

SAMPLE

FUNDRAISING FOR PRESIDENTS

A GUIDE

JAMES M. LANGLEY

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JAMES M. LANGLEY

FOREWORD

An effective president does so much more than raise funds and shake hands. Your institution's president is uniquely positioned to scan the horizon and help develop and communicate a vision of the future to prospective donors. In this book, Jim Langley, president and founder of Langley Innovations and past vice president for advancement at Georgetown University, contends that the president's primary role in fundraising is not to ask for money but to create the conditions that attract significant philanthropic investments.

This book will offer a forward-thinking look at:

- How the president can take a lead role in defining the case for support and identifying inspiring projects defined by specific objectives rather than by categories of institutional need.
- How the president can define for donors the difference a philanthropic dollar makes in achieving key objectives.
- The respective roles and responsibilities of the president, the vice president for advancement, and the board chair.
- The president's specific role in donor stewardship, campaigns, piloting new models for fundraising, volunteer management, and asking.
- How to onboard a new president in ways that strengthen rather than stall the work of fundraising.

Our book opens with “A Tale of Two Presidents,” a detailed narrative illustrating two institutions—one in which the president takes a traditional approach to executive involvement in fundraising, the other reflecting a more intentional and strategic approach. Enjoy this parable of effective presidential/development partnership and then turn to page 20 to begin reviewing practical strategies for your president.

BEYOND THE MYTHS AND STEREOTYPES: *A TALE OF TWO PRESIDENTS*

Whether we're speaking of the president of a college, nonprofit, medical center or research institute, it has become axiomatic to assert that he or she must be a fundraiser or, even more pointedly, that fundraising is his or her most important duty. Further, a stereotype of the president-as-fundraiser accompanies those assertions, that of a flawlessly coiffed, gleaming-toothed, back-clapping, silver-tongued orator.

Yet, in the universe of presidents we find many reticent, even occasionally tongue-tied fundraising successes and many well-dressed, smooth-talking failures. Substance and sincerity often play the race-winning turtle to the sociable hare. Fundraising success is not driven by how or how often one asks but how carefully one thinks about what one asks for and why. It is not about being amiable then ambushing the unsuspecting prospect; it is about finding prospects who identify with institutional purposes and demonstrating, through iterative dialogue, how a well-crafted investment can advance them in specific and lasting ways.

A president too focused on the mere act of raising funds may fail to understand or fulfill the duties that make an

organization a viable contender for private funds in the first place. The first order of business for a president is not to ask for more money but to create the conditions that will attract significant philanthropic investment. To ensure fundraising success, what presidents really must do is:

1. Explain in clear, compelling terms what distinguishes and differentiates their institution on a local, regional, national or global level;
2. Articulate how those differentiating and distinguishing features can be amplified, with sufficient funding, to deliver more value to those the institution exists to serve;
3. Lend credibility to those aspirations by putting forward series of objective-specific projects that demonstrate exactly how, when and to whom that value will be delivered; and
4. Demonstrate with consistency how their institution is a cause-oriented, service driven culture.

Presidents who do these things well will do more for fundraising than the “glad handers” and “eager askers.”

Illustrating the Divide: A Study in Contrasts

To illustrate the difference between fundraising and creating conditions that foster philanthropy, let us contrast two newly-minted presidents possessed of very different personalities and leadership styles, Dr. Dinah Mohe and Dr. Stradivarius “Strad” Agee.

Dinah, as soon as she is named president of Quadrivium College, announces her intention to “hit the ground running” by launching a campaign on her first official day in office, four months hence. In the meantime, she commits herself to weekend meetings interspersed with virtual conferences with the key players at “the Quad” as the institution is known among the cognoscenti of the college. Her take charge style is noted with glee among stakeholders who have long held that the Quad is the “best kept secret in higher education,” and it is noted with a bit of apprehension by the wiser but fewer souls who counter that without fundamental change, “the Quad is best kept as a secret.” But take-charge leaders beget snap-to adherents, so Dinah soon finds herself surrounded by the most amiable of head-nodders and all seems right with the world.

Strad, upon being named president of Didactia University, resolves to walk the length of the campus, to meet as many people as possible, and to interview faculty, student, alumni and staff leaders in a series of campus visits before his formal investment. Strad likes to ask everyone, “What three things must never change about Didactia, and what three absolutely must change if we are to remain a force in the 21st century?” As a result, he receives both deeply thoughtful and terribly irreverent answers, the latter being particularly true of students. Some of the more waggish have already played off the state motto by creating t-shirts and bumper stickers that read “Live Free or Didactia.” But even in the irreverence, Strad sees common threads running through the answers he receives from students, faculty, alumni and staff. He knows that people wouldn’t be critical if they didn’t care. When he meets with Cassie Andre, the vice president for advancement at Didactia, he asks, “Should we be launching a campaign on day one, like what Dinah is doing at the Quad?”

