

Winona State University

OpenRiver

---

Leadership Education Capstones

Leadership Education - Graduate Studies

---

7-2020

## Advancing Higher Education: Strategic Leadership for Chief Advancement Officers

Matthew Ohs  
mohs@winona.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://openriver.winona.edu/leadershipeducationcapstones>



Part of the [Educational Leadership Commons](#), and the [Leadership Studies Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Ohs, Matthew, "Advancing Higher Education: Strategic Leadership for Chief Advancement Officers" (2020). *Leadership Education Capstones*. 40.

<https://openriver.winona.edu/leadershipeducationcapstones/40>

This Capstone Paper is brought to you for free and open access by the Leadership Education - Graduate Studies at OpenRiver. It has been accepted for inclusion in Leadership Education Capstones by an authorized administrator of OpenRiver. For more information, please contact [klarson@winona.edu](mailto:klarson@winona.edu).

ADVANCING HIGHER EDUCATION:  
STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP FOR CHIEF ADVANCEMENT OFFICERS

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty  
of the Department of Leadership Education  
College of Education  
Winona State University

By

Matthew K. Ohs

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Science

July 29, 2020

## Abstract

This research study focuses on the role of strategic leadership within effective advancement organizations. Given the fundraising responsibility of university advancement leaders, there is a need to research the leadership strategies which lead to successful fundraising. The purpose of this study is to determine effective leadership strategies for Chief Advancement Officers (CAOs) at four-year, public universities. Strategic Leadership Theory suggests connections between the university's executive leadership and institutional success (Boal & Hooijberg, 2001; Finkelstein & Hambrick, 1996). The research study design is qualitative to explore the experiences of individuals regarding the connections between leadership strategies and fundraising performance in university foundation and advancement structures. Eight CAOs of similar universities volunteered to participate in this study. Individual interviews are used in this research study. Data collection consists of recorded interview transcripts and annual financial reports from each subject university. Findings include leadership strategies for fundraising departments, the role of CAO in institutional and departmental planning, effective fundraising strategies, and adaptations to the limits of strategic leadership. Conclusions and leadership implications include the following: 1) effective CAOs ensure organizational fundraising goals are met by communicating clear expectations and assessing both progress and performance; 2) effective CAOs use influence and authority to ensure that fundraising activities contribute to institutional success; 3) effective CAOs improve fundraising performance by increasing donor awareness of philanthropic priorities and by increasing donor confidence in institutional leadership; 4) effective CAOs demonstrate a high level of leadership capacity and are competent advancement professionals; and 5) effective management is a prerequisite for effective strategic leadership.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b> .....	iii
LIST OF TABLES .....	viii
CHAPTER I .....	1
INTRODUCTION .....	1
Problem Statement .....	1
Background .....	1
The Demand for Institutional Advancement.....	1
Role of the Chief Advancement Officer .....	2
Purpose of the Study .....	2
Theoretical Framework .....	2
Research Methodology .....	4
Research Questions .....	4
Definitions.....	5
Limitations of the Study.....	6
Delimitations of the Study .....	6
Significance of the Study .....	7
Summary .....	7
CHAPTER II.....	8
LITERATURE REVIEW .....	8
Historical Trends in Institutional Advancement.....	9

Contemporary Perspectives .....	11
Best Practices for Advancement Leadership .....	12
Measuring Advancement Effectiveness.....	14
Strategic Leadership Theory .....	15
Summary .....	18
CHAPTER III .....	19
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....	19
Research Design.....	19
Rationale for the Method .....	19
Research Questions .....	20
Setting .....	20
Sample.....	21
Selection of Participants .....	22
Institutional Review Board .....	22
Role of the Researcher .....	23
Instrumentation and Data Collection .....	24
Data Analysis and Triangulation .....	25
Summary .....	25
CHAPTER IV .....	26
RESULTS .....	26
Participant Demographics.....	26
Data Analysis .....	28
RQ1: Effective Leadership Strategies.....	28

Emergent Theme 1: Measure Effectiveness with Performance Metrics.....	29
Emergent Theme 2: Set and Communicate Clear Expectations .....	31
Emergent Theme 3: Regularly Review Performance Metrics .....	32
RQ2: Leadership Strategies for Institutional Goals .....	33
Emergent Theme 4: Strategic Planning Shapes University Goals and Priorities .....	35
Emergent Theme 5: CAOs Influence University Leaders .....	36
Emergent Theme 6: University Goals Drive Advancement Goals.....	37
RQ3: Contributing Factors of Effective Development .....	38
Emergent Theme 7: Donor Willingness Affects Fundraising Performance .....	40
Emergent Theme 8: Donor Awareness Affects Fundraising Performance.....	40
Emergent Theme 9: Donor Perceptions Affect Fundraising Performance .....	41
Emergent Theme 10: Current Events and Economic Climate .....	43
RQ4: Adaptations of Strategic Leadership .....	44
Emergent Theme 11: The Necessity of Effective Management .....	46
Emergent Theme 12: Leadership Capacity and Competence Affects Strategic Leadership.....	48
Summary .....	50
CHAPTER V .....	53
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS .....	53
Discussion.....	54
Measuring Effectiveness .....	54

Influence and Authority .....	56
External Factors Contribute to Effective Fundraising .....	58
Effective Management is Linked to Strategic Leadership .....	60
Leadership Capacity and Competence.....	61
Conclusions and Leadership Implications .....	62
Recommendations for Further Research.....	64
Summary .....	65
REFERENCES .....	66
APPENDIX A.....	72
PARTICIPANT EMAIL INVITATION.....	72
APPENDIX B .....	73
PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM.....	73
APPENDIX C .....	75
RESEARCH STUDY INTERVIEW PROTOCOL .....	75
APPENDIX D.....	77
SUBJECT 1 INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT .....	77
APPENDIX E .....	80
SUBJECT 2 INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT .....	80
APPENDIX F.....	82
SUBJECT 3 INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT .....	82
APPENDIX G.....	85
SUBJECT 4 INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT .....	85
APPENDIX H.....	89

SUBJECT 5 INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT .....	89
APPENDIX I .....	92
SUBJECT 6 INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT .....	92
APPENDIX J .....	96
SUBJECT 7 INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT .....	96
APPENDIX K.....	101
SUBJECT 8 INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT .....	101

**LIST OF TABLES**

1. Research Subject Experience as a CAO.....	28
2. Research Subject Organizational Fundraising Performance.....	29
3. Responses to IQ1: Measuring Effectiveness of Fundraising Staff.....	31
4. Responses to IQ2: Leadership Strategies for Fundraising Staff.....	32
5. Responses to IQ3: CAO Influence on University Goals.....	35
6. Responses to IQ4: Departmental and University Goal Alignment.....	36
7. Responses to IQ5: Internal Limitations to Fundraising.....	40
8. Responses to IQ6: External Limitations to Fundraising.....	41
9. Responses to IQ7: Limitations to Effective Leadership.....	46
10. Responses to IQ8: Adaptations to Limits on Effective Leadership.....	46
11. Summary of Emergent Themes.....	52

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Problem Statement**

Little is known about the leadership factors which lead to fundraising success at public universities. The mission of advancement plays an increasingly prominent role at every university (Chan, 2016) as its challenges and expectations grow (Weerts, 2007). While fundraising approaches have been streamlined and adopted throughout the field of higher education (Chan, 2016; Rowland, 1986), there is a dearth of research on best leadership practices within this area (Boal & Hooijberg, 2001; Phipps & Burbach, 2010; Taylor *et al.*, 2008;). This research study focuses on the role of strategic leadership within effective advancement organizations.

#### **Background**

##### **The Demand for Institutional Advancement**

State funding for public higher education has decreased in the modern era. Over the past 50 years, state legislatures reduced appropriations for public higher education while tuition prices increased, effectively shifting the cost from the state to the student (Chan, 2016; Fowles, 2014; Weerts, 2007). Universities increasingly rely on alternative sources of funding beyond state appropriations and tuition dollars, including both donations from alumni and private supporters, and commercializing its academic products through research, technology transfer, and entrepreneurial partnerships (Fowles, 2014; Weerts, 2007). Philanthropy's role in higher education will continue to grow in importance as universities pursue enhanced academic and professional programs, increase student participation, and construct new teaching and residential facilities (Chan, 2016). These changes place significant responsibility upon advancement officers (Sturgis, 2006).

## **Role of the Chief Advancement Officer**

Institutional advancement's role in higher education has grown since its introduction a century ago. The need for a professional advancement staff and management by a Chief Advancement Officer (CAO) was necessitated as the field increased in complexity and importance during the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Sturgis, 2006). Simultaneously, the scope and expectations of this role have grown exponentially. Today, this powerful position manages an advancement department, sits on the university's executive leadership cabinet, builds external relations, oversees trustee activities, and serves as the primary fundraising partner of the university president (Chan, 2016; Sturgis, 2006). Titles often include Vice President, Vice Chancellor, Executive Director, and Chief Development Officer (Walker, 2012). As the CAO of a university, this administrator must raise large sums of money while balancing the president's institutional vision, the institution's culture, and the personnel needs of their department (Chan, 2016). While the president and vice president's duties occasionally overlap, the CAO is ultimately responsible for the fundraising efforts of the university (Sturgis, 2006).

## **Purpose of the Study**

Given the fundraising responsibility of university advancement leaders, there is a need to research the leadership strategies which lead to successful fundraising. The purpose of this study is to determine effective leadership strategies for Chief Advancement Officers (CAOs) at four-year, public universities.

## **Theoretical Framework**

A theoretical framework serves as the core of all research studies and helps the audience understand how to best approach the research and its findings (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017). This study applies Strategic Leadership Theory (Finkelstein & Hambrick, 1996) to the field of higher

education advancement, particularly to the roles, actions, and outcomes of CAOs. At its core, Strategic Leadership Theory suggests direct connections between the executive leadership team and organizational outcomes (Phipps & Burbach, 2010). Research and theoretical perspectives in the field of strategic leadership explore links between the concepts of leadership capacity and organizational performance, often focusing on how executive leaders contribute to and affect organizational outcomes (Boal & Hooijberg, 2001; Phipps & Burbach, 2010). Much of the extant literature on strategic leadership examines executive leadership at for-profit organizations, while research into leadership capacity and outcomes at non-profit organizations is much rarer (Phipps & Burbach, 2010).

Boal & Hooijberg (2001) apply Strategic Leadership Theory to organizational structures. Boal & Hooijberg (2001) create a framework which describes the processes of leadership that create and affect change. The authors contend that the “essence of strategic leadership is the creation and maintenance of absorptive capacity and adaptive capacity coupled with managerial wisdom” (pp. 516-517). These characteristics exist throughout the organizational structure and are developed and encouraged by the executive leadership team. Truly effective strategic leaders possess capacities for learning, change, and managerial wisdom.

These organizational characteristics influence the findings of this study. *Absorptive capacity* refers to an organization’s ability to learn (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990; Boal & Hooijberg, 2001; Phipps & Burbach, 2010). Because non-profit leaders are expected to build efficient organizations with many constraints, they must often increase the organization’s capacity to learn (Phipps & Burbach, 2010). *Adaptive capacity*, or the ability to change, refers to an organization’s overall ability to adapt to changing conditions (Boal & Hooijberg, 2001; Hitt *et al.*, 1998). The ability to quickly accept change and adapt to a variety of forces is indicative of

an organization's strategic flexibility (Boal & Hooijberg, 2001; Phipps & Burbach, 2010).

*Managerial wisdom* refers to the ability to see changes within an environment and understand the social forces causing it (Bartunek & Necochea, 2000; Boal & Hooijberg, 2001). A leader skilled in managerial wisdom capitalizes on changing conditions by taking the right action at the right time. The presence and command of these three factors directly influences the effectiveness of strategic leadership (Boal & Hooijberg, 2001). Together, these capacities indicate the ability of a strategic leader to effect timely, necessary, and correct changes within an organization.

### **Research Methodology**

The design of this research study is qualitative to explore connections between leadership strategies and organizational performance. Qualitative research uses inductive reasoning drawn from specific results and findings to develop greater conclusions about the field (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017). This analysis focuses on the complex relationships between parts and actions within a defined context to find greater meaning and understanding within the system (Queirós *et al.*, 2017). Specifically, this study reveals the mechanisms and strategies used by CAOs who lead fundraising teams and universities.

This qualitative research study consists of individual interviews with CAOs of public universities to better understand any connections uncovered within the research. Documentation received from these organizations provides additional data sources and helps triangulate research findings around distinguishable themes. Triangulation of data ensures trustworthiness within a qualitative methodology (Patton, 1999).

### **Research Questions**

Effective research questions guide a research study and should be clearly stated, viable, and lead to significant findings (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017). Given the fundraising

responsibility of CAOs, there is a need to research the leadership strategies which foster successful fundraising. This study seeks to answer the overarching question, “What are effective leadership strategies for CAOs at four-year, publicly funded universities?” Research questions explore CAO roles, actions, and decisions which affect departmental and institutional leadership.

RQ 1: What are effective leadership strategies for CAOs within their fundraising departments?

RQ 2: How are leadership strategies used by CAOs aligned with institution-level goals?

RQ 3: What factors contribute to the effectiveness of strategic leadership?

RQ 4: How do CAOs adapt to limitations on the effectiveness of strategic leadership?

## **Definitions**

**Absorptive capacity (ability to learn):** the ability of an organization to recognize the value of new information and apply it towards innovative purposes (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990).

**Adaptive capacity (ability to change):** the strategic flexibility of an organization to react quickly to changing conditions to develop and remain competitive (Hitt *et al.*, 1998).

**Development:** fundraising activities, including soliciting monetary gifts for general and restricted purposes (Chan, 2016).

**Institutional Advancement:** the activities and programs performed by an organization that grow awareness and support from its constituent groups to further its goal of increasing all available resources (Rowland, 1986). Within higher education, these include alumni relations, public relations, and development (Chan, 2016).

**Managerial Wisdom:** The ability to perceive environmental changes and an understanding of involved social actors and embedded relationships (Bartunek & Necochea, 2000; Boal & Hooijberg, 2001).

**Public University:** a not-for-profit organization, typically an agency of state government, whose primary funding sources are student tuition and fees, state appropriations, federal funds, and private donations (Fowles, 2014).

**Strategic Leadership:** the alignment of strategic management, strategic thinking, policy development, and resource allocation within an organization (Tayler *et al.*, 2008).

### **Limitations of the Study**

This research focuses on a small group of individuals and the actions or decisions made within their roles as departmental and organizational leaders. It is assumed that all interviewees answer questions fully and honestly, and that supplied documentation adds validity to preliminary interview statements. While the findings intend to suggest connections between actions and results at specific universities, the results cannot be generalized for all similar public universities or organizations. Additional research will be necessary to duplicate findings within similar organizations.

### **Delimitations of the Study**

Participants within this study are delimited to advancement leaders at four-year, publicly funded universities throughout the United States. Selected universities are members of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) and share similar criteria from the Carnegie Classifications of Institutions of Higher Education. Participants are either current or former Chief Advancement Officers, Vice Presidents, Vice Chancellors, Executive Directors, or

similarly titled executives at these universities. All selected participants engaged in advancement, development, and leadership activities within these roles.

### **Significance of the Study**

This research may be significant to a variety of stakeholders within the sphere of public higher education advancement. First, students and practitioners of advancement and development may be interested in obtaining current perspectives on leadership best practices and related effects on organizational performance. In particular, the findings may inspire professional fundraisers at public universities to reflect on current or proposed fundraising leadership strategies and suggested organizational outcomes. Additionally, this study expands the collective knowledge base of Strategic Leadership Theory by applying Boal and Hooijberg's (2001) strategic leadership framework within the public higher education sector.

### **Summary**

This research study contains five chapters. The first provides an overview of the study, including an introduction to the roles of institutional advancement and the chief advancement officer (CAO). The purpose is established, as are the theoretical framework of Strategic Leadership Theory, guiding research questions, and the significance of the study. Also discussed are the limitations, delimitations, and research methodology. Chapter two includes a review of literature relevant to this study. Chapter three addresses the research design and methodological approach. Chapter four reviews the study's results, and chapter five discusses its findings and offers broader conclusions related to current literature. Leadership implications and areas for further research are also provided.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

American higher education and philanthropy share an intertwined history that trends toward increased organization and professionalization. As the primary bridge between the public and the academy, institutional advancement enhances a university through increased private philanthropic support, alumni engagement, and public relations (Chan, 2016). As the role of institutional advancement has grown within the university, so have its expectations. Of the \$427.7 billion given to American charities in 2018, \$58.7 billion, or 13.7%, was donated to educational institutions (Giving USA, 2019). Today, all colleges and universities maintain an active advancement agenda and rely on philanthropic support to provide academic programs, enhance student services, encourage student engagement, and build new facilities for teaching and research (Chan, 2016).

The purpose of this overall study is to determine effective leadership strategies for Chief Advancement Officers (CAOs) at public universities. This research is not intended to revise the foundational knowledge of fundraising within higher education and its numerous established best practices as compiled by Rowland (1978, 1986) and Worth (1993). Rather, it seeks to identify how executives within the field lead an organization toward fundraising achievement. The quantitative analysis of this question is rare and statistical profiles of CAOs are limited (Murray, 2008; Walker, 2012). A larger volume of both qualitative and quantitative research exists which focuses on the fundraising roles of university presidents and deans, development at the community college level, and studies of alumni participation and engagement with advancement. This study intends to add to the literature of strategic leadership for CAOs through a qualitative methodology. This literature review is organized into the following sections: a historical overview of fundraising within higher education, current trends within the role of CAO, an

analysis of leadership best practices, the measurement of fundraising success, and the development of Strategic Leadership Theory.

### **Historical Trends in Institutional Advancement**

The strong presence of philanthropy within American higher education dates to the Colonial era. Jacobson (1990) provides a historical survey of university fundraising and external relations. Through John Harvard's philanthropy, Harvard College was founded in 1636 as the earliest institution of higher education in the colonies. The fledgling school began its first fundraising efforts in 1641, when a delegation of preachers was sent to England to raise additional money. Although largely unsuccessful, their approach led to the first publication of collegiate fundraising literature in 1643. This early campaign is typical for fundraising efforts during the period, which were largely dominated by peer to peer advocacy, letter writing, and small market publications (Jacobson, 1990).

The college president was the de facto leader of fundraising campaigns at these early institutions. Jacobson's summary shows that this system of presidential leadership lasts from the 1600s to the late 1800s. Sturgis (2006) contributes a widely cited profile of presidential leadership in fundraising established through a quantitative study of leadership attributes. The colonial colleges were Protestant organizations and ministers were appointed as presidents by boards of trustees. A major task was fundraising, although these duties conflicted with the time-consuming challenges of creating and growing their small schools. Financial support often came from church congregations within the college's religious denomination, especially from the Old World. The Revolutionary War halted funding from Great Britain, which resulted in presidents seeking operating funds from the American public for the first time. The growth of the nation and addition of new states provided new revenues for universities. By the 1870s, each state

established a system of land grant colleges and publicly funded institutions, although presidents again focused on public support as state funding remained inconsistent (Sturgis, 2006).

Organized fundraising and external relations efforts emerged in the 1900s. This era featured an increased focus on external relations and the public perception of the university (Jacobson, 1990). Chan (2016) notes the first dedicated fundraising department was founded in the 1920s, which corresponds to a decreasing focus on fundraising by the president (Sturgis, 2006). Sturgis links a large population of GI Bill-eligible veterans to the growth of the university apparatus and a greater need for public funding during the 1950s. The first development officers were hired, and the position eventually evolved to include managerial and executive functions. During this time, the independent fields of external relations and fundraising began to merge into a single department focused on institutional advancement (Sturgis, 2006).

