



Maximizing Fundraiser Efficiency

Innovations in Major Gift Strategy

Advancement Forum

We help schools support students from enrollment to graduation and beyond

➤ **ROOTED IN RESEARCH**

7,500+ Peer-tested best practices

500+ Enrollment innovations tested annually

➤ **ADVANTAGE OF SCALE**

1,700+ Institutions served

4 M+ Students supported by our SSMS

➤ **WE DELIVER RESULTS**

95% Of our partners continue with us year after year, reflecting the goals we **achieve together**

➤ Find and enroll your right-fit students

➤ Support and graduate more students



➤ Prepare your institution for the future



Advancement Growth Focused on Major Gifts

Institutions Staffing Up, Starting with Frontline Fundraisers

Advancement Investments Reach New Highs

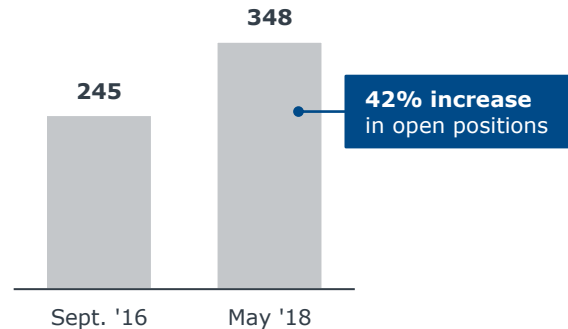
Advancement Investment and Performance Initiative, FY2016-FY2018 Average

10.0% Increase in **advancement** investment

15.9% Increase in **development** investment

Major Gifts Team Expansion Is Top Priority

Number of Job Postings for Development Officers at Colleges and Universities



“I’m hiring three or four **new major gift officers** over the next two years. It’s the top area where we’re staffing up.”

*Vice President of Advancement
Private Master’s University*

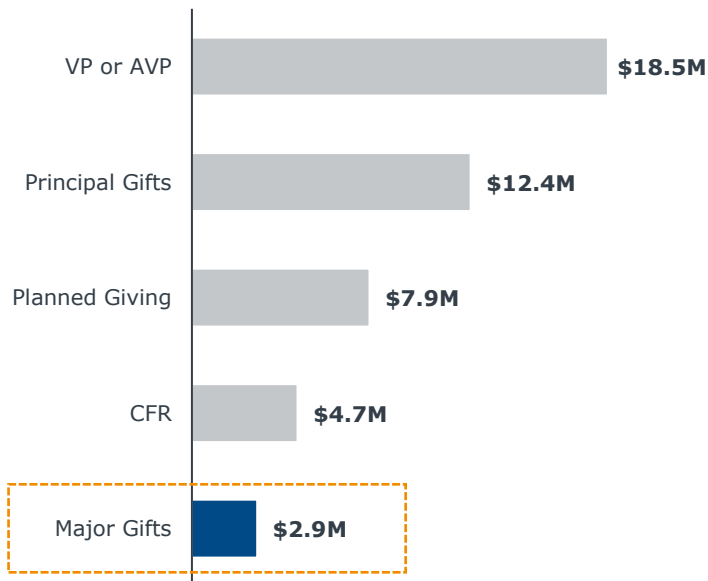


MGOs: The Lowest-ROI Frontline Investment

Top Performers Mask Inefficiencies Within Fundraiser Ranks

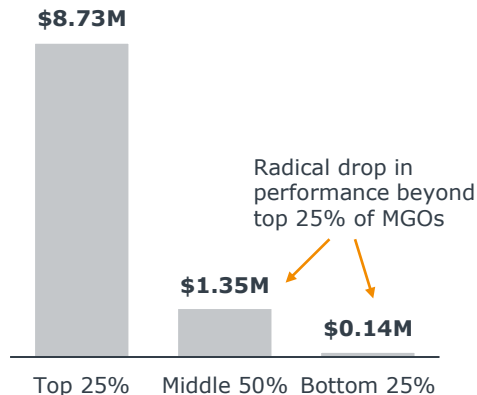
Major Gift Officers Underperform Compared to Colleagues

Average Fundraising Production by Role, FY2018¹



Top Performers Carry the Team

Average MGO Fundraising Production by Quartile, FY2018²



49%

Of major gift officers raised **less than \$500K** in 2018

1) n=1283

2) n=765



CAOs' Sights Turn Toward Efficiency

Working Smarter, Not Harder to Increase Major Gift Returns

Growing Urgency to Address Fundraiser Inefficiencies...