“Well,” she says, “let’s say we found a donor capable of making a very large gift. Pick the amount—\$25 million, \$50 million, \$100 million. And all that donor wanted from you was a plan showing how that amount would be put to best use and how it would have a significant and lasting effect, not only on the campus but on the lives of those we serve.”

“That would be great,” says Strad. “What’s your answer?”

“Well, I don’t have one yet.”

“We shouldn’t launch a campaign until you do,” she says.

“But, are you saying that if I do come up with a good answer that we can find those kinds of donors?” Strad asks.

“I’m saying that if you don’t, we won’t have a chance.”

Feeling confronted by what seems to be an overly-assertive subordinate, Strad feels a flash of anger run through him. “So, what’s your job?” he asks sharply.

“To help you come up with an answer and to do everything I can to help this place until we do.”

Strad is immediately mollified. On the trip home, he realizes that Cassie is the kind of determined, no-nonsense professional he needs—one who would tell him the truth and commit herself to making him and Didactia successful.

On the day Dinah formally assumes the presidency of the Quad, her first order of business is to review the plan she had requested—an aggressive schedule for the next six months detailing who she must see, in order of giving capacity, in cities that had the highest concentration of

donors. The plan called for half of her calendar to be committed to the campaign, including evenings and weekends. She reviews it with Dusty Beideboch, her vice president for development, asking a few questions about logistics. When finished, she says simply but firmly, “Okay, let’s go to work.”

“I hope you noticed we have our first solicitation today at lunch,” he says.

“Indeed,” she says, “starting right at the top.”

“The board chair has to be the first to step up,” he said. “Will he do the \$5 million?”

“He can. We’ve done everything to set him up for it,” says Dusty.

Their lunch goes well enough; the board chair says Dinah’s arrival marks the threshold of a new era for the Quad and promises his full support. She seizes the moment, employing much of Dusty’s script, stressing that the college is poised to move to the next level. “We need the board to step up,” she says, “and we need you to lead the charge.”

“I’m prepared to do that,” says the chair. “Can we count on you for \$5 million?”

“Well, I don’t know if I can step up that much,” he chuckles, “unless I want to step out of my marriage.”

Dinah shoots a look at Dusty to see if he can help her with the next move.

Dusty, quite subtly, fans out one hand, like a blackjack player signaling “hold.”

Dinah, not quite sure how to act on that signal, stares at the chair. A long, awkward moment ensues.

“Well,” he says after a few seconds, which Dinah and Dusty swear were a few minutes, “why don’t I start with a million, and we’ll see how it goes?”

“Could you see your way to five?” asks Dusty, hoping his moxie will impress Dinah.

“Not now,” says the chair. “Maybe later.”

On the way back from the meeting, Dusty, heaping praise on Dinah, proclaims the meeting a great success with \$1 million in hand and another four not far behind. Dinah, in turn, heaps praise on Dusty, and they return to campus basking in the glow of the first glint of what will surely be far greater success.

On his first day at Didactia, Strad conducts a town hall meeting on campus, the audience overflowing the historic auditorium, in which he shares the gleanings from his campus visits. He notes the deep dedication to Didactia that he has found at every level of the organization and the concomitant frustration with what is widely perceived as institutional inertia.

“In the face of rapid and profound change,” Strad says, “inertia is not just an irritant; it’s a liability, one that causes us to lose ground each day, to fall farther behind in fulfilling our obligations and pursuing our greater potential.

“We must embrace change, but not indiscriminately or for its own sake. We must distinguish between the shadow of faddishness and the substance of lasting change. We must begin by asking not what we want for ourselves, but how

we might make a greater difference where differences most need to be made in our community, our state, our nation, and our world.”

In the wake of that stirring rhetoric, Strad announces that he is appointing a series of task forces. Each is composed of various stakeholders (faculty, students, alumni, parents and staff) and charged with exploring opportunities and challenges facing a particularly critical function of the university and to suggest ways of maximizing the former and mitigating the latter.