A common understanding of institutional advancement solidified late in the century. A governing body, the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), was created in 1974 to provide oversight of the practice and guidance to the field (Jacobson, 1990). Rowland (1978) edited a comprehensive manual for university advancement programs, which serves as a foundational text within the field of practice (Chan, 2016). Additionally, Rowland (1986) provides the contemporary definition for institutional advancement (as presented in chapter 1) and seeks to expand research of philanthropy into higher education leadership. Worth (1993) builds on this knowledge base by compiling a broad assortment of best practices within the field of educational fundraising. The increasing complexity and varied functions of university advancement necessitate management by a skilled, high-level administrator.

## **Contemporary Perspectives**

The need for a CAO increased as the field professionalized and organized into the current model. Today, this powerful position manages an advancement department, sits on the university's executive leadership cabinet, builds external relations, oversees trustee activities, and serves as the primary fundraising partner of the university president (Chan, 2016; Sturgis, 2006). Kozobarich (2000) provides an overview of common organizational structures for this department. At larger universities, the department is a prominent feature of the university's overall organization, while smaller university operations may be scaled down in size and scope. The department is either centralized, wherein all staff are housed in one location, or it may be decentralized in that each college supports its respective advancement staff. Although the department houses multiple divisions, a primary function is to raise major gifts for the university. Development officers are supported by a professional staff responsible for research, planned gifts, annual gifts, and donor stewardship. Additional operations staff carry out gift processing, database administration, and financial reporting (Kozobarich, 2000).

The CAO of a university leads this department by carrying out a variety of roles and tasks. Titles often include Vice President, Vice Chancellor, Executive Director, and Chief Development Officer (Walker, 2012). Chan (2016) and Sturgis (2006) note this administrator must raise large sums of money while balancing the president's vision, the institution's culture, and the personnel needs of the department. The president is responsible for establishing priorities, strategic planning initiatives, and maintaining a clear vision for the institution. The CAO assists with these duties and organizes the fundraising priorities to align with the president's vision. While presidential and CAO duties occasionally overlap, the CAO is ultimately responsible for the overall fundraising performance of the university.

### **Best Practices for Advancement Leadership**

The relationship between a president and CAO emerges as a key theme in research on fundraising success. Sturgis (2006) explores perceptions of presidential and vice-presidential fundraising leadership in a survey of 132 colleges and universities. Sturgis finds a gap in perceptions of fundraising capability between the president and CAO. Presidents rate their personal perceptions of fundraising teamwork and capability significantly higher than do CAOs. A similar gap exists between the two positions on perception of overall leadership capabilities in Sturgis' findings. The study suggests CAOs need to prioritize a teamwork approach to fundraising with the university president in order to promote a more dynamic fundraising leadership team.

The level of presidential involvement in development activities is a key indicator of overall fundraising success. Walker (2012) identifies several factors that predict fundraising success through a survey of CAOs at 111 public colleges and universities. Presidential involvement in advancement activities serves as a crucial endorsement of the CAO's leadership and ability. An advanced or terminal degree helps build credibility with the university faculty and leadership, and more time spent in the CAO position contributes to stronger relationships with administration and major donors. The CAO must maintain a positive reputation on and off campus and should utilize strategic planning to align fundraising priorities with the president's vision. A cohesive and skilled advancement staff is important for carrying out this plan. In summary, CAOs do well by building and enhancing a culture of giving in their departments and universities, and the president's endorsement of this culture contributes to its success (Walker, 2012).

These findings are echoed in additional research with smaller sample sizes and different settings. Murray (2008) examines fundraising management practices of CAOs at 82 private colleges and universities. The key findings agree with the above literature. The results indicate several factors which contribute to fundraising success. First, the CAO needs the trust of the president to effectively carry out development activities. Second, the CAO must know the president's understanding of presidential and vice-presidential roles in fundraising. Finally, the CAO must have access to university trustees and should involve trustees in fundraising activities (Murray, 2008).

The president's role in fundraising success is not limited to assisting the CAO. Satterwhite and Cedja (2011) identify key presidential behaviors which encourage fundraising success. This research was conducted at three public universities in Texas with capital campaigns of less than \$100 million. While both CAOs and presidents were interviewed, the findings focus on presidential roles. These behaviors include an emphasis on strategic planning, coordination of external and internal stakeholders, building effective teams, directing fundraising activities, and optimizing resource allocation for achieving fundraising goals (Satterwhite & Cedja, 2011).

Quantitative research on CAO management practices relating to alumni donors offers insight on how to best achieve fundraising success. Brennan (2011) examines fundraising performance through the lens of CAO perceptions of alumni donors and volunteers. 26 survey respondents provide data from public and private institutions in eastern states and Canadian provinces. Key findings indicate that CAOs of public institutions place a higher emphasis on alumni donors than alumni volunteers. Additionally, these CAOs create fundraising strategies that segment donors by age and gender (Brennan, 2011).

## **Measuring Advancement Effectiveness**

CAOs set performance goals at both the organizational and individual level. The traditional metric for fundraising performance is dollars raised per fiscal year (Walker, 2012). Hiles (2010) examines this metric in depth and provides several interpretations. Dollars raised each fiscal year is an important measurement, but one that is neither entirely reliable nor accurate. Variance in year-over-year performance may occur due to the windfall nature of major gifts, as in the unexpected death of a large benefactor, or as the result of a years-long relationship with the fundraiser. Additional quantifiable performance metrics include the number of calls, contacts, and moves within a portfolio of donors, where contacts represent calls and invitations with the prospect, and moves represent concrete actions which lead to gift solicitations. Finally, the number and ratio of solicitations and donations can be measured. CAOs are encouraged to measure performance through a blend of quantifiable metrics and subjective evaluations (Hiles, 2010).

The success of a fundraising organization is influenced by more than its development operations. According to Stevick (2010), an effective CAO fully integrates alumni relations and marketing with development to maximize advancement potential. Institutional advancement departments can replicate the success experienced by for-profit corporations when sales and marketing teams were integrated during the 1990s. CAOs need to provide common definitions of success so that development, marketing, and alumni relations teams work together to improve overall fundraising performance. A common tactic combines customer relationship management (CRM) technology and strategies with constituent databases to encourage more personal relationships with donors and alumni (Stevick, 2010).

Additional performance measurement tools analyze organizational effectiveness beyond fundraising achievements. While fundraising performance is vital, CAOs are also tasked to deliver results in less quantifiable areas. van Nostrand (2003) presents a model that uses alumni indices to measure relationships between an institution and its alumni. Many institutions rely on alumni society membership numbers, alumni event attendance, and annual donation dollars to gauge organizational effectiveness. van Nostrand pilots five metrics identified in a survey of alumni at a Canadian university and creates a system of indexes measuring student experiences, university alumni reputation, campus connectivity, participation (alumni engagement), and donations. While customized for one university, these measurements demonstrate a broader understanding of alumni relationships and provide CAOs with a potential tool for measuring organizational effectiveness (van Nostrand, 2003).

### **Strategic Leadership Theory**

The field of strategic leadership examines how executive leadership influences and affects organizational performance. Phipps & Burbach (2010) cite Hosmer (1982) as the first to suggest that existing theories of leadership failed to fully account for an organization's success within its industry. As explained by Phipps and Burbach, Hosmer first defined strategic leadership and proposed that the actions and roles of leadership are different from management because leadership must be concerned with organizational strategy in the context of external environments. An organization's leadership operates at a higher level than its management and is primarily concerned with organizational strategy and influence.

Hambrick & Mason (1984) build on this foundation by developing Upper Echelon Theory. Upper Echelon Theory links leadership psychology with leadership strategy. The authors argue that organizational outcomes, strategies, and effectiveness can be viewed as

reflections of the cognitive ability, values, and actions of the dominant management group. This macro focus suggests that over time, organizations become reflections of the top management team. This central tenant of Upper Echelon Theory is incorporated throughout many approaches to the study of strategic leadership.

Finkelstein & Hambrick (1996) unite Upper Echelon Theory with numerous studies and theoretical perspectives into Strategic Leadership Theory. Factors of strategic leadership explored in this development include cognitive ability, psychological perspectives, leadership interactions, environmental or industry conditions, management turnover, executive succession, and organizational governance (Donaldson, 1997). The authors argue that leadership actions are bound to the psychological constructs of those leaders. Managerial discretion is suggested as a moderating factor to organizational outcomes in that leadership influence increases with the ability of leaders to affect organizational outcomes.

Strategic Leadership Theory is expanded by Cannella & Monroe (1997) who draw further connections between leadership psychology and organizational effectiveness. The authors argue that the personality characteristics, leadership styles, and psychological constructs of leaders directly contribute to organizational outcomes and successes. This view of Strategic Leadership Theory suggests that a leader's values, cognitions, personality, and other biases affect that leader's field of vision, selective perception of available information, and interpretation of that information (Cannella & Monroe, 1997).

Additional perspectives in the field approach Strategic Leadership Theory through a broader focus on leadership actions, influences, and outcomes. Ireland & Hitt (1999) describe six components of effective leadership. These factors are: 1) determining the organization's purpose and vision; 2) exploiting and maintaining core competencies; 3) developing human

resources and capital; 4) sustaining effective organizational cultures; 5) promoting ethical practices; and 6) establishing balanced controls. The authors suggest that when completed effectively through an organization, these factors lead to strategic competitiveness (Ireland & Hitt, 1999).

Boal & Hooijberg (2001) advocate that researchers must focus on describing strategic leadership processes which affect organizational outcomes and performance. The authors review and expand strategic leadership actions into the following list: 1) making strategic decisions; 2) creating and communicating a vision for the future; 3) developing key competencies and capabilities; 4) developing organizational structures, processes, and controls; 5) managing multiple constituencies; 6) selecting and developing the next generation of leaders; 7) sustaining an effective organizational culture; and 8) infusing ethical value systems into an organizational culture (p. 516). Additionally, the authors assume that an organization's overall system is dynamic due to constant internal and external change. Organizational environments often feature ambiguity, complexity, and informational overload. Therefore, managing and adapting to organizational turbulence is a critical activity of strategic leadership.

Boal & Hooijberg (2001) create a conceptual framework of Strategic Leadership Theory which marries core elements of strategic organizations (absorptive capacity, adaptive capacity, and managerial wisdom) with personal characteristics (cognitive complexity, social intelligence, and behavioral complexity) and leadership styles (visionary, charismatic, and transformational) to suggest that combinations of these nine factors produce strategic leadership within an organization. This framework predicts that combinations of these nine factors "positively affect the essence of strategic leadership" within an organization (pp. 539-540). Effective strategic leadership increases the capacity to learn, the ability to change, and the depth of managerial

wisdom present throughout the overall organization (Boal & Hooijberg, 2001). Together, these capacities indicate the ability of a strategic leader to create change within an organization.

### **Summary**

This chapter situates the study within the research fields of higher education philanthropy and strategic leadership. Literature relevant to the research questions is reviewed and organized into five sections: the history of advancement within the American system of higher education, current perspectives on the roles of the university president and CAO, quantitative research on leadership best practices for CAOs, performance measurement tools used in advancement, and the development of contemporary perspectives in Strategic Leadership Theory. The following chapter outlines the research methodology used to carry out this study.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Little is known about leadership factors leading to fundraising success at public universities. The mission of advancement plays an increasingly prominent role at every university as its challenges and expectations grow (Chan, 2016; Weerts, 2007). While fundraising approaches have been streamlined and adopted throughout the field of higher education (Chan, 2016; Rowland, 1986), there is a dearth of research on best leadership practices within this area (Boal & Hooijberg, 2001; Phipps & Burbach, 2010; Taylor *et al.*, 2008). The purpose of this study is to determine effective leadership strategies for Chief Advancement Officers (CAOs) of fundraising departments at four-year, public universities. The following chapter outlines the research design, methodology, areas of exploration, research setting, research sample, the role of the author/researcher, instrumentation, data collection, and analysis.

#### **Research Design**

The design of this research study is qualitative to explore the experiences of individuals regarding the connections between leadership strategies and fundraising performance in university foundation and advancement structures. Qualitative research uses inductive reasoning drawn from specific results and findings to develop greater conclusions about the field (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017). This analysis focuses on the complex relationships between parts and actions within a defined context to find greater meaning and understanding within the system (Queirós *et al.*, 2017). Specifically, this study reveals the strategies used by (CAOs) who lead fundraising departments.

#### **Rationale for the Method**

This research study uses a general qualitative design to explore these connections within specific university settings. This study consists of interviews with CAOs at universities to

explore connections between leadership strategies and fundraising performance. Each interview subject is treated separately. Because leadership strategies are the focus of this research, the unit of analysis for each case is considered embedded within each case. The results of these individual interviews are compared across all interviews within the study. Any conclusions drawn from this research are considered inductive in nature. Documentation received from each subject provides additional data sources and helps triangulate research findings around distinguishable themes.

### **Research Questions**

This study seeks to answer the overarching question, “What are effective leadership strategies for CAOs of fundraising departments at four-year, publicly funded universities?”

Research questions explore organizational and personal elements of strategic leadership:

RQ 1: What are effective leadership strategies for CAOs within their fundraising departments?

RQ 2: How are leadership strategies used by CAOs aligned with institution-level goals?

RQ 3: What factors contribute to the effectiveness of strategic leadership?

RQ 4: How do CAOs adapt to limitations on the effectiveness of strategic leadership?

### **Setting**

This research focuses on the leadership practices of CAOs at public universities. This study is specifically designed to investigate CAO leadership strategies used at four-year, public universities throughout the United States. All universities researched are members of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE). CASE serves as the global association organization for educational advancement professionals. CASE members include

more than 3,600 colleges, universities, secondary schools, and arts organizations in over 8 countries (Council for Advancement and Support of Education, 2019).

Four-year, public institutions range in size from small or regional state colleges and universities to large, world-renowned research universities. The size and scope of advancement departments at these universities are diverse as well. Carnegie classifications provide useful empirical data about these institutional differences (Carnegie Classifications of Institutions of Higher Education, 2019). This study obtains an adequate sample of CAOs by focusing on universities within the same classification.

### **Sample**

The research sample is identified by custom sorting four-year, public universities according to variables within the following Carnegie classifications:

- A) Basic: Master's Colleges & Universities, Small, Medium, or Larger
- B) Undergraduate Instructional Program: Professions plus arts & sciences
- C) Enrollment Profile: High or Very High undergraduate
- D) Undergraduate profile: Four-year, Full-time
- E) Size and Setting: Four-year, Primarily Residential

Graduate student profiles are not considered within this profile.

The research sample is focused on the individuals leading the advancement offices at universities in the capacity of CAO. Advancement offices can be structured as either internal departments of these universities or as external foundations affiliated with specific universities. Additionally, advancement offices can be centralized, with all staff located in one department, or decentralized with individual staff responsible for other departments. This research considers CAOs of different organizational structures to hold similar roles and does not exclude one

structure over another within the study sample. This research considers external foundations to function similarly to internal advancement departments.

### **Selection of Participants**

A purposeful sample refers to the selection of sites and participants based on a set of specific criteria (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017). A purposeful sample is obtained for this study from a list of 45 CAOs at qualifying universities who meet the above sample criteria. Eight subjects volunteered to participate in this research study. All live in the United States and are current or former CAOs of public universities:

Subject 1 is the former CAO of a university in CASE District V.

Subject 2 is the CAO of a university in CASE District I.

Subject 3 is the CAO of a university in the CASE District III.

Subject 4 is the CAO of a university in CASE District VI.

Subject 5 is the CAO of a university in CASE District II.

Subject 6 is the CAO of a university in CASE District IV.

Subject 7 is the CAO of a university in CASE District V.

Subject 8 is the CAO of a university in CASE District VI.

### **Institutional Review Board**

An Institutional Review Board (IRB) approves all research proposals at an institution to ensure compliance with university rules, federal regulations, ethical standards, and professional guidelines (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017). The research proposal for this study, including a Human Subject Protocol, is submitted to the Winona State University Institutional Review Board via the institutional portal at [www.irbnet.org](http://www.irbnet.org) (Winona State University, n.d.). No potential participants are contacted prior to the researcher obtaining IRB approval to carry out the study.

Once approval is granted, potential participants are contacted to join the study via email. Participation in the study is voluntary. Background information related to the study, informed consent documentation, and confidentiality statements are provided to all selected participants by the researcher. No data is collected prior to obtaining IRB approval for the research.

### **Role of the Researcher**

A significant factor affecting the outcomes of qualitative research is the individual researcher. This presents a problem for qualitative research because human reactions and interactions may vary across multiple study participants, which can influence the amount and type of data collected (Pezalla *et al.*, 2012). The researcher must account for this phenomenon, known as “researcher as instrument” (p. 166) to facilitate the best possible conversation with all study participants. To create the best conversational space with each individual study participant, the researcher must recognize that different interviewing approaches are sometime necessary for different research topics and participants (Pezalla *et. al.*, 2012).

The researcher is a practitioner-scholar within the field of higher education advancement and works in the setting outlined in this chapter. The researcher studies organizational leadership and is interested in potential connections between strategic leadership, fundraising management, and higher education advancement. The researcher is professionally acquainted with some participants either personally or through knowledge and experience in the field. A semi-open interview guide (SOIG) is utilized for this research to ensure uniform data collection across multiple cases. All interviews within the research study are limited to the standardized questions and follow up questions. All interviews, notes, transcriptions, data analysis, and supporting documentation is considered confidential and is not shared with other participants.

## **Instrumentation and Data Collection**

This research study is conducted via recorded interviews with participants. Interviews occur either over the phone or through video conferencing. Interviews are semi-structured around a uniform set of open-ended questions contained in the SOIG to ensure uniform data collection across multiple cases. In addition to standardized questions, probing, clarification, and follow up questions are utilized to draw out more information from participants. The researcher records the interviews and transcribes the conversation. Interview questions cover the following topics:

Strategies used by the CAO to plan and lead departmental fundraising.

Departmental goal setting and performance metrics used.

CAO involvement in institutional goal setting.

Internal and external limitations on fundraising performance.

Limits on the effectiveness of strategic leadership.

The interview protocol is included with the appendices of this research study. Transcribed data is coded for further analysis and included in the appendices of this study.

Additional documentation is necessary to confirm information gathered in demographic surveys and interviews. Supporting materials including fiscal year annual reports and other relevant items are accessed for each subject university. All provided documents are logged, converted to a digital format, and stored on a secure server. Any personal identification information is removed. Physical copies are retained under secured access during the research process. All research materials, including additional documents, are destroyed at the conclusion of the research process.

## **Data Analysis and Triangulation**

Careful data analysis is a key requirement for credible qualitative research (Patton, 1999). According to Lochmiller and Lester (2017), any conclusions drawn from qualitative research must be grounded within the data collected by the researcher. Data processing and analysis is completed by the researcher after all participant interviews are finished. This process includes making verbatim and condensed transcriptions, creating memos of conversations, and coding the data for further review. Emergent codes, categories, and themes are mapped within the analysis by the researcher (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017). Applying the Constant Comparative Method (Glaser, 1965) during this analysis further establishes the validity and credibility of the research method and conclusions. This triangulation of purposeful samples, multiple data types, and analytic methods within qualitative research yields results superior to those obtained with less reliable methodologies (Patton, 1999). All findings and conclusions drawn from this research are compiled in later chapters of this document.

## **Summary**

Chapter three provides an outline of the methodology used in this qualitative research study. The research design, rationale for the design, purpose, and research questions are presented. The setting, sample, selection of a purposeful sample, and role of the researcher are defined and discussed. The IRB process, instrumentation, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques are examined. The findings of this study are discussed in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

This qualitative research study explores leadership strategies used by Chief Advancement Officers (CAOs) at four-year, publicly funded universities. Chapter three presents the research methodology used in this study. This chapter describes the relevant participant demographic information, analyzes data collected in the study, and presents the emergent themes evident within the data.

#### **Participant Demographics**

Eight subjects were interviewed in this study. All were current or former CAOs of four-year, publicly funded universities that met the research sample criteria identified in the previous chapter. Each subject corresponds with a unique university throughout six states within CASE Districts I, II, III, V, and VI. Seven subjects were CAOs of advancement departments internal to a university, and the remaining was CAO of an external university foundation. Each subject's experience as a CAO is presented in Table 1.