88% Of polled CAOs were "interested" or "very interested" in **enhancing fundraiser efficiency**

“We’re **spending more than ever on fundraisers**, but it’s not moving the needle on our goals.”

“Our **ROI should be through the roof**. What’s the point of hiring more fundraisers if they’re not going to bring in enough gifts to justify their salaries?”

...Linked to Numerous Concerns



*Why aren't our fundraisers bringing in **more major gifts**?*

- ▶ Inadequate qualification calls
- ▶ Low number of visits
- ▶ Poor prospect coverage
- ▶ Long cultivation timelines
- ▶ Asks below capacity



Identifying Barriers to Efficiency

Three Pain Points Limit Majority of Gift Officers

1

Reinventing the Wheel on Strategy

Strategy playbook rewritten for every cultivation cycle

Results

- Uninteresting cultivation steps
- Customized collateral for one-time use

2

Lack of Clear Intermediate Goals

Trial and error used to reach overall performance metrics

Results

- Winding path from qualification to gift
- Results hide inefficiencies throughout workflow

3

Non-Fundraising Activity Creep

Asks across campus reduce valuable fundraising time

Results

- Inadequate time spent on the road
- Academic leaders assign all external-facing tasks to MGOs

An Acute Need To Increase Productivity

“ I know that not every hire is going to be a superstar... The question on my mind is **how to make everyone on my team more productive**, regardless of where they rank right now.

Even **getting everyone to bring in 5-10% more gifts would have a huge impact on our bottom line** in the next few years.”

*Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations
Private Research University*

Maximizing Fundraiser Efficiency



Roadmap for Our Discussions

1

Develop Donor Strategy at Scale



- Bring new hires up to speed quickly
- Meet donor demands without excessive customization

2

Enhance Intermediate Goal Accountability



- Prepare managers for goal-setting conversations
- Leverage data analysis to identify workflow pain points

3

Realign Time Investments



- Increase ROI of unit-based fundraisers
- Reduce jack-of-all-trades expectations for MGO responsibilities

Maximizing Fundraiser Efficiency

Roadmap for Today's Discussion

1

Develop Donor Strategy at Scale



2

Enhance Intermediate Goal Accountability



3

Realign Time Investments



- Prepare managers for goal-setting conversations
- Leverage data analysis to identify workflow pain points

‘Am I a Fundraiser or a Project Manager?’

Portfolio Coverage Requires Complex Project Management Skillset

Keeping 50 Projects on Track

“Each major gift officer is effectively doing project management. Thus a portfolio of 50 means managing 50 unique, complex projects and **keeping them all moving forward simultaneously.**”

David Lively

*Managing Major Gift Fundraisers:
A Contrarian’s Guide*

MGO Hiring Focuses on Donor-Facing Skills

Now Hiring: Major Gift Officer

Preference Given to Candidates with:

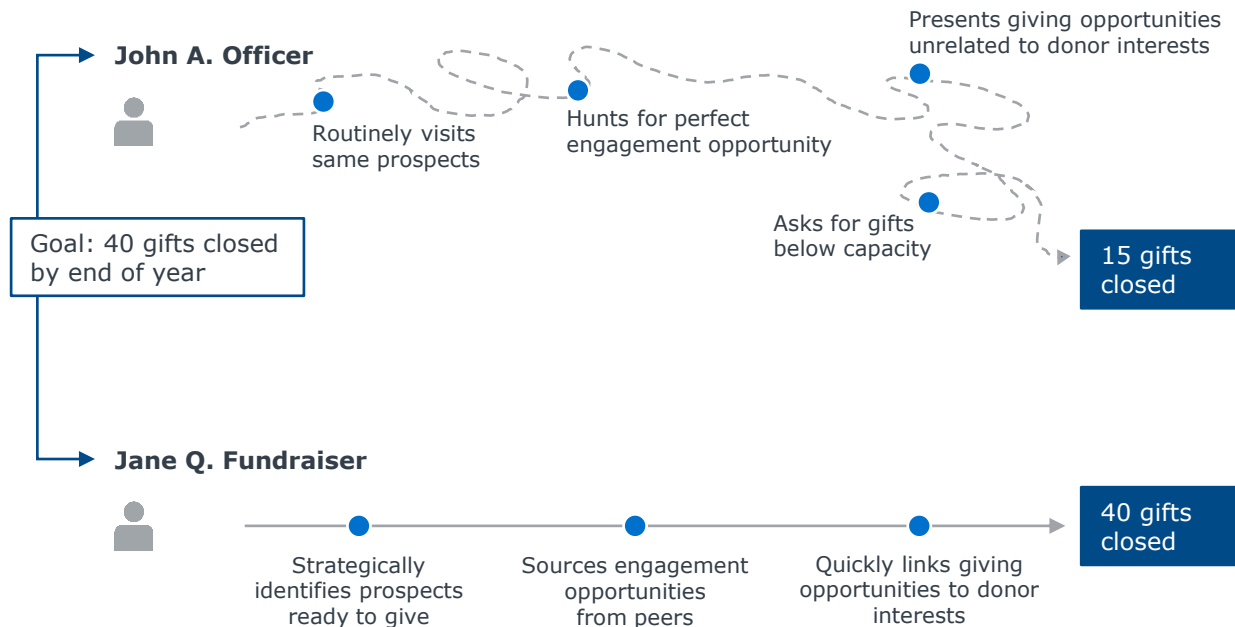
- Experience making the ask for gifts from \$25K to \$100K
- Excellent interpersonal, written, and oral communications
- Ability to maintain a positive and professional attitude under pressure