While some senior administrators caution Strad about “opening up a can of worms” in giving so many a voice in “university matters,” the new president is confident that the openness of the exercise will create its own checks and balances. The better ideas will be recognized and embraced while the weaker ones will be winnowed out through public discourse and debate. Others suggest that he should simply proclaim his vision at the outset and task others to see it through. But Strad knows institutions cannot advance without strong sense of shared purpose, so he is willing to listen, then lift up and build on what the culture will provide.

Strad also meets with Cassie, his vp for advancement, on his first day. “I’ve been thinking about where selective investment can make a significant difference.”

“Great,” Cassie says, “how can I help?”

“Well, my ideas are still rough,” says Strad.

“That’s fine. Let our donors and prospects help shape them.”

“Okay, how do we do that?”

“Different ways. You can share them conversationally with key board members and top donors. We can put some of them in the form of discussion papers and air them out with small groups of important prospects. We can even ask some of our most thoughtful contributors to help develop the draft. When someone writes in the margins of discussion papers, it’s a good sign. It means they’re taking some ownership of the idea.”

So Strad leads and engages in a widespread discussion about the future of Didactia, receiving appreciative comments from many internal and external stakeholders about how rewarding it is to be a part of such rich and purposeful conversations. Strad wins many over with his ability to field questions, to accept tough questions and challenges with equanimity, and to begin synthesizing various thoughts into an increasingly clearer articulation of shared purposes.

After six months of thoughtful self-study, Strad notes the emergence of thought leaders across the campus—in academic administration, on the faculty, in student affairs, in admissions and in advancement. In the give and take of dialogue around the future of Didactica, the thought leaders are marked by their ability to listen, to synthesize ideas, and to bring relevant research and analyses to bear. They are adept at framing concepts and proposals demonstrably in the best interests of the institution and those it serves, and give generously of their time. He also notes how the participants in the task forces eventually gravitate away from participants with large egos, narrow agendas and short-term expectations, even though they may have held sway at the outset of the discussion, and increasingly toward the thought leaders. The process teaches him to differentiate between those who have the most impressive titles and those who can be counted on, time and again, to make substantive contributions.

He also learns that substantive people and ideas do not emerge immediately but ultimately prevail in the court of public opinion.

In the next six months, Strad observes even greater coalescence of purpose and greater possibility. The task forces generate constructive recommendations and compelling ideas. The latter are turned into white papers that are shared and discussed with more internal and external stakeholders. And, in the iterative process, depth and detail is added to those ideas. The word-of-mouth buzz, still the most powerful form of communication, works to Strad's benefit. Though he has not yet secured significant new resources, he has some of the most significant prospects, including many who took part in the task forces, feeling more sanguine than ever before about the future of Didactia.

Meanwhile, at the Quad, Dinah has impressed many with her tenacity. Most board members encourage her to remain aggressive in fundraising but suggest she not waste those efforts on them. She continues to achieve a measure of success in securing gift commitments from loyal supporters but notices, after a few months, that Dusty has fewer and fewer suggestions about the next round of solicitations, and that the only appointments he is securing for her are with increasingly marginal prospects. He seems to be defining his role as "setting the table" for her but she is feeling as if he has orchestrated a clever role reversal in which he is giving her assignments and asking for progress reports.

Yet, Dinah stays on task, pursuing every opportunity, logging impressively long hours. At the end of her first year, the Quad announces record fundraising results. Dinah receives accolades all around; many cheer her on while pointing her toward "more low hanging fruit out

there” and legions of prospects “just waiting to be asked.” She follows up on every lead but finds the fruit much greener and more remote than rumored. When she returns to campus, she finds a longer line of internal claimants at her office door asking why they have not personally benefited from her fundraising prowess given the world class nature of their work and reputation, which is particularly troublesome given the “imminent offers” they are expecting from other institutions.

Dinah finds herself increasingly gnawed by doubts about Dusty and his development team. “Aren’t I being asked to do too much? Why aren’t they putting me in front of better prospects? Shouldn’t they be bringing in more by themselves?” After asking herself these questions, she starts probing fellow presidents. She notes that many seem to have war stories about being asked to do too much in the name of fundraising, about meeting with odd prospects of dubious giving potential or the same prospects over and over, and about being left wondering if subordinates have followed up on the prospects they were urged to meet. When Dinah asks, “So what would you do if you were in my position?” many advise her to bring in a consultant to evaluate her development operation.

Breaking the news gently to Dusty, Dinah says she thinks its “healthy” for aspects of her administration to “invite external review.” Despite appearing a bit glum, Dusty agrees, then immediately suggests a firm run by “an old friend.” Dinah says she would like to interview three to five firms, in addition to the one that Dusty has in mind. He nods, glummer still.

