

The Essential Elements of a Professional Development Effort

Whether you are the sole person responsible for fundraising or whether you have a team dedicated to the task, there are elements that must be part of your program if you are to be as effective as you can be. We will talk through these essentials and help you apply them to your situation.

R. Mark Dillon is the Executive Vice President of the Christian Higher Education and Nonprofit division of Generis. He holds a PhD in Philanthropy and Leadership from The Union Institute in Cincinnati, a MDiv from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, and a BA from Bethel University. Dr. Dillon has been a successful Chief Development officer over 25 years, first at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School/Trinity College, then for 19 years at Wheaton College, and most recently at the American Bible Society. He authored the book *Giving and Getting in the Kingdom: A Field Guide*, considered to be a standard guide for fundraising in the Christian realm, and has consulted with numerous colleges, universities, and seminaries in North America as well as a number of churches and nonprofit ministries. Dr. Dillon and his wife, Susan, live in Chicago, IL, and are the proud parents of three children (Daniel, Joel, and Laura Grace) and grandparents to ten grandchildren.

Joel A. Dillon is the President & CEO of Jill's House, a nonprofit ministry dedicated to families raising children with intellectual disabilities. Joel is responsible for the overall operations of Jill's House, including overseeing the local and national fundraising for all five locations. Previously, he served as Associate VP of Development for Trinity International University in Deerfield, IL, where he played a role in some of the strongest years of giving in the university's history. His experience caring for "at-risk" children at Mercy Home for Boys & Girls in Chicago, IL and living alongside adults with intellectual disabilities in a L'Arche community in Germany has deepened his commitment and passion for the mission and work of Jill's House. Joel is a graduate of Wheaton College. He lives in the Washington, D.C. metro area with his wife, Hannah, and their two children, Lucy and Jonah.

I. Assessing Your Opportunities

A. Create time for Development

1. How will you change your priorities to succeed?
2. What training do I need?

B. Determine budget for Development

1. Record keeping
2. Travel
3. Promotion
 - a. Website?
 - b. Direct mail?
 - c. Newsletter

C. Who are prospects to fund your ministry?

1. Current

2. Prospective

II. Mitigating Your Weaknesses

A. What are obstacles to fundraising success?

B. How to fund the Development effort

C. Other challenges?

III. Creating a Development Plan

A. Purpose statement to set forth the guiding principles, financial targets, fundable initiatives, development program adjustments (including marketing tools needed), personnel and operational requirements, and costs to meet aggressive growth goals and strategic opportunities.

B. Guiding Principles

1. Pursue Excellence

2. Grow Relationships

3. Keep Commitments

C. Summary of Past Two Fiscal Years

1. Total Gift Income: Operational/Other

2. Number of Givers

D. Goals for Next Two Fiscal Years

1. Gift Income
2. Donor Count
3. Non-Monetary Goals
 - a. Staffing
 - b. Marketing materials (print/video, etc.)

E. Strategic Considerations for Growth of Gift Income

1. Your involvement in the fundraising task
2. Board involvement in the fundraising task
3. Building an organization-wide culture of generosity

F. Event Strategy?

G. Donor Care Emphasis

1. Gift processing review
2. Gift acknowledgment process

H. Major Gift Metrics

1. Face-to-face visits
2. Solicitations
3. Discovery visits
4. List management

IV. Conclusion

Strategic planning and goal-setting are critical to moving toward excellence in Development. But they will be ineffectual if the plan is not operationalized and reviewed on a regular basis (at least quarterly). We must move forward with discipline and intentionality, all the while being open to God's activity in, under, and through our efforts to bring about His best for our ministry.