Missing from the List:

- ✘ Balancing multiple ongoing processes
- ✘ Shifting strategy based on donor response
- ✘ Prioritizing between competing demands

Not a Straight Line from Strategy to Results

End-Goal Metrics Say Little About How to Meet Them



Managers Ill-Equipped to Provide Guidance

The Best Player Often Becomes the Coach, Regardless of Readiness

Managers Offered Few Opportunities to Strengthen Their Skills...



57%

Of fundraising directors had no training before assuming their first management job



One of the primary leadership challenges in advancement is that we often promote high-performing fundraisers into management positions, **without providing them appropriate training and coaching** to develop the essential management skills they often lack."

*David Unruh
Senior Vice President
for Institutional Advancement
Drexel University*

...And Are Perceived as Ineffective by Their Staff

Survey of Perceived Coaching Ability, Percentile Ranking



A Threat to Success Across the Team

Short-Term Management Challenges Limit Long-Term Performance

Common Manager Missteps

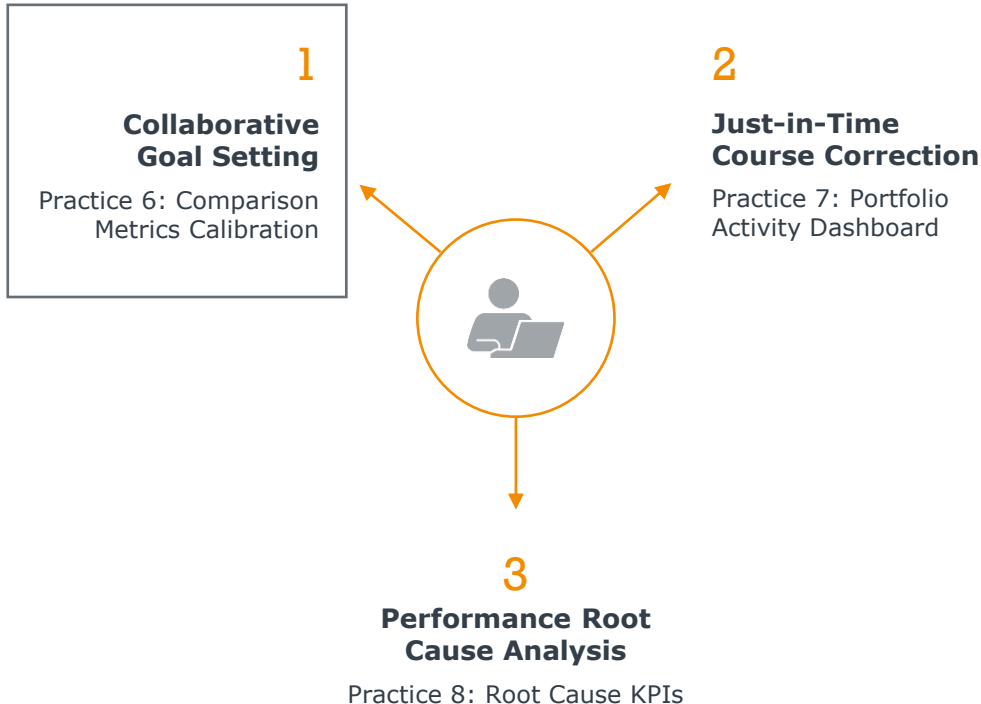
-  **Ineffective Check-Ins**
Line-by-line reviews spend equal time on all prospects in portfolio
-  **Reactive Feedback**
Coaching focuses on past performance, not future goals
-  **One-Size-Fits-All Approach**
Standardized goals ignore individuals' strengths and interests