Dinah interviews five consultants including Dusty’s friend whom, she concludes, is the weakest of the options. All seem to offer essentially the same services though some are more analytically grounded than others. All suggest,

some more emphatically than others, that she launched the campaign without the proper analytical foundations, including a prospect giving analysis, a case for support, or a feasibility study. All, coincidentally, offer those services. She selects the consultant who, upon completion of the various expensive analyses, promises to show Dusty how to implement a highly structured, metrical approach to identifying and assigning the most promising prospects to the portfolios of the development staff. “Then, through a series of carefully orchestrated moves,” the consultant says, “the advancement operation will be able to convert at least one-third of those prospects into donors in a logical, progressive and predictive, manner. This more disciplined approach will create a consistent updraft in the Quad’s prospect pyramid, thereby ensuring that more promising prospects rise more consistently to the top.” Employing this method, the consultant promises, will allow Dusty to bring only the most worthy, well-developed prospects to Dinah’s attention. Dinah chooses not to bias the consultant’s opinion but wonders how Dusty will stand up to the scrutiny and discipline that is about to be visited on him.

At Didactia, Cassie is deeply encouraged by Strad’s approach to direction setting, in the way he seeks to understand the university’s relative position in higher education without getting lost in the navel lint of obsessive benchmarking. Cassie also studies donors’ giving patterns in the recent past and analyzes the depth and capacity of current prospects, but she knows that Didactia’s philanthropic past is only partially predictive of its future. She knows that if she can show donors how investment in specific amounts will allow the university to make concrete and lasting differences in the lives of those it serves, she will help Didactia generate much, much greater private support. She realizes, with great appreciation, how Strad is repositioning the university not as a static institution that

loyalists give to, but as a service- driven university that the philanthropically inclined will give through to create a better world.

Indeed, the first significant commitment Strad receives is from E. Lee Moss, a noted local philanthropist and former board member who has been serving on the Student Success Task Force. Moss was taken by research shared with the task force showing a powerful correlation between the amount of responsibility given to students outside of the classroom and the success they enjoyed in the first ten years of their chosen profession. He was even more deeply impressed when the group learned that students who worked on campus were far more likely to give back to their alma mater than those who received large scholarships. As a result, Moss decided to give \$2.6 million to establish a student foundation. He stipulated that students selected to run the foundation be charged with managing those funds, raising additional ones, and disbursing a percentage of the earnings in the form of scholarships. He further stipulated that those scholarships be granted to working students who received strong performance reviews from the offices that employed them and who maintained a grade point average of 3.4 or better.

Four and a half months later, Anne Airy, President of the Firm Foundation, announced that Didactia would be receiving the largest grant in the institution's long and distinguished history, "to identify, inspire, and foster the characteristics of college students that are most likely to manifest themselves in lives of civic engagement." In announcing the award, Airy says, "The Firm Foundation has given many grants to many laudable initiatives emanating from the divisions and departments of various colleges and universities. This grant, however, is given in recognition of Didactia's collective effort to reawaken the university's service mission on a sweeping scale and to

redefine the role of a university in the global society of the 21st century.” At that event, the chairman of Didactia’s board tells Strad and Cassie that he will match the Firm Foundation’s grant but wants the announcement of his gift to have maximal strategic impact, to be, in his words, “a real momentum builder.”

Dinah, meanwhile, begins receiving detailed reports from the consultant, which she dutifully digests, usually in the late evening. One addresses the disparities between the current field of prospects identified by the Quad and the “gift pyramid” that one would expect to see given the size of the college’s campaign. That pyramid, says the report, should include three prospects capable of giving \$10 million, six capable of \$5 million, 12 capable of \$2.5 million, and 24 capable of a million, just for starters. She knows of no one in the \$10 million range, and only one who might give \$5 million, her current board chairman. And, even if there were 24 prospects capable of giving \$1 million, she wonders how long it would take to arrange enough visits with each to bring them around to that number. When the feasibility study comes in, she is stunned to learn that the majority of her board reports being “unaware” of a financial obligation to the college. She wonders why none of this was revealed to her when she was considering the post and why no one, especially Dusty, pushed back when she proposed launching a campaign on day one.

The consultant continues to assure Dinah that better analysis and more disciplined prospect engagement will make a steady and certain difference, but signs of significant progress seem hard to find as the months unfold.

Strad and Cassie, with the active participation of their board chair, also secure the services of a consultant when

the state of campus planning reaches a point where Didactia can define where it is going, why it is going there, who it hopes to serve and what difference will be made by various levels of investment.