Table 1			
Research Subject Experience as CAO			
Subject	Years in Current CAO Position	Years as CAO	Years in Advancement Field
1	5	19	20
2	1	1	23
3	4	4	23
4	2	2	24
5	1	1	14
6	2	15	19
7	4	4	12
8	2	2	3

All subjects occupied their current CAO position for between one and five years. Six subjects had between one and four years of experience as a CAO, and the remaining two subjects had between 15 – 19 years of CAO experience. Experience in the advancement field ranged from 3 – 24 years, with an average of 17 years. Seven of eight subjects had 12 or more years of experience in the advancement field.

Organizational fundraising data for each subject was obtained from annual financial records provided by the subject’s corresponding university or foundation. Where possible, the researcher obtained audited financial statements prepared in accordance with Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statements No. 34 and No. 35 (Governmental Accounting Standards Board, 1999a, 1999b). Each data source is publicly accessible in either digital or print format, although annual reports for the 2020 fiscal year (FY2020) are not currently available. Annual fundraising data for each subject’s university or foundation over the past five fiscal years is presented in Table 2.

Subject	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019
1	\$4.07	\$3.56	\$2.57	\$5.61	\$4.51
2	\$3.36	\$2.55	\$6.09	\$1.70	\$1.78
3	\$3.03	\$3.55	\$5.80	\$5.42	\$3.73
4	\$8.66	\$3.56	\$4.59	\$3.57	\$4.85
5	\$2.14	\$2.67	\$4.57	\$2.21	\$3.71
6	\$4.19	\$6.08	\$5.90	\$6.64	\$9.25
7	\$9.51	\$9.28	\$5.43	\$2.38	\$7.99
8	\$5.11	\$6.23	\$5.31	\$4.61	\$6.31

*Note.* Fundraising data is shown in millions of dollars; current CAO tenure is shown with shaded gray cells.

Each subject's university reported raising between \$1 million and \$10 million during the FY2019, with an average of \$5.27 million. This performance is typical across all eight universities for fiscal years 2015 – 2019. Two subjects reported that their universities were raising funds through a comprehensive capital campaign during FY20. Notably, two subjects completed their first full year as CAO during FY2020, therefore their leadership is not reflected within the fundraising performance data shown in Table 2.

### **Data Analysis**

The findings for Research Questions 1 – 4 were derived from one-on-one interviews conducted via a videoconferencing platform. All eight subjects were interviewed at their convenience, with interviews lasting between fifteen and thirty minutes. Each subject was asked a uniform set of eight open-ended questions. Responses were grouped together and coded by the researcher based on interpreted meanings as well as repeated phrases.

### **RQ1: Effective Leadership Strategies**

As discussed in chapter two, CAOs are responsible for the overall success of fundraising organizations (Walker, 2012; Hiles, 2010). Within the field of advancement, the traditional measurement of effectiveness is total dollars raised (Walker, 2012). Other quantifiable measures relate to the work of development officers, especially through attempts to meet with donors and solicit gifts (Hiles, 2010). Additionally, the effectiveness of integrating alumni engagement with development operations can be evaluated through both quantitative and qualitative measurements (van Nostrand, 2003; Stevick, 2010). To explore effective CAO leadership strategies, the following research question was proposed:

RQ1: What are effective leadership strategies for CAOs within their fundraising departments?

Research Question 1 was addressed through Interview Questions 1 and 2. Interview Question 1 specifically asked how CAOs gauge effectiveness:

IQ1: How do you determine the effectiveness of your fundraising staff as a whole?

Similar responses emerged within participants' answers and were grouped together by phrases and interpreted meanings. Responses to IQ1 are presented in Table 3.

Table 3	
Responses to IQ1	
Response	Frequency (n=8)
Effectiveness determined through metrics	8
Metrics tracked dollars raised by entire team	5
Metrics for entire team	5
Progress toward goals is tracked regularly	3
Metrics tracked dollars raised by individual	2
Metrics did not track dollars raised by individual	2
Metrics for CAO	2
Metrics for alumni engagement	2
Board involved in setting goals	2

### **Emergent Theme 1: Measure Effectiveness with Performance Metrics**

An emergent theme for RQ1 is apparent within responses to IQ1. Table 3 shows that all eight subjects measured effectiveness with performance metrics. Furthermore, five subjects indicated that metrics were used to measure the effectiveness of the entire fundraising team. Five subjects indicated that metrics were used to track the entire team's total fundraising performance, with four of these subjects indicated both responses. Only two subjects tracked dollars raised by individual fundraisers. These responses indicate that all subjects measure effectiveness through performance metrics, and that six subjects measure the effectiveness of the entire fundraising team through performance metrics. Relevant responses which demonstrate this theme include the following:

IQ1: How do you determine the effectiveness of your fundraising staff as a whole?

Subject 3: We have a fiscal year that runs July 1 to June 30 and we set annual goals for performance. We base that on visits, on new donor prospects that are brought into the pool, on the number of proposals that they will put out in that year, the number of total personal visits made, and we do not base it on a dollar goal, but we have a cumulative goal that the team reaches for. Those metrics are reviewed quarterly.

Subject 7: So we use, there's 2 ways we use to evaluate the staff as a whole. The first is goal achievement as it relates to university priorities, as established in our current comprehensive campaign. We have different fundraising and engagement goals within those plans that are in support of strategic initiatives across the university. That would be the primary means of evaluating effectiveness, and that's pretty quantitative. So we can measure exactly how many dollars we've raised against a particular goal or initiative.

Then there's a set of qualitative data that we track with our fundraising staff, and that really has to do with their relationships that they both identify and nurture over a given set period of time. So those would be the two, qualitative and quantitative, and then we get into different levels, but again the big one on the quantitative is the fundraising, just total dollars to goal, and the second one and the qualitative one, the types of relationships our fundraisers have.

Interview Question 2 asked CAOs about leadership strategies for fundraising staff:

IQ2: What leadership strategies do you use with the fundraising staff in your department?

Similar responses emerged within participants' answers and were grouped together by phrases and interpreted meanings. The findings from IQ1 are presented in Table 4.

Table 4	
Responses to IQ2	
Response	Frequency (n=8)
Coaching style of leadership	3
Lead by example	3
CAO accountability	3
CAO transparency	3
CAO communication	3
Progress toward goals is tracked regularly	3
Empowerment style of leadership	2
CAO motivates staff	2
Tiered organizational structure	2
Team building	2

### **Emergent Theme 2: Set and Communicate Clear Expectations**

A cluster of responses related to setting and communicating expectations reveals a second emergent theme for RQ1. Three subjects employed transparency, and three subjects advocated for clear communication. In all, four subjects indicated using a leadership strategy of setting and communicating clear standards for a fundraising team. Relevant responses demonstrating this theme include the following:

IQ2: What leadership strategies do you use with the fundraising staff in your department?

Subject 3: I do my own fundraising as well and so I try to show them what success looks like and what I expect of them through my own behaviors and work with donors. I think excellent communication is very important. I have daily communication with all of them and weekly meetings.

Subject 4: I think absolute transparency is one of the things I've focused on in the last 2 years. Being transparent in what my expectations are, but not only what expectations I have, but why I have them. I'm very clear with our fundraising staff what my conversations have been with the president, with other vice presidents, with the deans, so that nobody's caught off guard by what I'm asking and also so nobody thinks this is just something in my head that I'm coming up with. If it's something in my head that I'm making up, then I'll tell them that and why I think it's a good idea. For the most part I try to be very transparent and very supportive. I think it's a benefit that I've been in their position so that they know I know I understand the positives and negatives of what I'm asking them to do.

### **Emergent Theme 3: Regularly Review Performance Metrics**

CAOs regularly monitor performance metrics and track progress toward organizational goals. Four subjects indicated this in responses to IQ1 and IQ2, revealing a third emergent theme for RQ1. Relevant responses which demonstrate this theme include the following:

**IQ1: How do you determine the effectiveness of your fundraising staff as a whole?**

**Subject 2:** Metrics for team and staff. From gift officers to annual giving. Board helps set overall goals and sees results, but not at the individual level. Monthly reports on progress toward metrics. Metrics for leadership as well.

**Subject 3:** We have a fiscal year that runs July 1 to June 30 and we set annual goals for performance. We base that on visits, new on new donor prospects that are brought into the pool, on the number of proposals that they will put out in that year, the number of total personal visits made, and we do not base it on a dollar goal, but we have a cumulative goal that the team reaches for. Those metrics are reviewed quarterly.

**IQ2: What leadership strategies do you use with the fundraising staff in your department?**

**Subject 5:** We basically meet very frequently and we have a very open door policy. We go over our portfolios on about a quarterly basis to evaluate visits and who needs to be visited, and future actions that need to be taken with various constituents. We keep a close look on any outstanding asks or anyone who hasn't been reached out to, to make sure that we're touching base. So I keep a good handle as far as taking a look at all of our metrics, and where our frontline fundraisers are spending their time and reaching out, particularly right now, calling everyone in their portfolios, making sure they've touched base with them, check in with them and so forth. From a leadership standpoint, it's just making sure you know what your development officers are doing and checking the metrics to see how often they're visiting with people, checking in with people, and then helping to guide them on different ways to engage donors.

**Subject 6:** I am one that, now I have a kind of young and inexperienced staff, so I'm more hands on than normal. However, my leadership style is very much an empowerment style. It is "you have a job to do, here's the matrix, go do it." As vice president at a small state university, they wear you out. They have to be independently responsible...

Fundraisers, if you don't trust them, get rid of them. Because fundraisers are meant to be on the road, they're meant to be out. So when I hire them, and see that's the other thing, if you have a matrix where you track the results, then they can't flub on this. If they're lying about it, I'll know. It may take a year, but after a year if you're not seeing dollars coming in, then you have a problem. So if you have this matrix then you

can empower them to go do their job. So what we do is meet in a moves management meeting every two weeks.

### **RQ2: Leadership Strategies for Institutional Goals**

The CAO occupies a powerful position within the institution. As discussed in chapter two, the CAO manages an advancement department, sits on the university's executive leadership cabinet, and serves as the primary fundraising partner of the university president (Chan, 2016; Sturgis, 2006). The CAO assists with strategic planning initiatives and organizes fundraising priorities to align with the president's vision. The following research question was proposed to explore how CAOs achieved these both internally within the advancement department and externally throughout the university:

RQ 2: How are leadership strategies used by CAOs aligned with institution-level goals?

Research Question 2 was addressed through Interview Questions 3 and 4. IQ3 asked subjects to consider how the CAO influence the goals of the university throughout the institution.

IQ3: How do you as the Chief Advancement Officer influence the institutional-level goals?

Similar responses emerged within participants' answers and were grouped together by phrases and interpreted meanings. Responses to IQ3 are presented in Table 5.

Table 5	
Responses to IQ3	
Response	Frequency (n=8)
Influences university leaders	6
Use of strategic planning	5
Development goals aligned with university	5
Executive capacity	3
Executive cabinet	2
Influences external audiences	2
Donor-centered	2
Use of operational planning	1
Departmental structure	1

Three prominent responses to IQ4 emerged from the data. Six CAOs indicated influencing other university leaders. Additionally, five CAOs indicated that development departmental goals were aligned with university goals. Some of these responses were repeated within answers to IQ4. IQ4 asked subjects how the CAO address institutional goals through departmental leadership.

IQ4: How do your departmental leadership strategies address institutional-level goals?

Similar responses emerged within participants' answers and were grouped together by phrases and interpreted meanings. Responses to IQ4 are presented in Table 6.

Table 6	
Responses to IQ4	
Response	Frequency (n=7)
Departmental structure	4
Adaptability	3
Development goals aligned with university	3
Use of strategic planning	2
Use of operational planning	2
Partner with Marketing & Communications	2
Influences external audiences	2
Donor-centered	2
Development goals not aligned with university	1
Performance metrics	1
Importance of relationships	1
<i>Note.</i> IQ4 responses from Subject 2 were not captured during data collection.	

#### **Emergent Theme 4: Strategic Planning Shapes University Goals and Priorities**

An emergent theme for RQ2 is apparent within responses to IQ3 and IQ4. Strategic planning is mentioned by six of eight subjects across the two questions. These responses indicate that most subjects use strategic planning to help shape university goals and priorities at the institutional level. Relevant responses which demonstrate this theme include the following:

**IQ3:** How do you as the Chief Advancement Officer influence the institutional-level goals?

**Subject 1:** I was probably in a little different position, mainly because I was entrusted by the president to oversee the strategic planning process for the university. Not every chief advancement officer has that opportunity, so I probably was in a somewhat unique position...

So the advancement officer should always make sure that both strategic and operational planning are occurring at the institutional level. I think that's the important part for any chief advancement officer, to make sure the process is happening.

Subject 4: Because what we've tried to establish are strategic development initiatives. Working with each dean, working with other non-academic departments like career services, student success, and those areas, student affairs, we tried to establish strategic development initiatives for each of those areas we would help support...

So we are in the process right now of creating, of really buckling down and working with them more on these strategic development initiatives as we look toward going into another campaign.

IQ4: How do your departmental leadership strategies address institutional-level goals?

Subject 7: We really require each department to, let me back it up. We work under, currently we work under a 7-year comprehensive campaign plan for the foundation. That campaign plan was established by the university leadership and foundation leadership.

### **Emergent Theme 5: CAOs Influence University Leaders**

The influence of the CAO extends beyond the advancement department and affects other university leaders. Responses to IQ3 from six subjects indicate influencing university president, deans, and other leaders, especially regarding the role of philanthropy in shaping university priorities. Of these six subjects, two were members of the president's cabinet. Relevant responses which demonstrate this theme include the following:

IQ3: How do you as the Chief Advancement Officer influence the institutional-level goals?

Subject 2: Sits at senior leadership table, this is a big impact on shaping those goals.

Subject 3: I am a direct report to the President and that's a big help.

Subject 5: I think one of the ways you do that as an advancement leader is that you're able to interface with constituents and find out what they are wanting to support. By coming back to the university and saying, here's some areas that donors are very interested in, then we help to shape some of the academic programming at times, and also just where the university might focus some of its energy.

Subject 7: What we're trying to do on campus is really work with our leadership on campus to understand what private philanthropy and corporate support can mean to the institution, and many of our faculty staff understand that, and then freeing up time for our deans, and our leadership teams to actually engage in that. Engage in case building, engage in strategic planning, and then actually engaging with donors, that's been a challenge...

So we try to keep it very grass roots in its nature. We have those liaisons, and we have a consultant come in and work with our deans

and we've done some in-house workshops. We've also sent a number of our deans to advancement resource trainings. And then we try to, internally, really develop that sense of philanthropy.

### **Emergent Theme 6: University Goals Drive Advancement Goals**

Research subjects repeatedly mention that departmental goals and priorities are driven by university goals and priorities. This theme for RQ2 is apparent in responses to IQ3 and IQ4.

Relevant responses which demonstrate this theme include the following:

**IQ3: How do you as the Chief Advancement Officer influence the institutional-level goals?**

**Subject 1:** Mainly because in the end, the advancement office raises money based off the goals of the institution. Well if the institution isn't having annual goals or strategic goals, then what do you raise money for? I never wanted it to be that the advancement office was coming up with, "oh well we'll go raise money for this or that." It shouldn't be like that. The university should come up with what its goals are, and once its determined goals, then the advancement office should say, well how can we raise money for these particular goals?

**Subject 2:** Money must flow towards university priorities, which must be regularly set and reviewed.

**Subject 3:** We try to find the exact perfect donor to match the exact need on campus and drive projects that way.

**Subject 5:** The university gives us their goals and we seek funding for those as well.

**IQ4: How do your departmental leadership strategies address institutional-level goals?**

**Subject 1:** I guess my leadership approach is, firstly, is pretty much operational planning. We're going to look at what the institutional goals are, and based off of those goals, we're going to determine departmental goals. For me it was development, alumni, and marketing communications. Development will say what are the goals of the institutions, how do we fit in, clearly we'll be raising money for that particular area. Alumni looks at it saying we'll mobilize our alumni base, that's how alumni will fit in. Finally marketing communications looking at it for their goals.

**Subject 3:** Major gift officers are constituent-based and have focuses across the campus in various ways. We try to always keep in the forefront that what we do has to impact them in a positive way and fit in with their goals and mission. Sometimes we have donors who have ideas that don't necessarily fit in with the current goals of that area. We try to use negotiation as a means to emphasize the potential impact, especially if donors can align with the needs of the university and the university has to give a little bit in some ways to help align with the donor's goals of

philanthropy. I think we use negotiation a lot to ensure we're fulfilling goals and setting goals from the top down and prioritizing in each constituent area to try to impact the students as much as possible.

### **RQ3: Contributing Factors of Effective Development**

Ultimately, the philanthropic support of donors serves as an endorsement of the university's leadership and vision. As explored in chapter two, the CAO and university president encourage donor willingness by shaping the institutional vision and priorities, building donor relationships, and securing philanthropic gifts (Satterwhite and Cedja, 2011; Walker, 2012; Sturgis, 2006; Murray, 2008). CAOs are responsible for building and enhancing a culture of giving in their departments and universities, and the president's endorsement of this culture contributes to its success (Walker, 2012). Among the results of these responsibilities, CAOs are expected to achieve the university's fundraising goals. The following research question was proposed to explore contributing factors of effective fundraising:

RQ3: What factors affect fundraising performance?

Interview Questions 5 and 6 specifically asked research subjects to identify these factors.

IQ5: What factors internal to your institution affect your department's fundraising performance?

The results of IQ5 are displayed in Table 7.

Table 7	
Responses to IQ5: Internal Limitations to Fundraising	
Response	Frequency (n=8)
Budget constraints	4
University leadership	4
Impact of philanthropy	2
UP/CAO partnership	2
Staff limitations	1
Institutional expectations	1
Campus culture	1
University vision	1

Four subjects identified that resource limitations, such as budget constraints or limited staff sizes, were internal limitations to fundraising success. A cluster of five subjects spoke to internal challenges regarding the perception of university leadership or the partnership between the CAO and university president.

The results of IQ6 are displayed in Table 8.

Table 8	
Responses to IQ6: External Limitations to Fundraising	
Response	Frequency (n=8)
Economic climate	5
Current events	4
University reputation	3
Donor willingness	3
Awareness of philanthropy	3
Perception of state funding	3
Leadership reputation	2

Six subjects indicated that current events and the economic climate affect as external factors which affect fundraising performance. The external reputation of a university and its

leadership was mentioned by three subjects. Four subjects also directly identified donor willingness to give as an external factor which affects fundraising performance.

### **Emergent Theme 7: Donor Willingness Affects Fundraising Performance**

An emergent theme appeared in responses to IQ 5 and IQ6 from all eight subjects. All subjects indicated that the overall willingness of donors to give affects the university's fundraising performance. Relevant responses which demonstrate this emergent theme include the following:

**IQ5:** What factors internal to your institution affect your department's fundraising performance?

**Subject 7:** If we have that compelling vision that people see themselves as being able to be a part of, then I think we probably have the recipe in place, we've got the right leadership in place, if the institution isn't in a crisis, per se, and we've got the right vision, I think those three things can greatly influence the people's ability to invest in the organization.

**IQ6:** What factors external to your institution affect your department's fundraising performance?

**Subject 1:** Making sure we had the correct fundraising projects which were speaking to the values and passions of our donors... historically, the willingness of donors to give.

**Subject 7:** External... I would think, I've been doing this about 12 years, the biggest barriers externally typically are the economy and people's confidence in what the future's going to look like. The higher the degree of uncertainty, the greater the degree of the drop in fundraising. The level of, the level of wealth is relatively steady, it's just what are people willing to do with their assets? They need to be certain of the future or they are less likely to support at the time that you want them to support.