Implications for Direct Reports

-  **Wasted Time**
Conversations provide little return on time invested
-  **Falling Short of Goals**
Time used for strategy troubleshooting and action planning
-  **Turnover Risk**
Frustrated gift officers seek opportunities elsewhere

Enhance Intermediate Goal Accountability

Three Components for Increased Manager Effectiveness



A Collaborative Goal-Setting Process

UW Madison's Metrics Account for Fundraiser Context and Experience

Performance Dashboards Display MGO-Specific Goal Weights

Employee: John S. Smith

Criteria	Rank	Goal	Actual
Contacts	3	250	260
Visits	6	65	40
Solicitations	2	20	30
Dollars	4	\$4.5M	\$1M
Qualifications	5	20	10
Commitments	1	12	12
Weighted Score			97

Employee: Jane B. Doe

Criteria	Rank	Goal	Actual
Contacts	6	250	260
Visits	2	65	80
Solicitations	4	20	10
Dollars	1	\$4.5M	\$7M
Qualifications	3	20	17
Commitments	5	12	20
Weighted Score			123

Department Average
Peer Role Average

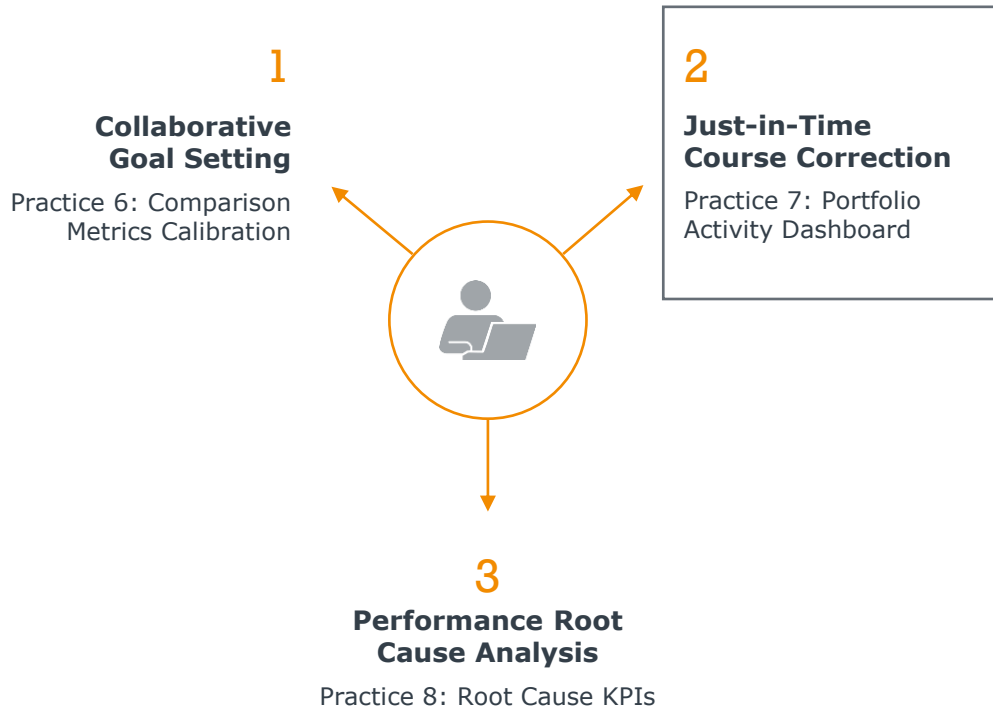
100
125

Managers and MGOs negotiate **individually ranked importance** of metrics

MGOs see how their scores **compares to peers** with the same title

Enhance Intermediate Goal Accountability

Three Components for Increased Manager Effectiveness





A Clear Window into Fundraiser Productivity

University of Cincinnati Gives Managers Granular Insight into Portfolios

Sample Portfolio Activity Dashboard

Prospect Management Status	City, State	PM Start Date	Visit	Strategic Move	Active Plan	Ask on Track	Total Points	Activity
Qualified	Harrison, OH	6/2/17	●	●	●	●	2	Not Active
Qualified	Milford, OH	8/25/18	●	●	●	●	3	Active
Qualified	Bear, DE	10/10/17	●	●	●	●	0	Not Active
Qualified	York, PA	1/4/19	●	●	●	●	1	Active
Qualified	Erlanger, KY	7/5/16	●	●	●	●	4	Active

