



What's the Difference between Fundraising and Development?

Q: Recently I heard a heated exchange about whether “development officer” was a pretentious way of saying “fundraiser” or if the two jobs are actually different. Is there a real difference between the two?

A: There are some distinctions between fundraisers and development officers, although the differences aren't particularly significant.

Conventionally, a fundraiser may be a paid or volunteer worker, a permanent staff member, or a consultant serving for the duration of a specific project. Development officers are always permanent, paid employees.

The title “development officer” is often preferred because it reflects the real work these professionals do. Development offi-

cers do more than raise funds; they share a vision with a donor. Development officers must, therefore, be full participants in their organization; they need to be involved in strategic planning and the design of new programs. They play a crucial role in taking the organization where it's going, helping to define what the organization is and can become.

No matter what your title, your creativity and clear-eyed judgment will be an asset to your organization, and will help strengthen the connection between those who can give and those who need to receive your organization's services. Ultimately, the title you've been given won't limit your effectiveness or your satisfaction with your work. Just use the term you want when you define how you go about doing what you do.

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Must You View Your Peers as Competitors?

Q: Several recent articles in *Nonprofit World* have made the point that nonprofit organizations need to become more competitive or they won't survive. In theory, I agree with that stance. But many of our organization's board and staff members are uncomfortable looking at our peers in other nonprofits as competitors. What can we do?

A: Competition is here to stay, since it works well not only for funders but for the people you serve. There's no doubt that the transition from non-threatening peer to competitor is a tough one, and it's one that thousands of nonprofit execs are wrestling with right now. But it's an

essential change to make if you're going to continue to be around.

Here's the good news: Strategic alliances are an attractive route to earned income. Competitors can also collaborate, whether it be on joint ventures, joint marketing campaigns, relationships with suppliers, licensing fees, brokering arrangements, or any number of other types of partnerships. Take another look at that “competitor” to see how you can develop a win-win scenario.

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