**Subject 8:** Our donors have lost personal wealth, they've lost jobs, they've had to direct their dollars other places, and so that hugely affects our ability to raise money.

### **Emergent Theme 8: Donor Awareness Affects Fundraising Performance**

The role of advancement plays an increasingly prominent role at every university as its challenges and expectations grow (Chan, 2016; Weerts, 2007). Universities increasingly rely on alternative sources of funding beyond state appropriations and tuition dollars, including both

donations from alumni and private supporters (Fowles, 2014; Weerts, 2007). CAOs are expected to increase donor awareness of philanthropy and communicate its impact on the university. The level of awareness affects fundraising performance. Four subjects indicated that these perceptions affected the fundraising ability of the university in response to IQ 5 and IQ6.

Relevant responses which demonstrate this theme include the following:

**IQ5: What factors internal to your institution affect your department's fundraising performance?**

**Subject 2:** Prioritize fundraising for impact. Not good enough to raise money that won't be used and just sit in an account. Share that impact through donor outreach, services, and stewardship. Show impact to donors through internal actions.

**IQ6: What factors external to your institution affect your department's fundraising performance?**

**Subject 2:** Perception among older alumni that institution is entirely state funded. No need for philanthropy. This class of donor attended when this was true – cheap and no debt. Big change maybe 15 years ago. Saying it over and over doesn't change that perception among that age group.

**Subject 4:** The more people are talking about philanthropy, planned giving, see my background's in planned giving so I'll say that, charitable support, I think all boats rise with the tide.

**Subject 5:** Legislative changes, state funding, if we get more state funding and we're doing well, then people don't think that we need money. If we get less state funding, people say, why doesn't the state support you, you're a state institution so you should have money.

### **Emergent Theme 9: Donor Perceptions Affect Fundraising Performance**

The reputation of the university and its leaders affect fundraising performance.

University leadership should be involved in fundraising at both the CAO and presidential level (Walker, 2012; Murray, 2008). The CAO and president are responsible for strategic planning, coordination of external and internal stakeholders, building effective teams, directing fundraising activities, and optimizing resource allocation for achieving fundraising goals (Satterwhite & Cedja, 2011). These actions influence internal and external perceptions of the university and its leadership. Six subjects indicated that these perceptions affected the fundraising ability of the

university in response to IQ 5 and IQ6. Relevant responses which demonstrate this theme include the following:

**IQ5:** What factors internal to your institution affect your department's fundraising performance?

**Subject 3:** Three years ago we had a major leadership challenge. We had a president that did not have a strong positive reputation, who was not visionary or goals focused. We had a vice president over our area that was equally challenging. That was a tremendous driver of negative force on our team. When you have donors who don't want to meet with university leadership, that's a problem. That was a big challenge.

I say all of that to say we have a new leadership in place, a new president, new structure, new organizational structure in that there is not a vice president in the office, we are just a direct report to the president's office. That has created a strong level of trust. This president really cares about our institution, is a graduate of our institution, that has had a tremendous positive impact on our team and our fundraisers specifically. It helps most of them want to get the work done, to meet goals, to work with the president to set goals. I think that has had a really great impact internally on our team.

**Subject 5:** Again, I can't talk about the department, but being a separate 501(c)(3), but working very closely with the university, things that have an impact are how well the president is doing, how the president is perceived by outside constituencies, whether or not the deans are considered good leaders, whether or not faculty are considered to be productive.

That will have a huge impact on donor relations with the university overall, not just within those departments but with the overall university. I think those are some of the areas that are critical to success in fundraising.

**Subject 6:** Well, leadership. I mean if the president is not prepared to make asks, if the president is not prepared to communicate with the public and to be involved in a campaign, you're not going to be successful. So leadership is important. And then leadership in my part, my part is to hire the right people, set the right tone, and put the right goals into place.

**Subject 7:** Primarily, the biggest internal factor is presidential leadership. What is the perception of the president internally and externally? That has a major impact on what is happening. I think campus culture, how are we perceived publicly? Do we feel like, does the public perceive us as moving in the right direction, as being a valuable part of the community, you know, externally. How are we perceived? University leadership and, I think, down to the next level, our Vice President for Academic Affairs, our deans, they all have to be strong leaders and people have to be willing to invest in them. So I think those are kind of the three big ones. And then I would add a fourth, do we have a vision? Right, and is it a

compelling vision, have we cast that compelling vision for the future? If we have that compelling vision that people see themselves as being able to be a part of, then I think we probably have the recipe in place, we've got the right leadership in place, if the institution isn't in a crisis, per se, and we've got the right vision, I think those three things can greatly influence the people's ability to invest in the organization.

IQ6: What factors external to your institution affect your department's fundraising performance?

Subject 1: Also perceptions of the university and even sometimes external perceptions of officials at the university.

Subject 6: Locally, how does the public view your president? How does the public view your students? How does the public view the institution as a whole? So if you have a positive, people really think you're a good education system if your students are well-behaved out in the community, if your students are doing a good job, that makes a difference. And they're more likely, businesses, foundations, and individuals are more likely to give.

Outside of the local community, I think it is reputation. You know, I was up in [City] before I came here at a small school called [small Private University]. It was a private university, well, it was in the shade of [large Private University]. [Large Private University] has a reputation around the world. All you got to do is say [large Private University] and they're throwing money at you. That's, that's PR right there. They have amazing PR because people know it's a great school, it's the best [religious] school in the country, I mean, they have all of these things. That's what it can do for you externally.

### **Emergent Theme 10: Current Events and Economic Climate**

A theme is apparent in responses to IQ6. Six subjects indicated that current events and the economic climate impact the willingness of donors to give. Relevant responses which demonstrate this theme include the following:

IQ6: What factors external to your institution affect your department's fundraising performance?

Subject 3: Right now it is a world-wide pandemic that is having a tremendous impact on what we're doing.

Our students are financially, their families are financially impacted by what we're doing. Over 45% of our student body are First-Generation college students, and so their families are falling into the demographics experiencing unemployment issues.

- Subject 5: Externally.... Current events that create a need from especially granting agencies. For instance, currently the COVID-19, in a way, funding that would normally be program and project oriented and, especially granting agencies, private foundations are focused 100% on humanitarian efforts created by COVID-19. Sometimes that's a hurricane in a certain area, or whatever that might be, those are some things that can have dramatic impact on your ability to get grants.
- Subject 7: I would think, I've been doing this about 12 years, the biggest barriers externally typically are the economy and people's confidence in what the future's going to look like. The higher the degree of uncertainty, the greater the degree of the drop in fundraising. The level of, the level of wealth is relatively steady, it's just what are people willing to do with their assets? They need to be certain of the future or they are less likely to support at the time that you want them to support.

#### **RQ4: Adaptations of Strategic Leadership**

As departmental heads, CAOs face challenges related to organizational effectiveness, including the roles of both leadership and management. As discussed in chapter 2, the scope and expectations of the CAO role have grown while the advancement field grew in complexity and importance throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Sturgis, 2006). Today, this position manages an advancement department and serves as the primary fundraising partner of the university president (Chan, 2016; Sturgis, 2006). The following research question was proposed to explore how CAOs respond to the challenges of the position:

RQ4: How do CAOs adapt to limitations on the effectiveness of strategic leadership?

Research Question 4 was explored through Interview Questions 7 and 8. These questions specifically asked research subjects about leadership challenges.

IQ7: What, if anything, limits the effectiveness of your leadership?

Responses to IQ7 are shown in Table 9.

Table 9	
Responses to IQ7: Limitations to Effective Leadership	
Response	Frequency (n=8)
Wasted time	3
Limitations of budget	2
Administrative tasks	2
Perceived limits on authority	2
Limitations of staff	1
External factors	1
Lack of communication	1
Personal strengths and weaknesses	1

Responses to IQ7 demonstrate challenges relating to both resource management and leadership capability. Four subjects indicated that challenges related to resource management, such as budget, staff limitations, or time, limited the effectiveness of leadership. Five subjects indicated other challenges broadly related to leadership capability.

IQ8: How do you compensate for limits on the effectiveness of strategic leadership?

Responses to IQ8 are shown in Table 10.

Table 10 Responses to IQ8: Adaptations to Limits on Effective Leadership	
Response	Frequency (n=8)
Effective management	4
Donor impact	3
Hard work	3
Manage time effectively	2
Advancement Skills	2
Technology improvements	1
Big picture thinking	1
Strong relationships	1
Transparency and communication	1

Responses to IQ8 indicate a mix of effective management strategies and skill competencies. The responses from six of eight subjects indicated measures taken to increase the effective management of time and staff. The responses of five subjects emphasized the importance of advancement and leadership skill competencies.

### **Emergent Theme 11: The Necessity of Effective Management**

An emergent theme appeared in responses to IQ7 and IQ7 from subjects. A total of six subjects indicated that effective management is linked to effective strategic leadership. Four subjects identified that challenges related to management, such as limited time, staff, and budgets, limited the effectiveness strategic leadership. Additionally, six subjects indicated that these challenges need to be effectively managed by CAOs. Relevant responses which demonstrate this emergent theme include the following:

IQ7: What, if anything, limits the effectiveness of your leadership?

Subject 1: Probably I would say that, day to day mundane operational issues that have a tendency to take up time and not allow a leader to sit back and see the whole picture. You can get into an activity or an event, or expectation of task, whatever it may be, and become so busy with that. I mean meetings and meetings. You get bogged down in those things and you don't step back and look at the large picture. It's very important for a

leader to sit back and look at the large picture: how are things moving, how is the entire operation occurring, are things in every area where they need to be, and sometimes when you get bogged down in the daily activities and requirements, it has a tendency to limit that.

- Subject 2: Resources, time, human talent. Never enough at current institution. Both external and internal resources were more accessible and available at [Private University] where career started.
- Subject 3: I think that budget situations limit the impact of my leadership because I have to... You can't necessarily make the best decisions for your team if you don't have the dollars you need to follow through on that. I think a limiting budget is a big factor that impacts my leadership.
- Subject 6: Paperwork. Administration. I'm a fundraiser and I came from the private university world. Then I came here to meetings. I mean, I came here and they just suck the life out of you, they want you in a meeting. I have a one on one with the president twice a week. Not only do I meet, I'm sorry, I mean I meet him one on one once a week, but then I meet him as an executive committee once a week, then I meet him as a cabinet once a week. So now I have three standing meetings with the president. And the cabinet and the EC, those can go on, they've gone upwards of three hours, easy. That's a waste of my freaking time. I need to talk to the president, I need to meet. I don't need to sit in three-hour meetings three times a week. So that's part of it.

And then, yes, we need paperwork. I'm a very flat, I've got twenty something people that work for me, and I have no middle managers. Ok? Me, and everybody else. Now I do that on purpose because I think you get more work done, because middle managers don't work. They do paperwork. Well, that means somebody has got to do it. So I'll have a secretary, or me, will have to do it. And that kind of ties me down a little bit. You know, you kind of weigh the options. Do I want more middle managers and less people out on the road, or do I want more people on the road and less middle managers? I've chosen the latter.

IQ8: How do you compensate for limits on the effectiveness of strategic leadership?

- Subject 1: I think you have to schedule time and I mean on the calendar, block out time, where you have nothing else to do for several hours. So you can sit back, think, reflect, you know, make plans or whatever it may be, and close the door so there's no interruptions. I think you have to intentionally schedule time in your calendar to provide that strategic leadership reflection time. The other thing I would say too, is and I guess this speaks to the same point, is try not to take on daily, try not to take on activities that require you to manage a project. I know that sounds like you're not doing work, but in the end, that's what managers are for, that's what directors are for, that's what your staff is for, to manage the project. I think it's important for the leader to remain separate from that. If you take

on too many projects, you get bogged down in the management of them, the daily activity of, the tasks of them. You're not leading, all you're doing is managing. I think it's important for the leader to, not that you totally don't take on any projects, but that you limit the number of actual projects you have, in order for you to sit back, see the whole picture, make sure the whole organization is working appropriately.

- Subject 3: I'll go back to that situation I was in when we did not have really great leadership. I think that you have to be even more of a strong leader of your team when you have poor leadership above you. I think that you have to manage up and manage down in a very different way when you have poor leadership in place.
- Subject 6: Oh, and second to that is technology. I've been pretty, and I'm not the most technologically savvy fellow in the world, but I've been able to upgrade our technology to where we save quite a bit of time.
- Subject 7: One of the things I've been blessed with is our ability to generate our own revenue. So our foundation has the ability, unlike other [State University system] foundations, we use our endowment management fee and our gift administration fee to primarily fund our operations along with some university support. That's been a real benefit that I had nothing to do with, I walked into it and it's just been a great tool. So that's been a compensation to what, when I hear my colleagues talk, the real challenge is staffing given our current union models. So I think that has been a challenge for others. It hasn't been a challenge for myself just because I have so much flexibility and I can hire in a different method and manage in a different method than others. That's been a real positive.

### **Emergent Theme 12: Leadership Capacity and Competence Affects Strategic**

#### **Leadership**

An emergent theme appeared in responses to IQ7 and IQ7 from subjects. A total of six subjects indicated that leadership capacity affects strategic leadership. Four subjects identified that leadership deficiencies affect the effectiveness strategic leadership. Five subjects indicated that these challenges need to be effectively overcome by CAOs. Additionally, five subjects mention competence in the advancement field. Relevant responses which demonstrate this emergent theme include the following:

IQ7: What, if anything, limits the effectiveness of your leadership?

- Subject 1: Probably I would say that, day to day mundane operational issues that have a tendency to take up time and not allow a leader to sit back and

see the whole picture. You can get into an activity or an event, or expectation of task, whatever it may be, and become so busy with that. I mean meetings and meetings. You get bogged down in those things and you don't step back and look at the large picture. It's very important for a leader to sit back and look at the large picture: how are things moving, how is the entire operation occurring, are things in every area where they need to be, and sometimes when you get bogged down in the daily activities and requirements, it has a tendency to limit that.

- Subject 3: The force of this pandemic has changed how we do business in a very short amount of time. We're trying to find our way through. I've been doing this for almost 25 years now, and when you have such a great change in such a short time, everything you thought you knew about how to lead a fundraising team has been put into question. You really are just forced to do everything different and find a new way. In some ways that's really great, and in some ways that's limiting until you can figure out what the best path forward is.
- Subject 4: I think an impact on my leadership, on my division, for the past couple of years I've been Interim Vice President. The interim part impacts the effectiveness of my leadership. I'd like to think it doesn't, but it does. Right now we're talking about what the next step is because I'm only interim for another month, but we don't, we aren't searching for anybody. So likely I'm going to continue. How do I continue? That's been an influencer of my effectiveness, not necessarily to our donors, but within the university.
- Subject 5: I think that communication has to be very robust, especially when you're an outside organization. It's difficult to lead if you don't know where you're going and try to get people to follow in a direction that you're not sure what that direction is. I think that when we have a lack of communication, I would say the same thing as having worked in a department in a university as well, communication is the key. If you don't have a strong communication plan and strong communication with your dean, it's hard to lead people.
- You have to have strong communication and you have to have a strong idea of what the overall goals are. Those goals need to stay flexible, but they also need to stay pretty permanent, at least for a while until you reach them and can move forward. Otherwise you can't lead.
- IQ8: How do you compensate for limits on the effectiveness of strategic leadership?
- Subject 1: I think you have to schedule time and I mean on the calendar, block out time, where you have nothing else to do for several hours. So you can sit back, think, reflect, you know, make plans or whatever it may be, and close the door so there's no interruptions. I think you have to intentionally schedule time in your calendar to provide that strategic leadership reflection time.

- Subject 2: Leadership is most important when it comes to fundraising – your leader must be good at this, too.
- Subject 3: I'll go back to that situation I was in when we did not have really great leadership. I think that you have to be even more of a strong leader of your team when you have poor leadership above you. I think that you have to manage up and manage down in a very different way when you have poor leadership in place. I think that it always comes back to the donor and it always comes back to the impact. You have to take everything else out of the equation. You remind your team that you work with donors to impact students. As long as you can keep the “why” on the table all of the time, despite everything else going on internal and external, that's how you have the greatest impact.
- Subject 4: Hard work. Hard work, I mean what I've tried to do over the past 2 years is build a team, and the team is doing well. Continuing to focus on the people that work with me and for me has been, has allowed us to continue to move forward in our efforts, even though we're not quite as strategic as we should be as a university. So hard work, transparency, communication, in all respects is an important factor in overcoming those limitations.
- Subject 7: So from a compensation standpoint, I think that the only other thing maybe just going back to your question 7 is just people's level of awareness of philanthropy at the public university, and why it's so important. So I think that's been the challenge and I think, answering that in one of your previous questions, we really just have to make the case and build relationships with people. Which is just basic advancement work, making our case and building relationships, and moving up people's philanthropic interest scale. I think that's how we would compensate for that.

## Summary

The researcher used individual interviews and document review to collect the data for this study. Eight Chief Advancement Officers (CAOs) of similar four-year, publicly funded universities participated in interviews for this study. Twelve themes emerged from the research data: 1) effectiveness is measured with performance metrics; 2) set and communicate clear expectations; 3) regularly review progress toward goals; 4) strategic planning shapes university goals and priorities; 5) CAOs influence university leaders; 6) CAOs use authority to align departmental goals with university goals; 7) donor willingness affects fundraising performance; 8) donor awareness affects fundraising performance; 9) perceptions of the university and its

leaders affect fundraising performance; 10) economic climate and current events affect fundraising performance; 11) effective management contributes to strategic leadership; and 12) leadership capacity affects strategic leadership. The research questions and emergent themes for this study are summarized in Table 11. Chapter four presented relevant demographic data and the objective findings of this study. Chapter five contains a discussion of the results, comparisons to literature and the theoretical framework, implications for advancement leaders, and recommendations for future research.

Table 11	
Summary of Emergent Themes	
Research Question	Emergent Theme
RQ 1: What are effective leadership strategies for CAOs within their fundraising departments?	1. Effectiveness is measured with performance metrics 2. Set and communicate clear expectations 3. Regularly review performance metrics
RQ 2: How are leadership strategies used by CAOs aligned with institution-level goals?	4. Strategic planning shapes university goals and priorities 5. CAOs influence university leaders 6. University goals drive advancement goals
RQ 3: What factors contribute to the effectiveness of strategic leadership?	7. Donor willingness to give 8. Donor awareness of philanthropy 9. Perceptions of university and leadership 10. Economic climate and current events
RQ 4: How do CAOs adapt to limitations on the effectiveness of strategic leadership?	11. Effective management 12. Leadership capacity

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This research study explored leadership strategies used by Chief Advancement Officers (CAOs) at four-year, publicly funded universities. Earlier chapters introduced the study, reviewed relevant literature, and provided the methodology. The previous chapter described participant demographic information, analyzed data collected in the study, and summarized the findings through emergent themes. This chapter reintroduces the purpose of the study and discusses the findings in relation to the theoretical framework. Finally, it offers conclusions from the research, leadership implications, and areas for further research.

The purpose of this study is to determine effective leadership strategies for CAOs at four-year, publicly funded universities. Research questions examined the roles, actions, and decisions of CAOs within fundraising departments and throughout the overall university.

Questions researched in this study are:

RQ 1: What are effective leadership strategies for CAOs within their fundraising departments?

RQ 2: How are leadership strategies used by CAOs aligned with institution-level goals?

RQ 3: What factors contribute to the effectiveness of strategic leadership?

RQ 4: How do CAOs adapt to limitations on the effectiveness of strategic leadership?

This qualitative study interviewed eight individual CAOs of similar four-year, public universities. Each subject was treated individually. Data from individual interview transcripts were analyzed through the theoretical framework of Strategic Leadership Theory and in relation to the research questions in this study. Twelve themes emerged from the research data: 1) effectiveness is measured with performance metrics; 2) set and communicate clear expectations; 3) regularly review progress toward goals; 4) strategic planning shapes university goals and

priorities; 5) CAOs influence university leaders; 6) CAOs use authority to align departmental goals with university goals; 7) donor willingness affects fundraising performance; 8) donor awareness affects fundraising performance; 9) perceptions of the university and its leaders affect fundraising performance; 10) economic climate and current events affect fundraising performance; 11) effective management contributes to strategic leadership; and 12) leadership capacity affects strategic leadership. These themes are discussed in relation to the literature and theoretical framework in the following section.