● Yes ● No ● Not Applicable ● PM Data Range Too Short

Activity indicators for MGO efforts

Summary of activity level

On-Demand Data for Just-in-Time Support

University of Cincinnati Designs Dashboard to Direct Portfolio Conversations

A Deep Dive into Prospect Strategy...

“Managers can now look at the prospects identified as non-active. They ask MGOs if the strategy is working. If it’s not, the question then becomes why. We can have **better conversations about performance** as a result.”

*Becky Fullmer
Assistant Vice President and Campaign Director
University of Cincinnati*

...Including Critical Activity Indicators



Strategic Moves

One strategic move per prospect at least every 6 months



Ask Scheduled

On track to make an ask within 3 years

Red Flags Show Where to Spend Check-In Time



“Let’s use our time today to talk about how to **get this ask back on track.**”



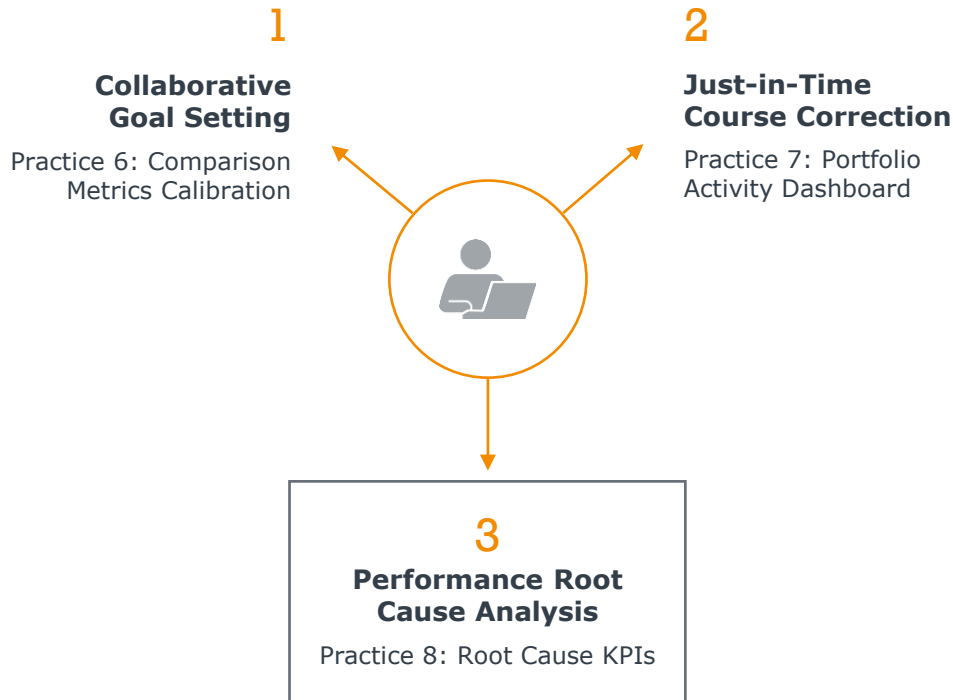
“The donor recently had a family emergency. How do you suggest that I **keep the conversation moving** forward?”



“Let’s talk about how to **update your strategy** and plan a new ask date.”

Enhance Intermediate Goal Accountability

Three Components for Increased Manager Effectiveness



Getting to the Root Cause of Underperformance

Oregon State Leverages Data to Remedy MGO Inefficiencies

Standard Metrics Mask Reasons Behind Performance

	FY18 Goal	Progress to Date
1 Number of visits	200	375
2 Number of major gifts closed	60	12
3 Number of major gift proposals	125	15
4 Total dollars raised	\$3M	\$1M

KPIs Provide Insight into MGO Challenges

? "With this many visits, why have so few gifts come in?"

▶ **Number of Unique Prospects Visited**
MGO visits the same prospect repeatedly

↳ *Strategize about future visit goals*

▶ **Rating of Average Visited Prospect**
MGO often visits low-rated individuals

↳ *Refocus on true major gift prospects*



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KPIs support the four primary metrics

Benefits for MGO Managers and Beyond

KPIs Designed to Inflect Change Across Advancement Team

Making Managers Stronger Coaches...