Like Dinah, they encounter consultants who offer the same old toolkit and dispense the same old bromides about fundraising, but they continue to look until they find innovators in the field. They gravitate to those who say, “Don’t hire a consultant to import tactics and techniques from someone else’s campaign. Hire someone who will help you define your own unique path forward given present and emerging realities.” They hire the consultant who demonstrates how she has helped very different institutions reach and sustain higher levels of giving with very different campaigns. They note that she has run campaigns of various durations—some as brief as two years, some three to five years in length, and only a few that were longer. When they ask her why, she says, “Too many institutions extended the length of the campaign, so they could post a larger number. Most donors, except the blindly loyal, have tired of these campaigns. They want to see where and how their investment is making a real difference. Your campaign should be about strategic objectives. The campaign should conclude when those objectives are met.”

Her advice resonates with Strad and Cassie, but Strad says, “It’s also a little scary to be breaking new ground. The standard campaign is so imprinted in our collective conscience. Do you honestly think we can pull it off?”

With the calm conviction of a seasoned veteran, the consultant replies, “The strategic footings that you’ve put in place for the university are the best I’ve ever seen. The campaign built on them will allow us all to do the best work of our careers.”

Dinah does begin to note some process improvements at the Quad. Dusty's reports, now in the form of dashboards, show how many prospects have been assigned to the portfolios of the development staff, the number of prospects in each stage (qualification, cultivation, solicitation or stewardship) and a projection of how much is to be raised at the end of the year. If the projections are right, she notes, her administration will have yet another record fundraising year. Yet, Dinah does not feel as if any of it has brought about a substantive improvement in the quality of her professional life. She feels as if she is being put through an ordeal of endless and relatively unproductive meetings, engaging the same old prospects and hearing the same old hedges about their giving, trying to sound messianic when asked the millionth time about "her vision," and providing remarks to gathering after gathering of alumni without a heavy hitter in sight.

On a long flight home after a grueling multi-city tour, Dinah is sorting through the latest reports from Dusty and the consultant. She doesn't realize she is sighing audibly as she turns each page but the distinguished-looking gentleman next to her can't help but feel for her.

"Long day?" he asks.

"Let's just say I've had a series of them."

"What do you do?"

"I'm the President of Quadrivium College."

"So you spend a lot of time fundraising?"

"It's an important part of the job," she says wearily.

"Indeed," he says, "I've chaired several large campaigns."

“Oh, really? Where?”

When he tells her, she knows she is in important company. She wonders how she might adroitly turn the conversation to what she is trying to achieve at the Quad, but he is an inquisitive sort. He asks all sorts of questions about fundraising. Since he listens so patiently and empathetically, she finds herself sharing her every frustration and concern.

“It’s all very familiar,” he says when she has finished. “Too familiar.”

“Really?” she asks. “I would think it would be much different at top tier institutions.”

“No,” he says, “there’s a terrible sameness to it. I’m approached for support constantly by various colleges, universities, independent schools, and nonprofits. I’m struck by how so many seem to be working from the same playbook. It’s painfully transparent.”

Dinah, now wanting to make sure she doesn’t fall into the same category, drops all pretenses and goes on intuitive autopilot. “Okay,” she says, “what am I doing wrong?”

“Well,” he chuckles, “I’d say you can’t make a substantial difference by imitating everyone else.”

The truth in his simple statement causes Dinah’s shoulders to slump, albeit imperceptibly and only for a nanosecond. Her over-achieving gear kicks as she turns to look at him full in the face. “I’m listening,” she says.

“Your development officer and consultant assume a lot,” he says. “I have not given away almost \$40 million because a development officer ‘moved’ me through a process. “

Dinah tries not to wince when he places a sardonic emphasis on the word “moved.”

“I am not a passive creature waiting to be activated by a sales pitch,” he continues. “I have a well-developed set of beliefs that include an obligation to give back to a society that has afforded me such a remarkable life.”

She nods, impressed by the evident sincerity of that statement.

“But I want to give in such a way that allows me to share that value system with others, not just fill your very familiar fundraising basket.” There is no acrimony in his tone despite the directness of his language.

“If you were to secure an appointment with me,” he continues, “I would hope that you had studied my philanthropic history and the value system behind it. If you hadn’t, I would hope that you came to ask me about it before trying to sell me on what you wanted. I would hope that you would propose a project that aligned with my values, that you had a deep personal conviction for, that your college had a unique capability to implement, and that you were willing to have me scrub before we talked money.”