## **Discussion**

### **Measuring Effectiveness**

Effective CAOs set and communicate clear expectations with fundraising staff members. While all eight subjects agree that effectiveness is measured through performance metrics, four also mention transparency and clear communication when sharing expectations and goals with fundraising staff. Subject 4's response best demonstrates this emergent theme:

IQ2: What leadership strategies do you use with the fundraising staff in your department?

Subject 4: I think absolute transparency is one of the things I've focused on in the last two years. Being transparent in what my expectations are, but not only what expectations I have, but why I have them.

Strategies of clear communication and setting goals are widely supported by organizational leadership and psychology literature. Locke *et al.* (1981) found that specific and challenging goals contribute to higher performance than goals which are easy, vague, or hard to define. Ahmed *et al.* (2010) suggest that managers influence employees through communication and that communication is an effective strategy for achieving organizational goals (p. 74). Beslin & Reddin (2004) found that effective communication from organizational leadership builds trust and creates shared values with employees and stakeholders. Setting specific goals and clearly communicating expectations is an effective leadership strategy for CAOs.

Furthermore, effective CAOs regularly monitor progress toward organizational goals. Four subjects routinely monitor progress towards goals through regular reports and meetings. Rather than only relying on annual reviews, these subjects mention bimonthly, monthly, or quarterly progress reviews. Subject 6's response best demonstrates this emergent theme:

IQ2: What leadership strategies do you use with the fundraising staff in your department?

Subject 6: We go over our portfolios on about a quarterly basis to evaluate visits and who needs to be visited, and future actions that need to be taken with various constituents. We keep a close look on any outstanding asks or anyone who hasn't been reached out to, to make sure that we're touching base. So I keep a good handle as far as taking a look at all of our metrics, and where our frontline fundraisers are spending their time and reaching out, particularly right now, calling everyone in their portfolios, making sure they've touched base with them, check in with them and so forth. From a leadership standpoint, it's just making sure you know what your development officers are doing and checking the metrics to see how often they're visiting with people, checking in with people, and then helping to guide them on different ways to engage donors.

This strategy is supported in literature. A meta-analysis of 138 studies by Harkin *et al.* (2016) found that monitoring goal progress is an effective management strategy and that increasing frequencies of evaluation are linked to higher occurrences of desired outcomes. Regularly monitoring progress toward goals is an effective leadership strategy for CAOs.

The primary goal of a CAO is to increase external financial support for a university, and the principal measurement is the total amount of dollars raised (Walker, 2012). Effective CAOs meet performance objectives through goal setting, clear communication, and regular progress monitoring. These leadership strategies contribute to organizational success and align with strategic leadership actions identified by Boal & Hooijberg (2001), including 1) developing key competencies and capabilities; 2) developing organizational controls, structures, and processes; and 3) effective management practices (p. 516). Furthermore, the ability to influence and motivate staff toward goal achievement is an element of managerial wisdom, a crucial component of strategic leadership effectiveness (p. 534). Therefore, the researcher concludes

that communicating expectations and assessing progress are critical leadership strategies for CAOs to ensure that organizational fundraising goals are met.

### **Influence and Authority**

Effective CAOs elevate the role of philanthropy by influencing university leadership. Six of eight subjects identified that strategic planning is used to set goals for the university. The same six subjects also mention using influence to shape institutional priorities, especially regarding the role of philanthropy throughout the university. Subject 7's response best illustrates this emergent theme:

IQ3: How do you as the Chief Advancement Officer influence the institutional-level goals?

Subject 7: What we're trying to do on campus is really work with our leadership on campus to understand what private philanthropy and corporate support can mean to the institution, and many of our faculty staff understand that, and then freeing up time for our deans, and our leadership teams to actually engage in that. Engage in case building, engage in strategic planning, and then actually engaging with donors, that's been a challenge...

So we try to keep it very grass roots in its nature. We have those liaisons, and we have a consultant come in and work with our deans and we've done some in-house workshops. We've also sent a number of our deans to advancement resource trainings. And then we try to, internally, really develop that sense of philanthropy.

This behavior is encouraged in literature on both the CAO role and strategic leadership. Walker (2012) found that successful CAOs partner with the university president on fundraising, involve academic deans in the fundraising process, and prepare university leadership for successful fundraising. Rowe (2001) suggests that strategic leaders use influence to encourage others to make everyday decisions which enhance organizations in the long term, and that a combination of managerial leadership and visionary leadership styles enables the strategic leader to affect organizational performance by focusing on both short-term priorities and long-term visions. Additionally, Subject 7's response is indicative of the capacity to learn at both the

individual and organizational level, an essential component of strategic leadership (Boal & Hooijberg, 2001; Cohen & Levinthal, 1990).

The CAO is an influential and visible figure within the institution. This figure is a member of the executive leadership cabinet, is often involved in long-term and strategic planning, and a supportive partner to deans and other vice presidents. As an integral member of university leadership, effective CAOs utilize influence throughout the institution to ensure that philanthropy remains a focus of strategic plans and priorities.

Furthermore, effective CAOs use authority to ensure that strategic goals are met by aligning advancement department goals and priorities with those of the university. Five of eight subjects refer to a strategy of alignment and agree that operational planning is driven by the strategic planning process. Subject 1's response best demonstrates this emergent theme:

IQ4: How do your departmental leadership strategies address institutional-level goals?

Subject 1: I guess my leadership approach is, firstly, is pretty much operational planning. We're going to look at what the institutional goals are, and based off of those goals, we're going to determine departmental goals. For me it was development, alumni, and marketing communications. Development will say what are the goals of the institutions, how do we fit in, clearly we'll be raising money for that particular area. Alumni looks at it saying we'll mobilize our alumni base, that's how alumni will fit in. Finally marketing communications looking at it for their goals.

A strategy of aligning departmental goals with institutional goals is consistent with literature on leadership roles in university fundraising. Kinnison & Ferrin (1989) refer to the CAO as an institutional leader and suggest that fundraising activities are deliberate and aligned with the institutional strategic plan. Satterwhite & Cedja (2005) found that the goals of the fundraising process must be consistent with the university's strategic plan. The CAO uses authority to ensure the success of this alignment within the advancement department. The CAO encourages operational planning, directs staff to carry plans out, and drives performance by monitoring progress toward established goals. As the department often includes fundraisers,

marketing and communications, alumni relations, and other external affairs, the CAO has wide latitude to ensure that the entire staff focuses on specific departmental goals and broader institutional goals. Effective CAOs use authority to ensure that these goals are aligned and achieved.

The CAO occupies a powerful position within the institution and is ultimately responsible for the success of fundraising efforts which support the president's vision and university's strategic plan. The CAO shapes institutional priorities and aligns advancement goals with those of the university. Therefore, the researcher concludes that effective CAOs use influence and authority to ensure that fundraising activities lead to institutional success.

### **External Factors Contribute to Effective Fundraising**

This research found that a variety of external factors affect fundraising results. Although RQ3 focused on factors affecting leadership, IQ 5 and IQ6 generated emergent themes related to factors affecting fundraising performance. Given that all eight subjects are CAOs, perhaps this group equates effective leadership with fundraising success. All subjects agree that the overall willingness of donors to give affects fundraising performance, and four subjects mention that the level of awareness of philanthropy affects fundraising performance. Subject 2's response best demonstrates this emergent theme:

**IQ6:** What factors external to your institution affect your department's fundraising performance?

**Subject 5:** Legislative changes, state funding, if we get more state funding and we're doing well, then people don't think that we need money. If we get less state funding, people say, why doesn't the state support you, you're a state institution so you should have money.

This theme is somewhat supported in the literature. McAlexander *et al.* (2014) found that higher alumni affinity is a stronger indicator of a donor making a financial gift than prior giving history or donor wealth. As Brennan (2011) found, public university CAOs value financial gifts

made by alumni more than alumni volunteer participation. Advancement departments rely on philanthropic support to meet the needs of the university. CAOs are expected to continually increase the level of philanthropic support, especially from alumni and other large external benefactors. Therefore, effective CAOs ensure that the university and its leadership broadly communicate both philanthropic needs and impacts.

Perceptions of the university and its leadership also affects fundraising performance. Six of eight subjects mention that the reputation of a university affect the willingness of donors to give. Subject 7's response best conveys this emergent theme:

IQ5: What factors internal to your institution affect your department's fundraising performance?

Subject 7: Primarily, the biggest internal factor is presidential leadership. What is the perception of the president internally and externally? That has a major impact on what is happening. I think campus culture, how are we perceived publicly? Do we feel like, does the public perceive us as moving in the right direction, as being a valuable part of the community, you know, externally. How are we perceived? University leadership and, I think, down to the next level, our Vice President for Academic Affairs, our deans, they all have to be strong leaders and people have to be willing to invest in them. So I think those are kind of the three big ones.

This theme is supported in the literature on CAO actions and roles. Satterwhite & Cedja (2011) identify executive leadership activities which contribute to perceptions of a university and its leaders, including internal and external stakeholder management. Walker (2012) and Murray (2008) found that fundraising partnerships between CAOs and university presidents lead to greater fundraising performance. CAOs can increase fundraising performance by building visible fundraising partnerships with university leaders and working to increase the reputation of the university. Therefore, the researcher concludes that effective CAOs improve fundraising performance by increasing both donor awareness of philanthropic institutional priorities and donor confidence in the institution's leadership ability.

### **Effective Management is Linked to Strategic Leadership**

This research found that effective departmental management contributes to effective strategic leadership. Six of eight subjects indicated that as leaders, CAOs must be able to manage the department's limited resources, including staff time, staff ability, and the overall budget. Subject 1's response best demonstrates this emergent theme:

IQ8: How do you compensate for limits on the effectiveness of strategic leadership?

Subject 1: I think you have to intentionally schedule time in your calendar to provide that strategic leadership reflection time. The other thing I would say too, is and I guess this speaks to the same point, is try not to take on daily, try not to take on activities that require you to manage a project. I know that sounds like you're not doing work, but in the end, that's what managers are for, that's what directors are for, that's what your staff is for, to manage the project. I think it's important for the leader to remain separate from that. If you take on too many projects, you get bogged down in the management of them, the daily activity of, the tasks of them. You're not leading, all you're doing is managing. I think it's important for the leader to, not that you totally don't take on any projects, but that you limit the number of actual projects you have, in order for you to sit back, see the whole picture, make sure the whole organization is working appropriately.

This theme is somewhat supported in literature on CAO leadership roles and responsibilities. Walker (2012) suggests that successful CAOs build productive teams and are good managers. Satterwhite & Cedja (2005) found that effective advancement operations and campaign success cannot be achieved without sufficient levels of human and financial resources. Additionally, this theme is present in Boal & Hooijberg's (2001) list of strategic leadership activities, including developing key competencies and capabilities, and managing multiple constituencies. This research study does not imply that strategic leaders must be managers, only that effective management is necessary for effective strategic leadership. Where subjects fulfill roles as both managers and leaders, a compromise appears between effective management and effective leadership. Therefore, the researcher concludes that effective departmental management is a prerequisite of effective strategic advancement leadership.

## **Leadership Capacity and Competence**

Effective CAOs demonstrate high levels of leadership capacity, the level of ability that exists at the present, as well as competence in higher education advancement. The role of CAO brings many challenges, both internally within the departmental and university demands, and externally with donor and public engagement. Six of eight subjects mention challenges related to leadership capacity in the role of CAO. Five subjects mention the command of advancement skills and This theme of leadership capacity and competence is best demonstrated by Subject 4's response:

IQ7: What, if anything, limits the effectiveness of your leadership?

Subject 4: I think an impact on my leadership, on my division, for the past couple of years I've been Interim Vice President. The interim part impacts the effectiveness of my leadership. I'd like to think it doesn't, but it does. Right now we're talking about what the next step is because I'm only interim for another month, but we don't, we aren't searching for anybody. So likely I'm going to continue. How do I continue? That's been an influencer of my effectiveness, not necessarily to our donors, but within the university. So I have our foundation board members very supportive of me, so is the president, so are people on campus, but just being short term is a limiting factor to my ability to lead the division. It's not stopped me from doing anything, because I have done a lot – added staff, gone from Banner to Raisers Edge database that we're just finishing up right now, so you can overcome those limitations by continuing to work hard, but it hasn't made it any easier.

The theme of leadership capacity is apparent in relevant CAO literature. Walker (2012) identified a lack of leadership at the CAO and presidential level as a barrier to fundraising success. Sturgis (2006) found that leadership in the advancement department is important for fundraising success. Strategic Leadership Theory literature is clear that an individual's skills, leadership style, cognitive ability, and personal experiences are important components of leadership capability (Boal & Hooijberg, 2001; Cannella & Monroe, 1997; Finkelstein & Hambrick 1996). In this leadership role, CAOs are involved in team building, goal setting, communication, and organizational decision making. Advancement leaders must be capable of

leading a team to success, both internally as the leader of the fundraising team and externally as a member of the institutional leadership team. Additionally, an effective CAO possesses a command of advancement operational knowledge, prerequisite fundraising experience, and leadership ability commensurate with the role. Therefore, the researcher concludes that effective CAOs demonstrate a high level of leadership capacity and competence in the advancement field.

### **Conclusions and Leadership Implications**

Given the fundraising responsibility of university advancement leaders, there is a need to research the leadership strategies which lead to successful fundraising. The purpose of this study is to determine effective leadership strategies for CAOs at four-year, public universities.

Answers to the research questions suggest effective leadership and management strategies for advancement leaders. Based on the results of this study, the researcher draws the following conclusions.

Effective CAOs ensure organizational fundraising goals are met by communicating clear expectations and assessing both progress and performance. This conclusion answers RQ 1 by providing an effective leadership strategy for CAOs and managers of fundraising teams. Teams need fundraising and other performance goals, and these expectations need to be clearly communicated by the leader to all members. Feedback and mutual understanding are important aspects of communication, and team leaders facilitate this process by regularly reviewing progress toward team goals and expectations. Finally, the overall effectiveness of the team, its members, and its leadership should be measured through performance metrics and evaluations. Advancement leaders should use the combination of these three steps to maximize the effectiveness and performance of fundraising staff.

Effective CAOs use influence and authority to ensure that fundraising activities contribute to institutional success. This conclusion answers RQ 2 by providing two key strategies for fundraising leaders in a position of power within an organization. First, leaders elevate core fundraising competencies throughout the organization by influencing its leadership. This should be done either through formal processes such as long-term and strategic planning, or through informal channels such as close working relationships with the university administration and other leaders of similar rank. Second, leaders should use authority to ensure that departmental success contributes to organizational success. The department's goals are made in tandem with those of the university, and a leader should ensure that these aligned goals are achieved through teamwork. Advancement leaders should use the powers of influence and authority to maximize the effectiveness of the team and its leadership.

Effective CAOs improve fundraising performance by increasing donor awareness of philanthropic priorities and by increasing donor confidence in institutional leadership. This conclusion answers RQ 3 and offers several suggestions for CAOs and fundraising professionals. All fundraisers are responsible for increasing the overall willingness of all levels of donors to give. In addition to helping establish institutional philanthropic priorities, advancement leaders should ensure that all branches of the advancement department aid in increasing awareness of these priorities and needs. Finally, advancement leaders should work to increase internal and external perceptions of the university and its leadership. To improve fundraising performance, effective advancement leaders need to increase the overall willingness of donors to give.

Effective CAOs demonstrate a high level of leadership capacity and are competent advancement professionals. This conclusion provides an answer to RQ 4. Leaders need both managerial wisdom and a broad base of knowledge and experience in the field. Leaders are

responsible for team building, training, motivation, and, ultimately, for performance. The work of institutional advancement is a team effort, and the team must be able to efficiently work together toward common goals under the leader's direction. Leadership capacity is necessary for directing the fundraising team to success, and competence is necessary for educating and coaching team members with the required knowledge and skills. Effective advancement leaders need both a command of advancement skills and the leadership capacity required for ensuring the fundraising team's high performance.

Finally, effective management is a prerequisite for effective strategic leadership. This conclusion provides an additional answer to RQ 4. Advancement leaders should be able to understand the separate roles requires for departmental leadership and institutional leadership. This research did not find that skilled strategic leaders must be skilled personnel managers. Instead, it indicates that effective management must be in place for effective strategic leadership to occur. Advancement leaders need the appropriate level of managerial wisdom to determine when effective management is required, and when effective strategic leadership is called for. Strategic leadership will not occur where effective management is absent, for the leader will spend too much time in a management role to provide effective strategic leadership. Effective advancement leaders need to be skilled in both and possess the managerial wisdom to determine when each role is needed.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

This study explored CAO leadership roles, actions, and decisions through the theoretical framework of Strategic Leadership Theory. Interview responses, emergent themes, and conclusions indicate connections between CAOs and institutional outcomes. While these

findings are predicted by Strategic Leadership Theory, the theory is unable to fully explain these connections.

Boal & Hooijberg (2001) theorize that leadership processes result from combinations of personality characteristics, leadership styles, and organizational characteristics. The authors suggest that effective strategic leadership increases the capacity to learn, the capacity to change, and the depth of managerial wisdom present throughout the overall organization. While these capacities are apparent in this study's interview responses and findings, more thorough research is needed to fully explore the connections between these organizational capacities and organizational outcomes. Additional strategic leadership research on CAOs could include in depth case studies of CAOs featuring various surveys of leadership styles, cognitive assessments, and behavioral and personality analyses. The findings of future research could be compared to the predictions of Boal & Hooijberg's (2001) model and better explain the linkages between strategic leadership and organizational success.

### **Summary**

University advancement's role in institutional success will continue to grow as public funding for higher education decreases. Little is known about the leadership factors which lead to fundraising success at public universities. This qualitative research study focuses on the role of strategic leadership within fundraising departments. Eight Chief Advancement Officers (CAOs) of similar universities are interviewed about CAO roles, actions, and decisions. This study's findings provide effective strategies for CAOs and indicate connections between CAO effectiveness and institutional success.

## REFERENCES

- Bartunek, J. M., & Necochea, R. A. (2000). Old insights and new times: Kairos, Inca cosmology, and their contributions to contemporary management inquiry. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 9(2), 103-113. Retrieved from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/247737455\\_Old\\_Insights\\_and\\_New\\_TimesKairos\\_Inca\\_Cosmology\\_and\\_their\\_Contributions\\_to\\_Contemporary\\_Management\\_Inquiry](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/247737455_Old_Insights_and_New_TimesKairos_Inca_Cosmology_and_their_Contributions_to_Contemporary_Management_Inquiry)
- Beslin, R., & Reddin, C. (2004). How leaders can communicate to build trust. *Ivey Business Journal*, 69(2), 1-6. Retrieved from <https://iveybusinessjournal.com/publication/how-leaders-can-communicate-to-build-trust/>
- Boal, K. B., & Hooijberg, R. (2001). Strategic leadership research: Moving on. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 11(4), 515-549. Retrieved from <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1048984300000576?via%3Dihub>
- Brennan, K. L. (2011). *An examination of the management practices and perceptions of chief advancement officers and how they view the relationship with alumni* (Doctoral dissertation, St. John Fisher College). Retrieved from <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/82cf/09f569257e9706b3b411f3f1ac86a6b2212c.pdf>
- Cannella, A.A., & Monroe, M.J. (1997). Contrasting perspectives on strategic leaders: Toward a more realistic view of top managers. *Journal of Management*, 23(3), 231-237. Retrieved from <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0149206397900337>
- Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. (2019). About the Carnegie Classification. Retrieved from <http://carnegieclassifications.iu.edu/index.php>
- Chan, R. Y. (2016). Studying philanthropy and fundraising in the field of higher education: A proposed conceptual model. In Alphin, H. C., Lavine, J., Stark, S. & Hocker, A.