“Our intention is that the KPIs will become a coaching tool that gives managers the **data they need to understand what to coach** for their teams.

We don't want to give MGOs 18 new numbers to chase. We want to **create a stronger dialogue** between our staff members.”

*Mark Koenig
Assistant Vice President for Advancement
Services, Analytics and Digital Strategy
Oregon State University*

...And Standardizing Performance Measurement Across the Shop



Improved Data Governance

Standardized definitions for recording and analyzing activities



Analysis and Communication

Supervisors discuss pain points with MGOs



MGO Performance Improvement

Fundraisers understand intermediate steps to reach goals


Setting a Standard for “Reasonable Attempts”

New Metric Clarifies When MGOs Should Let Prospects Go

George Washington University Persistently Contacts Discovery Prospects



*"MGOs must make **two attempts** through **two channels** for **four consecutive quarters**."*

- 
- **Winter:** Email followed by phone call
 - **Spring:** Commencement invitation and email
 - **Summer:** Call and internal strategy meeting
 - **Fall:** Letter and email



If still unresponsive, **prospect is removed from portfolio**, coded “not a prospect now,” and reviewed in the future

A Tenacious Approach to Pipeline Outreach

Multiple Channels...



...With Multiple Asks...



... And Multiple Plans



Rewarding the Move to Cultivation

Stage Change Metrics Shift Focus from Visits to Strategy



Getting Stuck in Qualification

“My colleague Eric Rosario, the then Senior Director of Prospect Development and Leadership Gifts, and I realized that the portfolios had become too heavily weighted with prospects in qualification, and these prospects were not moving quickly enough. We had cases of prospects taking a visit every year, letting the fundraiser buy them lunch, but not increasing their giving. **We needed to move more prospects into cultivation.**”

*Michael Wesley, Director of Prospect Development & Strategic Research
Ithaca College*

Ithaca College’s Stage Change Metrics



Deemphasize Visit Count

Downplay one-off visits that do not meaningfully advance cultivation



Reward Moves into Cultivation

Track number of prospects who move from “qualification” to “cultivation” in donor management system



Have we built a **cultivation strategy**?



Have we set an expected **ask date**?



Have we secured **follow-up visits**?



Have we engaged **campus partners**?

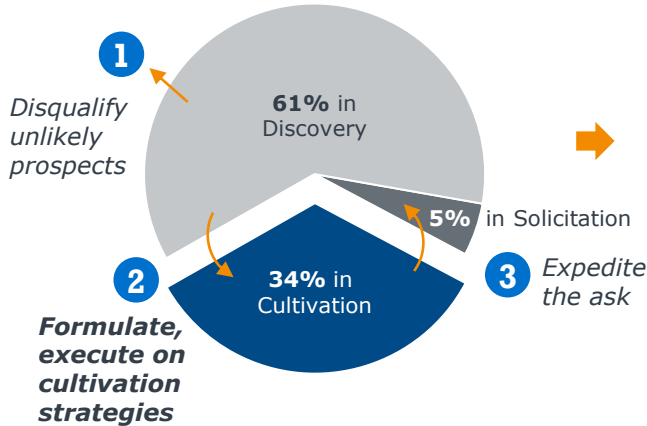
A Seismic Shift in Portfolio Composition