“Of course,” she says.

“I wouldn’t make a decision then and there,” he says. “I would take stock of you. I would look for signs of courage, conviction and true innovation. I’d do some research on you and the college, and if I was more encouraged than not, I’d ask you to send me a proposal.”

“It sounds like such a logical way to work,” says Dinah. “I’m afraid I haven’t been doing much of what you suggest.”

“You’re just starting,” he says with nonchalant shrug. “And, remember, I’ve been through this many times. Your challenge is to find younger versions of me, budding philanthropists, in their 30s and 40s. If you discover them before everyone else and nurture their interests, you’ll benefit many times over.”

“I’m not sure there are a lot of younger versions of you out there.”

“Oh, there are. Look for people of substance who become civically engaged early in life. Avoid the conspicuous consumers, the ‘see and be seen’ crowd.”

“That makes sense,” she says, “but it takes time. What do I do this year, and next?”

“You’ve got to find those who are giving their money away, understand why and convince them that you’ve got a better use for their money. And if you convince them, you’d better make it happen.”

When Dinah returns to the office, she calls the consultant to tell him his services are no longer needed.

“Why?” he asks.

“You made a valuable contribution to our efforts,” she says, “but I’ve concluded that gift pyramids don’t populate themselves. I need a consultant that will help me make people want to give to the Quad, people who will be forever glad they did.”

Stepping Back

Both Dinah and Strad are intelligent, responsible, hard-working leaders. Both assume presidencies without previous experience and inherit cultures that are new to them. And, in both cases, we see the assumptions that comprise a culture—the culture of the institution itself and the level of sophistication with which it has defined the advancement function.

Dinah brings a limited view of fundraising to the position and inadvertently plays right into a culture that is looking for a star, someone who will solve all their problems without asking much in return. All they needed, or so they thought, was a charismatic president who would sweep donors off their feet and come back to campus with more money for all. So, when Dinah announced her intention to launch a campaign on day one, perfect conformance with cultural expectations was achieved. Everyone, including Dusty, saluted and fell in line. The burden of enormous and unrealistic expectations was parked on her seemingly Atlas-like shoulders. Indeed, the culture of the Quad assumed three terms—fundraising, development and advancement—were synonyms. In fact, “fundraising” is only a phase of advancement—the solicitation of private funds. “Development” is the phase that precedes fundraising, the one that seeks to describe the process by which prospects’ philanthropic inclinations and propensities are identified and ‘developed’ by agents of the institution to the point where they will respond favorably to a solicitation. “Advancement,” the scene-setter for development and fundraising, entails a host of short-term, mid-term and long-term strategies by which an institution positions itself as an ever-stronger competitor for private support. The culture of the Quad, which conflated the

terms into one, placed too much emphasis on fundraising and too little on advancement and development. It expected to reap in cash and commitments what it had not sown in the building of long-term credibility and community.

Strad was fortunate enough to have secured a presidency at an institution whose culture held a broader view of advancement. Cassie, the symbol of that culture, drew that distinction when she first met Strad, disabusing him of his campaign hopes until he, and the campus community, gave greater thought to the difference that they could make through greater investment. The eager participation of stakeholders in the various task forces demonstrated that there was constructive energy within the institution that, prior to Strad, had not been channeled in pursuit of worthy ends. He was wise enough to listen to and internalize her advice. Indeed, his willingness to listen, to let the culture speak to him, and to synthesize the best of its expressions into an intelligible, compelling whole is foundational to his success and, therefore, Didactia's.

GETTING STARTED

Start simply. When donors make gifts, even small gifts through the annual fund, ask them whom they most admire, appreciate or respect at your institution. Notify each and every person cited by your donors' mention. Keep the tally for six months, then go to five or ten people most frequently mentioned by donors and ask how private support could help them do their jobs better. Ask them how they might use \$10,000, \$100,000, \$1 million or even more. Ask them to think in very specific terms how the money could be used and who it could benefit. Or you could ask them which of the institution's fundraising priorities they find most important. Then, feature these stars on your website and through other means—perhaps by sharing their dreams and what certain increments of private support would mean or perhaps by using their testimony to stress the critical importance of institutional priorities. In this simple way, you will have highlighted your most respected faculty and/or staff and linked them to appealing project or institutional objectives. You will have better aligned your interests with those most likely to support you.

JAMES M. LANGLEY

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We hope you have enjoyed this complimentary sample from *Fundraising for Presidents*.

You can purchase the entire book [here](#).



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