- (Eds.), *Facilitating Higher Education Growth through Fundraising and Philanthropy*, Hershey, PA: IGI Global.
- Cohen, W. M., & Levinthal, D. A. (1990). Absorptive capacity: A new perspective on learning and innovation. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 35(1), 128-152. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/2393553.pdf>
- Council for Advancement and Support of Education. (2019). Districts. Retrieved from <https://www.case.org/districts>
- Donaldson, L. (1997). Review: Strategic leadership: Top executives and their effects on organizations. *Australian Journal of Management*, 22(2), 221-224. Retrieved from <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.214.3289&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- Finkelstein, S. & Hambrick, D. (1996). *Strategic leadership: Top executives and their effects on organizations*. Minneapolis, MN: West Publishing Company.
- Fowles, J. (2014). Funding and focus: Resource dependence in public higher education. *Research in Higher Education*, 55(3), 272-287. doi:10.1007/s11162-013-9311-x
- Giving USA. (2019). Giving USA 2019. Retrieved from <https://givingusa.org/giving-usa-2019-americans-gave-427-71-billion-to-charity-in-2018-amid-complex-year-for-charitable-giving/>
- Glaser, B. G. (1965). The constant comparative method of qualitative analysis. *Social Problems*, 12(4), 436-445. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/798843.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A9c813c1182092cf40e998dd95fa9d237>
- Governmental Standards and Accountability Board. (1999, June). *Summary of Statement No. 34*. <https://www.gasb.org/st/summary/gstsm34.html>

Governmental Standards and Accountability Board. (1999, June). *Summary of Statement No. 35*.

<https://www.gasb.org/st/summary/gstsm35.html>

Hambrick, D. C., & Mason, P. A. (1984). Upper echelons: The organization as a reflection of its top managers. *The Academy of Management Review*, 9(2), 193-206. Retrieved from

<http://www.jstor.com/stable/258434>

Harkin, B., Webb, T. L., Chang, B. P. I., Prestwich, A., Conner, M., Keller, I., ... Sheeran, P.

(2016). Does monitoring goal progress promote goal attainment: A meta-analysis of the experimental evidence. *Psychological Bulletin*, 142(2), 198-229.

<https://doi.org/10.1037/bul0000025>

Hiles, T. S. (2010). Determining the success of fundraising programs. *New Directions for Higher Education*, 2010,149, 51-56. <https://doi.org/10.1002/he.380>

Hitt, M. A., Keats, B. W., & DeMarie, S. M. (1998). Navigating in the new competitive landscape: Building strategic flexibility and competitive advantage in the 21st century.

*The Academy of Management Executive (1993-2005)*, 12(4), 22-42. Retrieved from

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/4165492.pdf>

Hosmer, L. T. (1982). The importance of strategic leadership. *Journal of Business Strategy*, 3(2), 47-57. Retrieved from [https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/](https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/eb038966/full/html)

[doi/10.1108/eb038966/full/html](https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/eb038966/full/html)

Ireland, R. D., & Hitt, M. A. (1999). Achieving and maintaining strategic competitiveness in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: The role of strategic leadership. *The Academy of Management Executive*

*(1993-2005)*, 19(4), 63-77. <https://doi.org/10.5465/AME.2005.19417908>

- Jacobson, H. K. (1990). Research on institutional advancement: A review of progress and a guide to the literature. *The Review of Higher Education*, 13(4), 433-488.  
<https://doi.org/10.1353/rhe.1990.0009>
- Kozobarich, J. L. (2000). Institutional advancement. *New Directions for Higher Education*, 2000(111) 25-34. <https://doi.org/10.1002/he.11103>
- Lochmiller, C. R., & Lester, J. N. (2017). *An introduction to educational research: Connecting methods to practice*. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.
- Locke, E. A., Shaw, K. N., Saari, L. M., & Latham, G. P. (1981). Goal setting and task performance: 1969–1980. *Psychological Bulletin*, 90(1), 125-152.  
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.90.1.125>
- McAlexander, J. H., Koenig, H. F., & DuFault, B. (2014). Advancement in higher education: The role of marketing in building philanthropic giving. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, 24(2), 243-256. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08841241.2014.969797>
- Murray, L. E. (2008) *The managerial practices of chief advancement officers: Practices that promote or inhibit fundraising in higher education* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Database. (UMI No. 3337519)
- Patton, M. Q. (1999). Enhancing the quality and credibility of qualitative data. *Health Services Research*, 34(5), 1189-1208. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1089059/pdf/hsresearch00022-0112.pdf>
- Pezalla, A. E., Pettigrew, J., & Miller-Day, M. (2012). Researching the researcher-as-instrument: An exercise in interviewer self-reflexivity. *Qualitative Research*, 12(2), 165-185.  
doi: 10.1177/1487941111422107

- Phipps, K. A. & Burbach, M. E. (2010). Strategic leadership in the nonprofit sector: Opportunities for research. *Journal of Behavioral and Applied Management*, 11(2), 137-154. Retrieved from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/238748851\\_Strategic\\_Leadership\\_in\\_the\\_Nonprofit\\_Sector\\_Opportunities\\_for\\_Research](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/238748851_Strategic_Leadership_in_the_Nonprofit_Sector_Opportunities_for_Research)
- Queirós, A., Faria, D., & Almeida, F. (2017). Strengths and limitations of qualitative and quantitative research methods. *European Journal of Education Studies*, 3(9) 369-373. doi:10.5281/zenodo.887089
- Rowe, W. G. (2001). Creating wealth in organizations: The role of strategic leadership. *Academy of Management Executive*, 15(1), 81-94. Retrieved from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/239487590\\_Creating\\_wealth\\_in\\_organizations\\_The\\_role\\_of\\_strategic\\_leadership](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/239487590_Creating_wealth_in_organizations_The_role_of_strategic_leadership)
- Rowland, A. W. (1978). *New directions for institutional advancement: Evaluating advancement programs*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.
- Rowland, A. W. (1986). *Handbook of institutional advancement: A modern guide to executive management, institutional relations, fundraising, alumni administration, government relations, publications, periodicals, and enrollment management*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.
- Satterwhite, C. R., & Cedja, B. (2011). Higher education fund raising: What is the president to do? *International Journal of Educational Advancement*, 5(4), 333-344. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.ijea.2140224>
- Stevick, T. R. (2010). Integrating development, alumni relations, and marketing for fundraising success. *New Directions for Higher Education*, 2010(149), 57-64. <https://doi.org/10.1002/he.381>

- Sturgis, R. (2006). Presidential leadership in institutional advancement: From the perspective of the president and vice president of institutional advancement. *International Journal of Educational Advancement*, 6(3), 221-231. doi:10.1057/palgrave.ijea.2150019
- Taylor, J. S., Machado, M. L., & Peterson, M. W. (2008). Leadership and strategic management: Keys to institutional priorities and planning. *European Journal of Education*, 43(3), 369-384. Retrieved from <http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=1&sid=4d293ca3-c6c6-4565-bfdc-3a290ed1bafc%40pdc-v-sessmgr03>
- van Nostrand, I. (2003). A quantitative model for evaluating advancement effectiveness. *The CASE International Journal of Educational Advancement*, 4(2), 166-178. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.cijea.2140022>
- Walker, S. (2012). *The chief advancement officer: Role identification in fundraising at public four-year institutions of higher education in the United States* (Doctoral dissertation), Texas Tech University). Retrieved from <https://ttu-ir.tdl.org/bitstream/handle/2346/45211/WALKER-DISSERTATION.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y>
- Weerts, D. J. (2007). Toward an engagement model of institutional advancement at public colleges and universities. *International Journal of Educational Advancement*, 7(2), 79-103. doi:10.1057/palgrave.ijea.2150055
- Winona State University. (n.d.). Institutional review board (IRB). Retrieved from <https://www.winona.edu/grants/irb.asp>

**APPENDIX A**  
**PARTICIPANT EMAIL INVITATION**

Greetings.

My name is Matthew Ohs and I am a graduate student at Winona State University in Minnesota. I am conducting a research study about strategic leadership within advancement departments at public universities.

Would you be willing to participate for the purpose of gathering data in this study? Your participation will be limited to a phone interview of approximately 15-30 minutes. Participation is completely voluntary. Your name, university, and responses will be kept anonymous throughout this study.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [matthew.ohs@go.winona.edu](mailto:matthew.ohs@go.winona.edu)

Thank you for your time.

Matthew K. Ohs

Leadership Education Graduate Student

Winona State University

## APPENDIX B

### PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

**Consent Form:** Advancing Higher Education: Strategic Leadership for Chief Advancement Officers

#### **What is this research study about?**

You are invited to participate in a research study designed to research connections between the individual and organizational components of strategic leadership. The researcher hopes to learn about the management and leadership strategies used by Chief Advancement Officers (CAOs) at four-year, publicly funded universities.

#### **What activities will this study involve?**

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to share your perspectives on this subject with the researcher through a phone interview. The researcher will collect additional data from annual reports made public by each subject university. Interviews will be limited to a single phone or Zoom call lasting roughly 30 minutes, depending on the length of interviewee responses.

#### **How much time will this take?**

The study will begin in February 2020 and end in June 2020. I estimate participating in the study will require a half hour of your time.

#### **What will be done with the data collected during this study?**

The information you give will be coded as responses made by Subject 1, 2, etc. University names will be coded as University 1, 2, etc. No subject names, university names, or other identifiable information will be made public. All information collected will be stored on a secured personal server at the research institution. Hard copy research data and materials will be stored in a private office with keyed access. Only the primary researcher will have access to collected data during the research process.

When the study is completed, all research notes, interview transcriptions, data files, and other research materials will be deleted from the server. All hard copy research materials will be shredded at the completion of the study.

#### **Are there any risks for participating?**

There are no risks associated with this study.

#### **Are there any benefits for participating?**

The benefits reasonably expected from this study are contributing to research literature related to strategic leadership within higher education advancement. A copy of the final study will be offered to all participants.

### **What are my rights as a participant?**

Participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. You may decide not to participate or to discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. A decision not to participate or withdraw will not affect your current or future relationship with Winona State University.

### **Who can I contact if I have questions or concerns about this study?**

The main researcher conducting this study is Matthew K. Ohs, a graduate student at Winona State University. The faculty advisor for this study is Theresa Waterbury, PhD, 507-457-5607, twaterbury@winona.edu. You may ask any questions you have about the study and your participation now or later during the study.

### **Who can I contact if I have questions about my rights as a participant?**

If you have questions or concerns about your participation in the study, contact the Human Protections Administrator Brett Ayers at 507-457-5519 or bayers@winona.edu. This project has been reviewed by the Winona State University Institutional Review Board for the protection of human subjects.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

### **Agreement to Participate**

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may withdraw at any time. Your signature indicates that the study has been explained, you have had an opportunity to ask questions, and you have decided to participate.

Your signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Your name (printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of person obtaining consent: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person obtaining consent (printed): Matthew K. Ohs

## APPENDIX C

### RESEARCH STUDY INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Thank you for participating in this study regarding strategic leadership and Chief Advancement Officers at 4 year, publicly funded universities. My name is Matthew Ohs, and I am a Leadership Education graduate student at Winona State University in Winona, Minnesota.

This study will consist of a series of questions in an interview style. When considering your answers, please focus on your fundraising staff, as this is the emphasis of my study. Our conversation will be recorded for the purpose of transcription to efficiently code responses. Your voluntary participation is confidential, and no names, universities or other identifiable information will be made public. At the conclusion of this study, you will receive a digital copy of my findings.

You should have received a consent form for your participation in this study. Were you able to review the consent form prior to our interview? *[Pause]*

Do you have any questions regarding information presented on the consent form? *[Pause]*

If there are no (other) questions, I will begin with the first question of my research study.

Question 1: How do you determine the effectiveness of your fundraising staff as a whole?  
*[Pause]*

Question 2: What leadership strategies do you use with the professional fundraising staff in your department? *[Pause]*

Question 3: How do you as the Chief Advancement Officer influence the institutional-level goals? *[Pause]*

Question 4: How do your departmental leadership strategies address institutional-level goals? *[Pause]*

Question 5: What factors internal to your institution affect your department's fundraising performance? *[Pause]*

Question 6: What factors external to your institution affect your department's fundraising performance? *[Pause]*

Question 7: What, if anything, limits the effectiveness of your leadership? *[Pause]*

Question 8: How do you compensate for limits on the effectiveness of strategic leadership? *[Pause]*

Thank you so much for your candid responses to these questions. Are there any clarifications or further comments you would like to provide? *[Pause]*

This concludes our interview. Thank you again for your responses and for your involvement and participation in my study.

## APPENDIX D

### SUBJECT 1 INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Interview #1 on February 27, 2020

#### **Question 1: How do you determine the effectiveness of your fundraising staff as a whole?**

To me the metrics are there and the fundraising staff are basically either a development officer or their assistant. I don't include in that gift processing or anything like that, so I would say the metrics are the same for all fundraisers, because again I want to make sure the whole group is looked at as a team. The assistants help the development officers get appointments, make calls, bring in gifts, process those gifts appropriately, and then steward them, so I wouldn't have any separate metrics for the staff in general.

#### **Question 2: What leadership strategies do you use with the fundraising staff in your department?**

Well I think that largely it's for them making their plans for the year. If they say, I'm going to raise an x amount of dollars, I want at least a plan about how they're going to do that. Who are they going to see, the donors they plan to solicit for this goal for the year, and not just say, well hey here's my goal and I'm going to talk to the people I know. A clear plan about who they're going after, what are they going after them for, meaning I'm going to pursue this particular donor for the athletic campaign, and the amount of money they would like to see. So that plan is written out and at the end of the year we can go back and assess that plan and say hey, yeah I met with this donor, for athletics, and we got that amount of money, or I went for this donor and we thought we were going to go for this particular campaign or project, and they said no, I want to do this and that changed, or it didn't happen. Well why, and what are the reasons for that? It's not a document to punish the development officer. It's a document to help them think about what went right, what went wrong, what else can we do to improve for the planning process in the next year.

#### **Question 3: How do you as the Chief Advancement Officer influence the institutional-level goals?**

I was probably in a little different position, mainly because I was entrusted by the president to oversee the strategic planning process for the university. Not every chief advancement officer has that opportunity, so I probably was in a somewhat unique position. I think that the one way, I'm going to try to answer as if I didn't have that role, as the advancement officer the one way they affect the goals of the institution is by making sure the institution is actually thinking about those university-level goals. Mainly because in the end, the advancement office raises money based off the goals of the institution. Well if the institution isn't having annual goals or strategic goals, then what do you raise money for? I never wanted it to be that the advancement office was coming up with, oh well we'll go raise money for this or that. It shouldn't be like that. The university should come up with what its goals are, and once its determined goals, then the advancement office should say, well how can we raise money for these particular goals? So the advancement officer should always make sure that both strategic and operational planning are occurring at the institutional level. I think that's the important part for any chief advancement

officer, to make sure the process is happening. Whether that person does it or not, I just had the opportunity where I was the one doing it. It was a lot easier for us to know what the institutional goals were because I got to make sure that happened. But I do think the advancement officer has to push the president to say, are we setting strategic goals, are we setting operational goals, so that the advancement office has things to raise money for.

**Question 4: How do your departmental leadership strategies address institutional-level goals?**

I guess my leadership approach is, firstly, is pretty much operational planning. We're going to look at what the institutional goals are, and based off of those goals, we're going to determine departmental goals. For me it was development, alumni, and marketing communications. Development will say what are the goals of the institution, how do we fit in, clearly we'll be raising money for that particular area, alumni looks at it saying we'll mobilize our alumni base, that's how alumni will fit in. Finally marketing communication looking at it for their goals. I've found that over time I had to bifurcate development and alumni into one planning process, and marketing communications into another planning processing. Largely because if you did them together, I found that development and alumni began to see marketing communications as theirs, and not as the institution's. But marketing communications is the institution's, not just particularly for development and alumni. Alumni and development are really departments within the institutional makeup that marketing communications has to take care of. But again, I think that leadership strategy is always planning at the strategic level, at the operational level, and also agile planning, which is basically the idea that you look at your plans and make changes weekly, monthly, to respond to situations that come up that tend to thwart your planning.

**Question 5: What factors internal to your institution affect your department's fundraising performance?**

First off, I would have to say internal constraints on budget and the ability to not have staff necessary to implement the fundraising program. Secondly, I would say internal constraints such as other activities that the university required advancement or development to do that weren't necessarily fundraising-related. So those internal expectations. I would say that's about it. Budget constraints and other internal expectations that needed to be accomplished that weren't necessarily fundraising.

**Question 6: What factors external to your institution affect your department's fundraising performance?**

Making sure we had the correct fundraising projects which were speaking to the values and passions of our donors. The current economic environment. And, historically, the willingness of donors to give. Also perceptions of the university and even sometimes external perceptions of officials at the university.

**Question 7: What, if anything, limits the effectiveness of your leadership?**

Probably I would say that, day to day mundane operational issues that have a tendency to take up time and not allow a leader to sit back and see the whole picture. You can get into an activity or an event, or expectation of task, whatever it may be, and become so busy with that. I mean

meetings and meetings. You get bogged down in those things and you don't step back and look at the large picture. It's very important for a leader to sit back and look at the large picture: how are things moving, how is the entire operation occurring, are things in every area where they need to be, and sometimes when you get bogged down in the daily activities and requirements, it has a tendency to limit that.

**Question 8: How do you compensate for limits on the effectiveness of strategic leadership?**

I think you have to schedule time and I mean on the calendar, block out time, where you have nothing else to do for several hours. So you can sit back, think, reflect, you know, make plans or whatever it may be, and close the door so there's no interruptions. I think you have to intentionally schedule time in your calendar to provide that strategic leadership reflection time. The other thing I would say too, is and I guess this speaks to the same point, is try not to take on daily, try not to take on activities that require you to manage a project. I know that sounds like you're not doing work, but in the end, that's what managers are for, that's what directors are for, that's what your staff is for, to manage the project. I think it's important for the leader to remain separate from that. If you take on too many projects, you get bogged down in the management of them, the daily activity of, the tasks of them. You're not leading, all you're doing is managing. I think it's important for the leader to, not that you totally don't take on any projects, but that you limit the number of actual projects you have, in order for you to sit back, see the whole picture, make sure the whole organization is working appropriately.

## APPENDIX E

### SUBJECT 2 INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Interview #3 on May 22, 2020

Researcher's Note: Subject 2's responses were not captured via video recording software during the interview. All responses were added immediately after the interview concluded based on the researcher's recollections of key phrases, points, and ideas shared during the interview.

**Question 1: How do you determine the effectiveness of your fundraising staff as a whole?**

Metrics for team and staff. From Gift officers, to annual giving. Board help sets overall goals and sees results, but not at individual level. Monthly reports on progress toward metrics. Metrics for leadership as well.

**Question 2: What leadership strategies do you use with the professional fundraising staff in your department?**

Lead by example. Been at University for 9 years. VP for 1 year. 90 visits in first 90 days, ambitious goal and held self accountable. Vulnerable about progress to group. 86 visits achieved. Lead by example. Monitor group progress and be a part of it.

**Question 3: How do you as the Chief Advancement Officer influence the institutional-level goals?**

Sits at senior leadership table. Money must flow towards university priorities, which must be regularly set. Currently in a campaign. Priorities made clear and shared at every level.

**Question 4: How do your departmental leadership strategies address institutional-level goals?**

[Subject 4's answer was not captured during data collection]

**Question 5: What factors internal to your institution affect your department's fundraising performance?**

Prioritize fundraising for impact. Not good enough to raise money that won't be used and just sit in an account. Share that impact through donor outreach, services, and stewardship. Show impact to donors through internal actions

**Question 6: What factors external to your institution affect your department's fundraising performance?**

Perception among older alumni that institution is entirely state funded. No need for philanthropy. This class of donor attended when this was true – cheap and no debt. Big change maybe 15 years ago. Saying it over and over doesn't change that perception among that age

group. Promote philanthropy too much to the wrong group and state won't provide additional funding.