Ithaca Engineers Metric System to Realign Center of Gravity to Cultivation

Original State

Few Prospects Moving to Cultivation

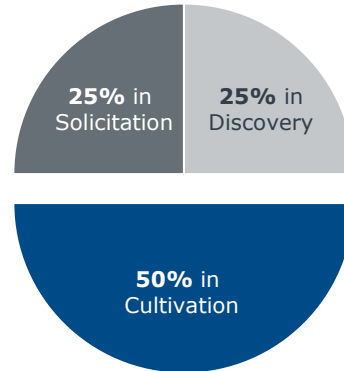
Average FY2016 Portfolio Composition



Ultimate Goal

More Activity Leading to Cultivation

Intended, Ideal Portfolio Composition

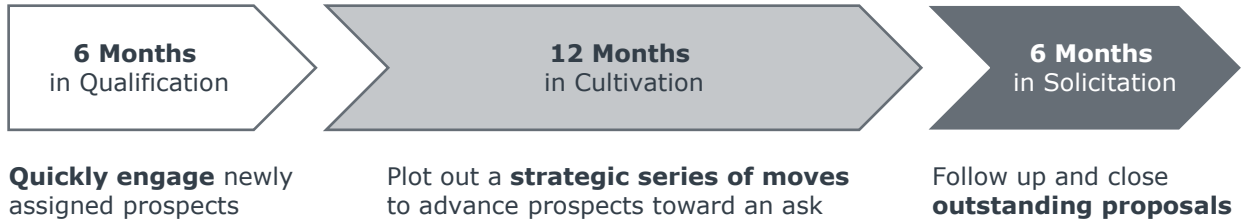


Hardwiring Fast-Paced Solicitations

Speeding Up Cultivation Timeline to Drive Activity

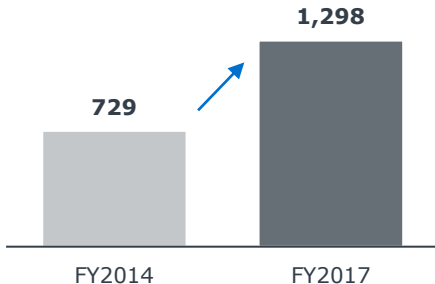
University of Chicago Holds Firm on Timelines

Accelerating Prospects to the Ask

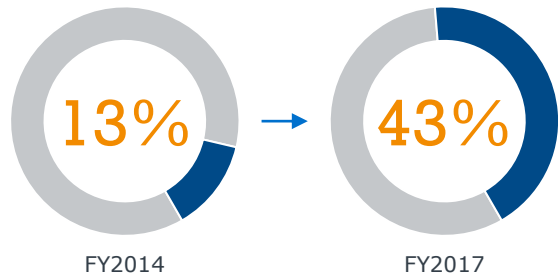


Not Just Faster—More and Better, Too

Number of \$100K+ Asks



Percentage of Prospects Asked at Capacity



Setting Strategy with Your Team

Resources to Enhance Intermediate Goal Accountability

Next Steps for Implementation

Short-Term

- ▶ Develop manager-friendly performance dashboards
- ▶ Brainstorm key KPIs to provide insight into MGO performance
- ▶ Provide guidance for collaborative goal-setting conversations

Long-Term

- ▶ Plan manager professional development to focus on coaching skills
- ▶ Train managers to address red flags that indicate MGO challenges

Discussion Questions

- 1 | How can we deploy professional development to strengthen our managers' coaching skills?
- 2 | How do managers and their direct reports currently set annual goals? How can we make the process more collaborative?
- 3 | Do our performance dashboards clearly communicate actionable information to managers?
- 4 | Are MGO managers using performance data analyses that we provide? How can we maximize the use of these tools?
- 5 | How can we ensure that managers proactively address MGO challenges throughout the year?

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Realign Time Investments



- Increase ROI of unit-based fundraisers
- Reduce jack-of-all-trades expectations for MGO responsibilities

Tuesday, June 2nd
1:00 to 2:00pm
Eastern

Stay Current with EAB's COVID-19 Resource Center

101



[Enrollment](#)

[Student Success](#)

[Advancement](#)

[Operations and Strategy](#)

[Research and Insights](#)

[Events](#)



[Home](#) > [Research](#) > [Support your campus through the coronavirus crisis](#)

Support your campus through the coronavirus crisis



Share

Support your school through the coronavirus crisis

1. Bookmark these pages for the latest official information about the coronavirus.
2. Use EAB research and resources to support your school's response to coronavirus.
3. Reference peer policies and other guidance when developing response plans.
4. Use these peer examples to help communicate coronavirus information.
5. Read the coronavirus responses from the major education associations.
6. Find Department of Education resources by state.

2. Use EAB research and resources to support your school's response to coronavirus

Most of these resources were not created specifically for infectious disease outbreak responses. That said, many of our existing resources can complement, supplement, and inform a variety of crisis response, planning, and mitigation efforts. Explore the three topic areas below.

- NEW Support student success during instructional disruption +
- Provide transparent and timely communication +
- Combat discriminatory responses to the coronavirus outbreak +
- Plan for potential financial and operational impact of the crisis +
- NEW Address basic needs insecurities of impacted students +

Regional and global information hubs, relevant EAB research and resources, and responses from major education associations to help you stay up to date and make informed decisions.

