

KEY PLAYS from the

2025 Advancement Leaders Playbook

Advancement teams are under more pressure than ever—staffing shortages, shrinking donor pipelines, and evolving technology are making it harder to reach fundraising goals. But the right strategies can help leaders stay ahead. EAB’s 2025 Advancement Leaders Playbook breaks down the biggest challenges advancement leaders are facing today and highlights areas of opportunity to move forward.

CHALLENGES

Staffing shortages are stretching teams thin

75% of advancement teams have current vacancies, leading to burnout and resource constraints.

57% of leaders rank hiring as a top priority, making competition for experienced fundraisers fierce.



Donor pipelines are shrinking

80% of leaders are concerned about declining donor counts, yet 34% aren’t prioritizing pipeline growth.

41% of leaders report stagnant or declining alumni participation rates, putting long-term fundraising sustainability at risk.



Limited expertise in data and technology is holding teams back

45% of leaders say their data management is weak, limiting their ability to make informed decisions.

Despite AI’s potential, **43%** of leaders rank it as their lowest priority, citing lack of expertise and resources.

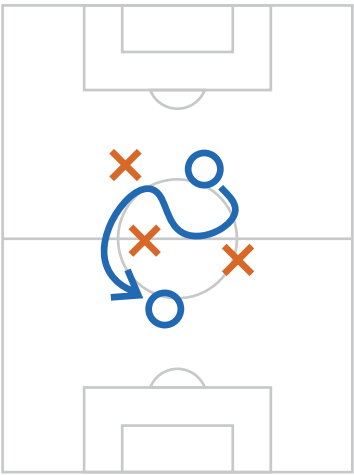


OPPORTUNITIES

Invest in **technology** and **strategic partnerships** to bridge staffing gaps

35% of leaders are adopting new technologies to streamline processes, helping teams maximize efficiency with limited staff.

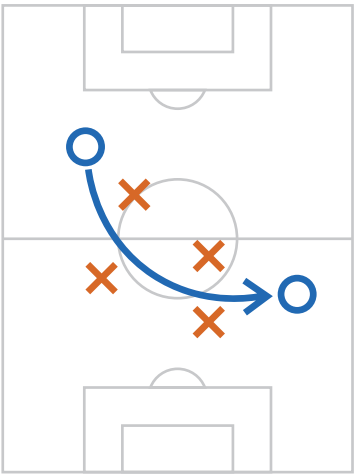
34% of teams hire contractors or outsource projects, provide access to specialized expertise, and scale support without full-time hires.



Focus on **digital marketing** and **engage mid-level donors** to fuel giving

67% of leaders rank mid-level and leadership annual giving as a top priority, making it a key area of growth for a strong, sustainable pipeline.

100% of teams use email, but only **56%** use digital ads, leaving room to expand reach to younger donors.



Optimize data platforms and **explore AI** to boost fundraising efficiency

41% of institutions have migrated to a new CRM in the past five years, creating opportunities to improve data use and decision-making.

Only 28% use AI for communication strategies, creating opportunities to streamline workflows and boost engagement.



About the 2025 Advancement Leaders Playbook

Built from 30 key questions—exploring the biggest challenges and opportunities in advancement today

164 advancement leaders shared their insights

70% hold AVP or higher titles

54% from private institutions

46% from public institutions



Don’t miss out. Download the 2025 Advancement Leaders Playbook for full insights and expert recommendations to stay ahead.

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