**Question 7: What, if anything, limits the effectiveness of your leadership?**

Resources, time, human. Never enough at current institution. Resources were more accessible earlier in career at Private University where her career started.

**Question 8: How do you compensate for limits on the effectiveness of strategic leadership?**

Unable to fully answer in current capacity as VP for 1 year. Current president and past president are both strategically-minded and able to fundraise. Leadership is most important when it comes to fundraising – your leader must be good at this, too.

## APPENDIX F

### SUBJECT 3 INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Interview #5 on May 27, 2020

**Question 1: How do you determine the effectiveness of your fundraising staff as a whole?**

We have a fiscal year that runs July 1 to June 30 and we set annual goals for performance. We base that on visits, new on new donor prospects that are brought into the pool, on the number of proposals that they will put out in that year, the number of total personal visits made, and we do not base it on a dollar goal, but we have a cumulative goal that the team reaches for. Those metrics are reviewed quarterly.

**Question 2: What leadership strategies do you use with the fundraising staff in your department?**

I have kind of a servant leader management strategy and I utilize kind of a coaching style to help them get motivated and get excited. I also try to be a role model. I do my own fundraising as well and so I try to show them what success looks like and what I expect of them through my own behaviors and work with donors. I think excellent communication is very important. I have daily communication with all of them and weekly meetings.

Right now this is crazy, so I'm trying to answer your questions on like a normal basis. Communication, the amount and the quality of communication has become even more important in the current situation, but regular communication is very important.

**Question 3: How do you as the Chief Advancement Officer influence the institutional-level goals?**

I am a direct report to the President and that's a big help. We work through our strategic plan and let that guide our process. We put students first, we promise that and we try to deliver on it. All of the work that we do helps benefit them first. However, we are also donor-centered. We try to the exact perfect donor to match the exact need on campus and drive projects that way.

**Question 4: How do your departmental leadership strategies address institutional-level goals?**

Major gift officers are constituent-based and have focuses across the campus in various ways. We try to always keep in the forefront that what we do has to impact them in a positive way and fit in with their goals and mission. Sometimes we have donors who have ideas that don't necessarily fit in with the current goals of that area. We try to use negotiation as a means to emphasize the potential impact, especially if donors can align with the needs of the university and the university has to give a little bit in some ways to help align with the donor's goals of philanthropy. I think we use negotiation a lot to ensure we're fulfilling goals and setting goals from the top down and prioritizing in each constituent area to try to impact the students as much as possible.

**Question 5: What factors internal to your institution affect your department's fundraising performance?**

Three years ago, we had a major leadership challenge. We had a president that did not have a strong positive reputation, who was not visionary or goals focused. We had a vice president over our area that was equally challenging. That was a tremendous driver of negative force on our team. When you have donors who don't want to meet with university leadership, that's a problem. That was a big challenge. I say all of that to say we have a new leadership in place, a new president, new structure, new organizational structure in that there is not a vice president in the office, we are just a direct report to the president's office. That has created a strong level of trust. This president really cares about our institution, is a graduate of our institution, that has had a tremendous positive impact on our team and our fundraisers specifically. It helps most of them want to get the work done, to meet goals, to work with the president to set goals. I think that has had a really great impact internally on our team.

**Question 6: What factors external to your institution affect your department's fundraising performance?**

I'm supposed to ignore that we are having a world-wide health pandemic, or do you want me to say that? Right now it is a world-wide pandemic that is having a tremendous impact on what we're doing. We've almost stopped major gift fundraising, we have pivoted on our goals and strategies, we are again student focused so that the central mission continues to ring true. We're just pivoting on what we normally do to meet these new needs of our students.

We're a small regional university in a very rural area. Our students are financially, their families are financially impacted by what we're doing. Over 45% of our student body are First-Generation college students, and so their families are falling into the demographics experiencing unemployment issues. We need to be able to meet those financial needs and the CARES Act is helping a little, but not necessarily institutionally. We're changing the way we tell our story to our donors. That's how external factors can impact what you're doing. It's how you tell your story and change it to what's relevant for the external factors impacting what you're doing right now.

**Question 7: What, if anything, limits the effectiveness of your leadership?**

I think that budget situations limit the impact of my leadership because I have to... You can't necessarily make the best decisions for your team if you don't have the dollars you need to follow through on that. I think a limiting budget is a big factor that impacts my leadership.

I think these crazy external factors that we have right now, because we are a people business, we are a relationship business. The force of this pandemic has changed how we do business in a very short amount of time. We're trying to find our way through. I've been doing this for almost 25 years now, and when you have such a great change in such a short time, everything you thought you knew about how to lead a fundraising team has been put into question. You really are just forced to do everything different and find a new way. In some ways that's really great, and in some ways that's limiting until you can figure out what the best path forward is.

**Question 8: How do you compensate for limits on the effectiveness of strategic leadership?**

Tough question. I'll go back to that situation I was in when we did not have really great leadership. I think that you have to be even more of a strong leader of your team when you have poor leadership above you. I think that you have to manage up and manage down in a very different way when you have poor leadership in place. I think that it always comes back to the donor and it always comes back to the impact. You have to take everything else out of the equation. You remind your team that you work with donors to impact students. As long as you can keep the "why" on the table all of the time, despite everything else going on internal and external, that's how you have the greatest impact.

## APPENDIX G

### SUBJECT 4 INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Interview #4 on May 26, 2020

**Question 1: How do you determine the effectiveness of your fundraising staff as a whole?**

That's an interesting question considering we're going through extensive process of review for that. So I can tell you where we've been and kind of where we're going. I've been at [State University] for over 18 years in different capacities. I've been vice president, interim vice president for the past 2. We have our, as with most places I suppose, the size of our development staff has changed. We were in a campaign up to five years ago and had a larger staff. It's gone down a little through budget cuts, but now we're trying to increase that. We have never used metrics, fundraising dollar metrics, before. We've always used number of visits, number of proposals presented, number of new qualified prospects, but now we're looking at added the performance metrics of actual dollars raised.

How we define that is kind of a work in progress. We've been working with a consultant over the past few months to help do that. From what I understand, the general industry standard varies, but they're suggesting five times base salary for the dollar amount raised per year, at least after the first year or two that a person is on staff. Up until now, we've felt that the proposal and visit metrics have worked fairly well because we've been a little limited in our technology, but we've also been adding some new technology and changing our database and are adding a CRM this year, so we can be a little more focused on adding that monetary metric.

Another problem is we've been a little lenient, I would say, on those non-fundraising duties that fundraisers sometimes get caught doing, like alumni engagement events and those events that you can spend three weeks on that generate \$5,000 when you could be spending three weeks on actual visits that would generate ten times that. We're changing expectations as well. So goals are shifting right now, and as I've told fundraisers. One of the biggest reason for goals is to help other people that we work with understand what we're supposed to be doing, as opposed to just knowing ourselves what we're supposed to be doing. So that the deans we work with, the other vice presidents we work with, respect the fact that we need to be doing major gift work.

**Question 2: What leadership strategies do you use with the fundraising staff in your department?**

I was the Director of Planned Giving before I became Vice President, so I worked for 16 years with many of the same people on my staff as a fellow fundraiser and what's now the interim position of Vice President. I think absolute transparency is one of the things I've focused on in the last 2 years. Being transparent in what my expectations are, but not only what expectations I have, but why I have them. I'm very clear with our fundraising staff what my conversations have been with the president, with other Vice Presidents, with the deans, so that nobody's caught off guard by what I'm asking and also so nobody thinks this is just something in my head that I'm coming up with. If it's something in my head that I'm making up, then I'll tell them that and why I think it's a good idea. For the most part I try to be very transparent and very supportive. I

think it's a benefit that I've been in their position so that they know I know I understand the positives and negatives of what I'm asking them to do.

It seems that one of the other things we've added recently is another layer of fundraisers. Up until this point we've kind of had a very flat organizational structure. One of the things we've done in the last 6-8 months is to add Associate Directors of Development under our current experienced major gift officers. That adds another aspect to me helping them be supervisors for other people. I think that addition of that is kind of succession planning in a sense. All of our fundraisers, our major gift officers, have all been here 12-15 years, so we have great longevity in this area, but now we've added new staff. So to add that staff under the current staff has been very helpful in allowing them to be leaders as well. It's an effort on my part to help them lead the next group of fundraisers into their positions.

**Question 3: How do you as the Chief Advancement Officer influence the institutional-level goals?**

In the campaign that we had, it was a 5 year campaign from 2010 to 2015, it was pretty clear when we set that campaign in motion that we were all kind of on the same page, we were focused on scholarships. After the campaign was over, it's been a little more difficult. Because what we've tried to establish are strategic development initiatives. Working with each dean, working with other non-academic departments like career services, student success, and those areas, student affairs, we tried to establish strategic development initiatives for each of those areas we would help support.

That's been kind of difficult because they are also in the middle of, we've had some budget cuts a couple of years ago in [State], I'm sure you've had them where you are too, and we have more because of COVID, of that it's been very difficult to pin down some of these other departments on what they want to do. So we are in the process right now of creating, of really buckling down and working with them more on these strategic development initiatives as we look toward going into another campaign. And being realistic, not that we don't want them to dream big, but we have to be realistic in the context of what they're currently doing. And I will say that one of the things, I mentioned I have been working with consultants lately, one of the things they did say is that there's a lack of a culture of philanthropy. And initially I kind of disagreed with that, but then the more I thought about it, it's actually true. Because we have been, I will admit, we as an advancement office have been a little more too tangential I the work of the university and not integral in the work of the university. I don't know if that's the case in other places, you'll find out in your research, but I'm working very hard to make us more integral by working with developing those strategic initiatives.

**Question 4: How do your departmental leadership strategies address institutional-level goals?**

I think it's going to become, I think at certain times it's not as critical. At certain times we're not, our goals are not, we kind of just run parallel to the university's goals. I think what's going to happen, especially with COVID and the budget issues, and the economic impact issues of it, the budget issues of it, it's going to shift so that we are paid attention to more. I think we have to be more proactive to do that. We have to be more proactive in the sense of what are our donors

wanting? We've tried to do a couple of surveys in the past year. What are our donors wanting to support, what are the donors really looking for, how are they feeling about the university? Are they going to give that support to the university, and what aspects of the university are they going to support? I can give you one example of scholarships. One of the things we get a lot of pressure from the university on is we want you to raise a lot of money on general unrestricted scholarships. Well, I can't do that, really, some people will do that, sure, but I can legitimately say based on our surveys, "No, donors want to be able to say their scholarships go to sports management, or business, or somebody from [City], or something like that." So I think that drives what the university does a little bit by virtue of the fact that we can't raise money for some of the things they think would be ideal. We try to be clear about that and they can push us to the point that they want, but it's not going to help if we can't find the donors to support what they want to do.

**Question 5: What factors internal to your institution affect your department's fundraising performance?**

Budget. Considering in the next two days I have to figure out how to cut our budget. That's, I hear a lot of the universities continue to hire fundraisers, despite the budget issues. We aren't that fortunate, maybe it's because we're a public university that doesn't have as much, well we have a 40 year track record and we've done pretty well, but it's still not the business concept that there could be a return on investment on a new person raising money. I think that's an education process we have to do better on in our division, to say some of those goals I talked about earlier may impact that, but to say that if we hire this other person and we don't cut the budget, we are going to be a revenue generator for the university, that's something we have to do. So budget is a factor that limits us to some extent, also the focus other parts of the university that are not necessary on working with our donors. Sometimes we have donors who would like to give to something we do have, but we have to find that key faculty member to partner with the donor to generate that good relationship. So sometimes it's those partnerships across campus that are limiting as well.

**Question 6: What factors external to your institution affect your department's fundraising performance?**

Well COVID is going to, COVID has. The economy, the local, national, you know, economy in general affects it. I think also, I was going to say other, other, other nonprofits in the area can affect it, but I don't know that that's necessary true. I've had some people say, well because the humane society is doing their capital campaign, the local k-12 school is doing their campaign, or most recently on campus our catholic campus ministries did a capital campaign. A lot of people were saying well we can't raise money, that impacts the pocketbooks of people who would give money to us. And that can be the case sometimes, but I don't think it's a huge factor that influences our success or failure because people give to multiple charities that they care about. So it may affect us on a short term basis, but not on a long term basis. The more people are talking about philanthropy, planned giving, see my background's in planned giving so I'll say that, charitable support, I think all boats rise with the tide. I like to think that most of the time. I think that's one thing that can be a short-term influencer is other things going on in the community, but not a long-term impact.

**Question 7: What, if anything, limits the effectiveness of your leadership?**

Funny you should ask that. I think an impact on my leadership, on my division, for the past couple of years I've been Interim Vice President. The interim part impacts the effectiveness of my leadership. I'd like to think it doesn't, but it does. Right now we're talking about what the next step is because I'm only interim for another month, but we don't, we aren't searching for anybody. So likely I'm going to continue. How do I continue? That's been an influencer of my effectiveness, not necessarily to our donors, but within the university. So I have our foundation board members very supportive of me, so is the president, so are people on campus, but just being short term is a limiting factor to my ability to lead the division. It's not stopped me from doing anything, because I have done a lot – added staff, gone from Banner to Raisers Edge database that we're just finishing up right now, so you can overcome those limitations by continuing to work hard, but it hasn't made it any easier.

**Question 8: How do you compensate for limits on the effectiveness of strategic leadership?**

That's also a good question. Hard work. Hard work, I mean what I've tried to do over the past 2 years is build a team, and the team is doing well. Continuing to focus on the people that work with me and for me has been, has allowed us to continue to move forward in our efforts, even though we're not quite as strategic as we should be as a university. So hard work, transparency, communication, in all respects is an important factor in overcoming those limitations.

## APPENDIX H

### SUBJECT 5 INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Interview #2 on May 20, 2020

**Question 1: How do you determine the effectiveness of your fundraising staff as a whole?**

We have a metric system we use, and we base all of our frontline fundraisers are measured on face to face visits, amount of dollars they bring in, and we track that through our software and our database. And we are given an annual goal by our board based on our three-year rolling average of gifts we've brought in previously. They tack on another 10-20% based on what our current levels of giving are.

**Question 2: What leadership strategies do you use with the fundraising staff in your department?**

We basically meet very frequently and we have a very open door policy. We go over our portfolios on about a quarterly basis to evaluate visits and who needs to be visited, and future actions that need to be taken with various constituents. We keep a close look on any outstanding asks or anyone who hasn't been reached out to, to make sure that we're touching base. So I keep a good handle as far as taking a look at all of our metrics, and where our frontline fundraisers are spending their time and reaching out, particularly right now, calling everyone in their portfolios, making sure they've touched base with them, check in with them and so forth. From a leadership standpoint, it's just making sure you know what your development officers are doing and checking the metrics to see how often they're visiting with people, checking in with people, and then helping to guide them on different ways to engage donors.

**Question 3: How do you as the Chief Advancement Officer influence the institutional-level goals?**

I think, one of the ways you do that as an advancement leader, is that you're able to interface with constituents and find out what they are wanting to support. By coming back to the university and saying, here's some areas that donors are very interested in, then we help to shape some of the academic programing at times, and also just where the university might focus some of its energy. The university gives us their goals and we seek funding for those as well. I think it's a nice collaboration where we are able to go out and visit donors and find out what their interested are and bring that information back to the university.

I'll give you a good example from when I was in a previous position. We had the oil and natural gas industry was very interested in a landman program. We were able to raise close to half a million dollars before we ever instituted the program, but we were able to get the support to hire adjuncts and others to develop the program based on industry interest. That program became one of the largest programs in the unit I was in in just a year to a year in a half with over 120 students enrolled. Another example would be we had a donor here who was very interested in first generation students and wanted to develop a first-generation student center. We worked with the university to see how that might look and developed a proposal that the donor was interested in.

**Question 4: How do your departmental leadership strategies address institutional-level goals?**

That one is difficult to answer because we are a separate 501(c)(3) from the university. We don't have, I'm not working specifically for a particular unit, I'm working for the university overall, but in a separate 501(c)(3) that's separate from the university. I've worked in departmental fundraising, and then I've also been here for a little over a year. It's very different because we, the perspective I can offer is that working in a department, you were able to understand the needs and the goals, the challenges that they had and you were able to really build relationships with their individual donors. But working as a separate organization, apart from the university but linked, you're working on behalf of the entire university, so you don't have those one on one relationships with the department. It's very different and it also makes the relationship more complex because you don't have those intimate conversations as often as you do when you work directly for a dean.

**Question 5: What factors internal to your institution affect your department's fundraising performance?**

Again, I can't talk about the department, but being a separate 501(c)(3), but working very closely with the university, things that have an impact are how well the president is doing, how the president is perceived by outside constituencies, whether or not the deans are considered good leaders, whether or not faculty are considered to be productive. Whether or not they have high enrollment in certain departments, and also support that the university is giving to various departments. For instance, we have some departments that they're probably going to cut over the next year. That will have a huge impact on donor relations with the university overall, not just within those departments but with the overall university. I think those are some of the areas that are critical to success in fundraising.

**Question 6: What factors external to your institution affect your department's fundraising performance?**

Externally.... Current events that create a need from especially granting agencies. For instance, currently the COVID-19, in a way, funding that would normally be program and project oriented and, especially granting agencies, private foundations are focused 100% on humanitarian efforts created by COVID-19. Sometimes that's a hurricane in a certain area, or whatever that might be, those are some things that can have dramatic impact on your ability to get grants. Legislative changes, state funding, if we get more state funding and we're doing well, then people don't think that we need money. If we get less state funding, people say, why doesn't the state support you, you're a state institution so you should have money. I think those are three of the areas that have the most impact externally. Also just how people view us, if there's any kind of issues internally that become external, issues with our alumni associations, and so forth, those all have an impact.

**Question 7: What, if anything, limits the effectiveness of your leadership?**

I think that communication has to be very robust, especially when you're an outside organization. It's difficult to lead if you don't know where you're going and try to get people to

follow in a direction that you're not sure what that direction is. I think that when we have a lack of communication, I would say the same thing as having worked in a department in a university as well, communication is the key. If you don't have a strong communication plan and strong communication with your dean, it's hard to lead people. I'll give an example. I worked with a dean once who's priorities changed every week. It's hard to tell people that one week you're looking for scholarships and the next week you're looking for programmatic funds for something that just popped up, and the next you're looking for funding for a building because someone needs a building. You have to have strong communication and you have to have a strong idea of what the overall goals are. Those goals need to stay flexible, but they also need to stay pretty permanent, at least for awhile until you reach them and can move forward. Otherwise you can't lead.

**Question 8: How do you compensate for limits on the effectiveness of strategic leadership?**

You use a shotgun approach. What ends up happening is you allow the donors to have more flexibility in what they support, because if the university doesn't have a strong, or the department doesn't have a strong set of goals, then if you get a donor who says, I want a first generation center, then you focus on the first generation center. It actually ends up giving donors more, a wider berth on how they can impact the university rather than me asking them to help with nursing or the athletic facilities. They're basically saying this is what we'd like to support, how can you make that happen? It really gives more power to the donor.

## APPENDIX I

### SUBJECT 6 INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Interview #8 on June 30, 2020

**Question 1: How do you determine the effectiveness of your fundraising staff as a whole?**

I have a system I call accountability matrix. And in this accountability matrix we have several things that we track, as far as touches, how many visits, how many proposals, how many closures, things of that nature. That is a good indication. Here, I know one thing, if you ask your people to do two things, you're going to raise money. Make visits personally and ask for money. You do those two things, money will come in. Now that over, oversimplifies it, but that's basically development in a nutshell. But then of course, how much do you ask for, when do you ask for it, what do you ask for, what projects, a lot goes into it. But for the most part, we track a couple matrices, 4 or 5 different things that tells how effective people are.