EAB Support your campus through the coronavirus crisis

1. EAB's latest take on the coronavirus crisis and what it means for higher education
2. Use EAB research and resources to support your school's response to coronavirus
3. Bookmark these pages for the latest official information about the coronavirus
4. Reference peer policies and other guidance when developing response plans
5. Use these examples to help communicate coronavirus

4. Reference peer policies and other guidance when developing response plans

Remote work policies +	Flashpoints and discrimination responses +
Remote teaching contingency plans +	Support for at-risk populations +
On-campus quarantine and decontamination plans +	Events and large group hosting +
Study abroad and international students +	Long-term planning and contingencies +
Support for students' basic needs +	Spring break policies +

Institution-specific examples of comprehensive websites, direct communication, and social media messaging, as well as sample policies and response plans.



To Learn More:
eab.com/covid19

Incentives for Charitable Giving to Offset the Likely Dropoff From Recession

Recessions Hurt Fundraising

FY2008-2009 Shift in Donor Behavior

12.2%

decline in total fundraising production

33%

decline in the three largest individual gifts at the median institution



Consider Communications Plan for New Provisions

- How will you train major gift officers to understand and apply these provisions?
- When and how will you communicate to donors (appropriately) about these tax opportunities?
- For major gift conversations that might come to fruition either this year or next, how can you pull forward by citing these expiring benefits?

Could CARES Act Provisions Make a Difference?

Some Help, But Unlikely to Have Dramatic Impact

New programs apply only to **cash gifts** for **public charities** (not for Supporting Organizations or Donor-Advised funds) and are **temporary in 2020**

- ▶ **For those who do not itemize** (claim the standard deduction): Universal deduction for charitable contributions of up to \$300 from taxpayer's AGI¹
- ▶ **For those who do itemize**: Can claim deduction for up to 100% of 2020 AGI (instead of typical 60%) and carry forward unused qualified cash deductions for 5 years, subject to normal 60% AGI
- ▶ **For corporations**: Increases current taxable income limit on contributions from 10% to 25% for 2020

Source: PG Calc, [CARES Act Includes Charitable Giving Incentives](#); Penn Wharton, [New Charitable Deduction in the CARES Act: Budgetary and Distributional Analysis](#); [Voluntary Support for Education Survey](#); EAB interviews and analysis.

1) Adjusted gross income

Most Pressing Concerns Emerging from COVID-19

104

How EAB Can Support Your Efforts to Navigate the Crisis and Beyond



Strategy and Organization

- How should we deploy **federal relief** funds for optimal impact?
- How do we address immediate **cost-cutting** needs while preserving strategic options for the future?

How can we use this **crisis as a catalyst** to prompt difficult decisions or enact **bold change**?

What **enduring changes** will carry into the post-COVID-19 world, and how can we prepare?



Undergraduate Recruitment

- How can we adapt our **yield, financial aid, and net tuition revenue** models for COVID-19?
- What **virtual** methods and strategies can we use to effectively **engage prospective students** and their parents?
- How can we convey an authentic, honest, and **meaningful portrayal** of our institution in a **virtual world**?
- How do we **augment our future prospect** pool when Search names are delayed?



Student Success

- How can we address the **needs of underserved** student populations hurt most by COVID-19?
- How do we **virtually onboard** new students most effectively, so they don't reconsider their decision to attend?
- What do we do now and over the summer to **reenroll our fall class**?
- How do we use the lessons of the spring to **protect course completion** rates in the fall?



Adult Learners

- What **educational offerings** will adult learners need most **amidst economic uncertainty**?
- What strategies will allow us to **expand** our adult learning efforts **within a cost-constrained** world post-COVID-19?
- How do we improve our **flexible and online delivery capabilities** to meet students where they are?

Select EAB Resources



EAB's Coronavirus Resource Center on EAB.com



Enrollment Services, Financial Aid Optimization, and Agency Services



Navigate (Student Success Management System)



Adult Learner Recruitment Marketing



Academic Performance Solutions and Education Data Hub



YouVisit Interactive Content and Virtual Tours



Student Success Playbook



Market Responsive Program Design

Please Reach Out to Continue the Conversation



R. Fleming Puckett
Senior Director

fpuckett@eab.com

...and register for our upcoming working-group series on the **next phase of COVID-19 responses**, including...

- Hiring and Onboarding Talent While Remote
- Fundraising Priorities and Messaging
- Planning for Summer and Fall 2020

**May 15th,
22nd, 27th,
and June 1st**



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