**Question 2: What leadership strategies do you use with the fundraising staff in your department?**

I am one that, now I have a kind of young and inexperienced staff, so I'm more hands on than normal. However, my leadership style is very much an empowerment style. It is "you have a job to do, here's the matrix, go do it." As vice president at a small state university, they wear you out. They have to be independently responsible. But, I also know that a lot of these people are new so they have to be trained. What I do is I work through the training, let's go back to the question, I want to be sure I answer it.

**Researcher: What leadership strategies do you use with the fundraising staff in your department?**

Empowerment. Fundraisers, if you don't trust them, get rid of them. Because fundraisers are meant to be on the road, they're meant to be out. So when I hire them, and see that's the other thing, if you have a matrix where you track the results, then they can't flub on this. If they're lying about it, I'll know. It may take a year, but after a year if you're not seeing dollars coming in, then you have a problem. So if you have this matrix then you can empower them to go do their job. So what we do is meet in a moves management meeting every two weeks. Sometimes I only seem them every two weeks, that's all I see of them. I don't even have a desk for one of my people, she's on the road hitting it, hitting it, hitting it. Even during COVID, she's on the phone, she's at home, or she's travelling.

**Question 3: How do you as the Chief Advancement Officer influence the institutional-level goals?**

You know, that's a good question. So you've got to motivate your people. How do you motivate the people? To me, and you talked about my management style, one of them is yeah, I empower them, but I also build the team, so it's teambuilding. If you build a team, what you do is say, "Ok team, we have a goal to raise \$3 million this year. Or we are starting our campaign this year, our total goal is \$50 million dollars, we need to raise so much this year." And then you

build the team. You say, “ok, you all have specific things that you are supposed to reach. And by the way, in my accountability matrix, not one of them is how many dollars have you raised? I don’t even ask that question because I know I’ll get what I want if they do those things. So build the team and you got to encourage and you got to motivate. And you do that by, whenever somebody has a success, it’s everybody’s success. We celebrate that. When we have a failure, we have a failure, we put it behind us and we move on. We don’t dwell on those things.

**Question 4: How do your departmental leadership strategies address institutional-level goals?**

Departmental strategies to my institution... Well, in my department, the advancement department, I have the print shop, I’ve got marketing communications, fundraising, and alumni relations. Well, I tell my team I’m in a perfect world. Because marketing communications, that affects people’s public view of [State University], so if they have a positive public view, they’re more likely to give. If alumni are engaged and getting information, they’re more likely to give. If we print good products and have a good design for a piece, we’ll get more people to give. So it all comes together. And the first thing I did is I said, “Guys, we’re very different office, but we’re really one team.”

**Question 5: What factors internal to your institution affect your department’s fundraising performance?**

Well, leadership. I mean if the president is not prepared to make asks, if the president is not prepared to communicate with the public and to be involved in a campaign, you’re not going to be successful. So leadership is important. And then leadership in my part, my part is to hire the right people, set the right tone, and put the right goals into place. My job, I told the president, my job is to provide you the resources. So we’re going to bring the people to you, all you got to do is ask them for money. And we do all the background research, we do everything. In fact, we made two asks a week ago, we made two asks. One for \$1 million, one for \$500,000. He didn’t prepare that, we did all of the work, and then he and I sit down and we have a conversation and then we meet them.

**Question 6: What factors external to your institution affect your department’s fundraising performance?**

Locally, how does the public view your president? How does the public view your students? How does the public view the institution as a whole? So if you have a positive, people really think you’re a good education system if your students are well-behaved out in the community, if your students are doing a good job, that makes a difference. And they’re more likely, businesses, foundations, and individuals are more likely to give.

Outside of the local community, I think it is reputation. You know, I was up in [City] before I came here at a small school called [small Private University]. It was a private university, well, it was in the shade of [larger Private University]. [Larger Private University] has a reputation around the world. All you got to do is say [larger Private University] and they’re throwing money at you. That’s, that’s PR right there. They have amazing PR because people know it’s a

great school, it's the best [religious] school in the country, I mean, they have all of these things. That's what it can do for you externally.

**Question 7: What, if anything, limits the effectiveness of your leadership?**

Paperwork. Administration. I'm a fundraiser and I came from the private university world. Then I came here to meetings. I mean, I came here and they just suck the life out of you, they want you in a meeting. I have a one on one with the president twice a week. Not only do I meet, I'm sorry, I mean I meet him one on one once a week, but then I meet him as an executive committee once a week, then I meet him as a cabinet once a week. So now I have three standing meetings with the president. And the cabinet and the EC, those can go on, they've gone upwards of three hours, easy. That's a waste of my freaking time. I need to talk to the president, I need to meet. I don't need to sit in three-hour meetings three times a week. So that's part of it.

And then, yes, we need paperwork. I'm a very flat, I've got twenty something people that work for me, and I have no middle managers. Ok? Me, and everybody else. Now I do that on purpose because I think you get more work done, because middle managers don't work. They do paperwork. Well, that means somebody has got to do it. So I'll have a secretary, or me, will have to do it. And that kind of ties me down a little bit. You know, you kind of weigh the options. Do I want more middle managers and less people out on the road, or do I want more people on the road and less middle managers? I've chosen the latter.

**Question 8: How do you compensate for limits on the effectiveness of strategic leadership?**

I work extra hours. I mean, a vice president for a regional-size university can't work 40 hours a week. If you do, you're not getting your job done. So you work extra hours. I can't, to be honest, I can't necessarily ask my people to do it at a state institution, it's a little restrictive. However, my people do it because they know I only ask when it's absolutely necessary, or if it's an event or something like that. But for the most part, you just got to work more hours. It's the only way to compensate for it, hard work.

Oh, and second to that is technology. I've been pretty, and I'm not the most technologically savvy fellow in the world, but I've been able to upgrade our technology to where we save quite a bit of time. We went to Raiser's Edge, we had Banner for our student system. Banner is terrible for fundraising, terrible. I don't know what you are using, but Banner is terrible fundraising software. So I came in and I invested money and bought Raiser's Edge. It was about a \$40,000, \$45,000 investment. But now my fundraisers can get everything they need on a phone. Look up every record, they can type their reports, everything is on their phone. That was a huge savings for us.

**Thank you so much for your candid responses to these questions. Are there any clarifications or further comments you would like to provide?**

Fundraising, you either love it or you hate it. If you're going to get into it, and you don't love it, then get out of it. It will wear you down, but it's something new every day. Every person that you deal with is different, every prospect requires a different strategy. It's a lot of work, and if you don't enjoy that work, it will feel like a drag. You've got to love it.

**Researcher: As a matter of demographic question, how long have you been in your current position?**

Subject 6: 2001, so 19 years. Oh, as Vice President, I've been Vice President here for 2 years, I've been a Vice President for 15 years.

## APPENDIX J

### SUBJECT 7 INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Interview #7 on June 30, 2020

#### **Question 1: How do you determine the effectiveness of your fundraising staff as a whole?**

So we use, there's 2 ways we use to evaluate the staff as a whole. The first is goal achievement as it relates to university priorities, as established in our current comprehensive campaign. We have different fundraising and engagement goals within those plans that are in support of strategic initiatives across the university. That would be the primary means of evaluating effectiveness, and that's pretty quantitative. So we can measure exactly how many dollars we've raised against a particular goal or initiative.

Then there's a set of qualitative data that we track with our fundraising staff, and that really has to do with their relationships that they both identify and nurture over a given set period of time. So those would be the two, qualitative and quantitative, and then we get into different levels, but again the big one on the quantitative is the fundraising, just total dollars to goal, and the second one and the qualitative one, the types of relationships our fundraisers have.

#### **Question 2: What leadership strategies do you use with the fundraising staff in your department?**

I think it's helpful to understand our structure when you think about fundraising staff. I serve as Vice President of University Advancement. In my role, I'm 50/50 split between university marketing and communications, and the foundation. I do serve as Chief Development Officer for the university. I also have currently a Managing Director for Development. He's really the person who's in charge of setting the strategic, the strategy with the development officers, we have an additional 4 development officers who work with that person. So they in turn then set that strategic direction. They work with their Deans and Director of Athletics to identify again what those strategic priorities are. We don't just kind of, we're very slow to, if someone has an idea that comes up and they're think we need to raise some money for that, we have a process we run that idea through to make sure they fit with our strategic priorities. We really evaluate those or make sure they fit with what we're trying to do, they being the fundraising projects that they fit with within our strategic plan.

So leadership strategies, particularly number 1 is trying to motivate staff, I think it's a difficult challenge. And finding the right people. So you have to find people who are self-motivated and you have to find motivation for them to help them invite people into the mission of the university. So part of it is framing what we do, part of it is finding the right people, and part of it is setting achievable goals so that our fundraising staff feel like their making progress. The process can be kind of starts and stops, and you don't really control your timeline of your donors, they tend to make gifts when it's the right time for them, not necessarily the right time for the institution. So I think keeping fundraisers motivated and finding the right people is absolutely critical.

**Question 3: How do you as the Chief Advancement Officer influence the institutional-level goals?**

Great question. I'm going to back up a bit. Your study is on public, four-year universities. Fundraising at these, private philanthropy, particularly at [State University] is in a relatively young phase. I had the good benefit of working at a private college where they have a much more developed sense of philanthropy on campus. That permeates through the entire culture, from students to faculty, staff, to alums, to parents, to community, everybody. Everybody understands part of that equations is individual philanthropic support, or corporate support, or whatever other source might be. In the public sphere, particularly public four-years, we're relatively new to the process. What we've been trying to do at [State University] is to figure out how do we build a sense, of identify what's already working well, for instance our faculty staff giving is near 50%, over 50% in the past couple of years, so they have a very strong sense of philanthropy on campus. Our alumni participation rate is usually between 6.4 and 6.6%. Part of the reason is, number 1, they don't necessarily view [State University] as a place... [inaudible] relationship with the state. So, they really view it... [inaudible] well the state will handle it, the state will build the buildings, the state will keep tuition down, the state will do this, the state will do that. So then you have this paradox of state funding decreases, the percentage of state funding decreases, and our expenses increase. Really you have to fill that gap with philanthropy.

We've taken a very significant, part of my role is to, and this is where the concept of advancement comes through, the pairing of marketing and communications with the fundraising team. Most of the VPs of Advancement within [State University system] right now, most of us were fundraisers previous to joining our role. We didn't come from marketing communications because they wanted influence to be heavily fundraising, and then use the marketing communications team to increase both institutional and external awareness about the net need of philanthropy, the value of philanthropy, and the impact of philanthropy. So it's been intentional in the structure and what we're trying to do, that's giving you a bit of the global perspective.

What we're trying to do on campus is really work with our leadership on campus to understand what private philanthropy and corporate support can mean to the institution, and many of our faculty staff understand that, and then freeing up time for our deans, and our leadership teams to actually engage in that. Engage in case building, engage in strategic planning, and then actually engaging with donors, that's been a challenge. We've done a couple of things. We have in our institution, each college has a liaison who meets with the dean on a monthly basis, and that liaison is a member of our development team, it's a Director of Development. We also have a liaison to Athletic department and to the Arts because we believe that most of the philanthropy that happens and most of our alums is at that departmental level, or within athletics to a team, or within the Arts to a program. So we try to keep it very grass roots in its nature. We have those liaisons, and we have a consultant come in and work with our deans and we've done some in-house workshops. We've also sent a number of our deans to advancement resource trainings. And then we try to, internally, really develop that sense of philanthropy. We've done a [State University] Give Day, which is an online day of giving that we host on campus, but we have a lot of interaction. Obviously COVID-19 has made that challenging. We've done that all internally.

Externally, we've done a lot with marketing communications, so highlighting the impact of gifts, highlighting why donors make their gifts, we've really co-opted the university's channels and messaging so that it's not really coming from the foundation any more, most of those stories' origins are from the internal marketing communications team. They look like they're coming from [state university], not the foundation. The foundation does have its own channels, but we really, we have better reach with university channels than the foundation's or doing both. This is taking more of marketing communication's time, we're not viewed as kind of, "oh yeah, the foundation needs that," we're really viewed as partners, and that's the whole concept of including marketing communications with the advancement team.

I know there's a lot there, but it's a big question at the same time.

I would add, too, that one of my accountabilities each year with the president, and one of the goals that's on my performance review with our president, is "How have you increased the institutional capacity for philanthropy?" So we're pretty strategic and tactical about what we're doing to drive that each and every year.

**Question 4: How do your departmental leadership strategies address institutional-level goals?**

We really require each department to, let me back it up. We work under, currently we work under a 7-year comprehensive campaign plan for the foundation. That campaign plan was established by the university leadership and foundation leadership. And underneath that we have a tactical plan. And those plans, then, we call it our work plan, those plans directly roll up to our goals. So each department is required to submit a work plan, they build it with their team, so each one of my departmental leaders, my managing director for development, my director of finance, director of foundation operations, chief marketing officer, all have a work plan that rolls up to meet those goals. So they start working in January and they have to be submitted by end of June. Then we as a leadership team roll those up and make sure, you know, did we do what we said we were going to do last year and accomplish what we did? Sometimes yes, sometimes no, usually yes. And then we adjust for the next year.

We do at least a quarterly retreat, a one-day quarterly retreat as a leadership team to, hey how are we doing on our work plan? Let's do a quick status update. What do we need to adjust, what do we need to tweak? And then move out from there. It's a pretty structured process, I would say, that has served us well.

**Question 5: What factors internal to your institution affect your department's fundraising performance?**

Internal factors.... Primarily, the biggest internal factor is presidential leadership. What is the perception of the president internally and externally? That has a major impact on what is happening. I think campus culture, how are we perceived publicly? Do we feel like, does the public perceive us as moving in the right direction, as being a valuable part of the community, you know, externally. How are we perceived? University leadership and, I think, down to the next level, our Vice President for Academic Affairs, our deans, they all have to be strong leaders and people have to be willing to invest in them. So I think those are kind of the three big ones.

And then I would add a fourth, do we have a vision? Right, and is it a compelling vision, have we cast that compelling vision for the future? If we have that compelling vision that people see themselves as being able to be a part of, then I think we probably have the recipe in place, we've got the right leadership in place, if the institution isn't in a crisis, per se, and we've got the right vision, I think those three things can greatly influence the people's ability to invest in the organization.

**Question 6: What factors external to your institution affect your department's fundraising performance?**

External... I would think, I've been doing this about 12 years, the biggest barriers externally typically are the economy and people's confidence in what the future's going to look like. The higher the degree of uncertainty, the greater the degree of the drop in fundraising. The level of, the level of wealth is relatively steady, it's just what are people willing to do with their assets? They need to be certain of the future or they are less likely to support at the time that you want them to support. That's really the one big external that I can think of.

**Researcher: As point of clarification, you said you've been doing this 12 years, is that in the Chief Advancement Officer role?**

Subject 7: Nope, Chief Advancement Officer for four years.

**Question 7: What, if anything, limits the effectiveness of your leadership?**

Limiting factors on leadership... Boy, I don't feel like there is, you know, besides my own personal strengths and weaknesses, institutionally I don't feel like I'm limited. Externally, too, I've got a really great board and they allow us to do things. I just don't feel that terribly limited to be honest with you. Tough one to answer.

**Question 8: How do you compensate for limits on the effectiveness of strategic leadership?**

Yeah. Let me ask this question, are you are you doing mostly [State University system] schools?

**Researcher: No, I found Carnegie Classifications for Winona State, and searched nationally for similar institutions.**

Subject 7: Cool, you did Carnegie. Got you. Let me give you some context because I think it's helpful because I never know. One of the things I've been blessed with is our ability to generate our own revenue. So our foundation has the ability, unlike other [State University system] foundations, we use our endowment management fee and our gift administration fee to primarily fund our operations along with some university support. That's been a real benefit that I had nothing to do with, I walked into it and it's just been a great tool. So that's been a compensation to what, when I hear my colleagues talk, the real challenge is staffing given our current union models. So I think that has been a challenge for others. It hasn't been a challenge for myself just because I have so much flexibility and I can hire in a different method and manage in a different method than others. That's been a real positive. So from a compensation standpoint, I think that the only other thing maybe just going back to your question 7 is just people's level of awareness of philanthropy at the public university, and why it's so important. So I think that's been the

challenge and I think, answering that in one of your previous questions, we really just have to make the case and build relationships with people. Which is just basic advancement work, making our case and building relationships, and moving up people's philanthropic interest scale. I think that's how we would compensate for that.

## APPENDIX K

### SUBJECT 8 INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Interview #6 on June 29, 2020

**Question 1: How do you determine the effectiveness of your fundraising staff as a whole?**

Well, obviously, our most important metric in terms of fundraising success is dollars raised. Collectively, I have actually two overarching goals every year, it's dollars in the door and alumni participation rate. Alumni participation rate used to just mean what percentage of our total alumni give, and now we're using actual different means of engagement, so I measure alumni engagement and dollars in the door, those two things.

**Question 2: What leadership strategies do you use with the fundraising staff in your department?**

I have a lot of individual accountability. My strategy really is to arm them with everything I think they need to be successful. Our message, arm them with the "why [University]" and of course arm them with wonderful prospects with wealth research and other engagement metric research. And then really empower them to get out there and do it on their own without a ton of daily oversight from me. I like to show them the why and then show them the how, so I hold myself to the highest, the actual highest accountability. I have a \$2 million in the door annual goal for myself, so they watch me do it. I'm not asking them to do anything I'm not doing myself, so that's my strategy.

**Question 3: How do you as the Chief Advancement Officer influence the institutional-level goals?**

Certainly we have a huge role to play in enrollment and recruitment. I am also the Vice President of External Engagement, so I am really the face of the institution from an external perspective. So not only do I and the foundation influence, obviously, dollars in the door, but alumni engagement, recruitment of new students, retention of current students, and outreach, so brand awareness and getting, you know, enhancing and raising our brand awareness. All of those things.

**Question 4: How do your departmental leadership strategies address institutional-level goals?**

I think that, again, holding my entire staff up to such a high level of accountability. They have to have a number of visits in a year, dollars in the door a year, they all have those expectations. Inherently, that is going to filter across the university in terms of engagement numbers, outreach numbers, brand awareness, and, of course, private dollars to enhance scholarships, and capital projects, and the visibility of those capital projects, all of those things. I think really using metrics for my staff translates into metrics for the entire institution.

**Question 5: What factors internal to your institution affect your department's fundraising performance?**

Well, the allocation of dollars and enrollment dollars and all of those things are huge. I just had to lay off 5 of my 21 staff members due to fluctuating enrollment and public funding and less enrollment dollars directly affects us, I had to let several fundraisers go. That's going to negatively affect our ability to perform.

**Question 6: What factors external to your institution affect your department's fundraising performance?**

A great example is COVID 19, which is external to us, but is affecting our ability to raise funds in a myriad of ways. Our donors have lost personal wealth, they've lost jobs, they've had to direct their dollars other places, and so that hugely affects our ability to raise money. External to us, the state has allocated so much less money to higher education and that affects us as well in our ability to raise money.

**Question 7: What, if anything, limits the effectiveness of your leadership?**

Many factors limit the effectiveness of my leadership. Everything from who are my team members and how receptive are they to personal accountability, to our university HR and what they allow me the ability to do in terms of hiring, firing, retention, bonusing, all of those things. They are hugely important and affect my ability to lead.

**Question 8: How do you compensate for limits on the effectiveness of strategic leadership?**

I don't have the ability to monetary bonus staff, so I have to work even harder to motivate them in other ways. The personal "why we're doing this." I have to work harder because I don't have the ability to monetize it.

**Thank you so much for your candid responses to these questions. Are there any clarifications or further comments you would like to provide?**

I've been in my position about two and a half years. In higher education, 22.