**Sample questions for a development audit**

These questions demonstrate the scope of issues you should consider if you want to evaluate your fund development program.

Often a development audit is conducted by an outside evaluator. However, you can also use this survey to conduct your own internal assessment.

Ask your development staff to complete this audit. Go through the questions with your development committee. Or, use this detailed audit to develop your own brief version targeted to the board’s role in fund development.

P.S. Remember, these are questions to stimulate discussion. Your organization may decide that it doesn't need to subscribe to all of these statements. However, exceptions should be rare.

Use the scale below to rate your organization's fund development effectiveness.

*Below Standard (1): We don’t operate this way. Standard (2): Usually we operate this way. Above Standard (3): We regularly operate this way.*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Below (1)</th>
<th>Standard (2)</th>
<th>Above (3)</th>
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**Organization's purpose**

1. Services and programs are deemed relevant by your organization's constituents and the community at large.  

2. Justifiable reason, recognized by the community at large, to raise public and private contributions.

**Organizational planning**

3. Mission statement is regularly evaluated for relevance.

4. Organizational values and vision are clear and shared by all staff and key volunteers.

5. Strategic plan, based upon market research, addresses internal strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats, sets corporate goals for a specific time period.

6. Ongoing review and adjustment of the plan.

7. Ongoing evaluation of program effectiveness, client satisfaction, health of infrastructure, and systems to intervene as necessary.

8. Systems for continuous quality improvement.

**Constituency development**

9. Clear understanding of who current constituents are and what motivates their participation.

10. Clear vision of new markets (i.e., those predisposed to your cause) to target for relationship building.
11. Ongoing mechanisms to gather demographic and lifestyle information about constituents and the predisposed.

12. Strategies to cultivate relationships with donors and prospects.

Organizational leadership
13. Understanding and acceptance that, together, the board and CEO are responsible for the success or failure of the organization and the fulfillment of its mission.

14. Leadership that stimulates organizational learning and, when appropriate, change.

15. Effective enabling of volunteers by staff.

Marketing and communications
16. A positive image in the community.

17. Clear understanding of image you wish to have, image you currently have, and strategies to align the two.

18. An effective communications program to reach constituents.

Organizational operations
19. Clearly articulated role, responsibilities and relationship between board and staff.

20. Comprehensive financial management system that include annual budgeting and revision processes, monthly statement of revenue and expense compared to budget, and fund accounting.

21. Financial and program systems that fulfill accountability and reporting requirements to clients, donors, and regulatory agencies.

22. Board that represents the community and the organization's constituencies.

23. Board includes new and incumbent directors in order to guarantee continuity and new opinions.

24. Bylaws that limit tenure and ensure rotation of board members.

25. Conflict of interest policy and compliance by board and staff.

26. Comprehensive board recruitment process that includes identification of necessary skills, qualifications and performance expectations.

27. Clear articulation of roles, responsibilities and performance expectations presented to each candidate before nomination to board.

28. Process to annually assesses performance of board members and distinguish between those who should be invited to continue to serve and those who should be thanked and released upon completion of (or prior to completion of) the term of appointment.
### Leadership and fund development

29. Each board member, the CEO and development officer give a gift every year.  
   Yes  No  

30. During a capital campaign, all board members, the CEO and development officer give to both capital and annual.  
   Yes  No  

31. The board understands its role in fund development.  
   _ _ _  

32. Each board member does some fund-raising task each year.  
   _ _ _  

33. Within the board, there are individuals who effectively solicit gifts face-to-face.  
   _ _ _  

34. Within the board, there are individuals who effectively plan and sell tickets to special events.  
   _ _ _  

35. Within the board, there are individuals who effectively use their business contacts on behalf of your fund development activities.  
   _ _ _  

36. Board members attend special events.  
   _ _ _  

37. The board regularly discusses the strategic issues and progress of philanthropy and fund development for the organization.  
   _ _ _  

38. The chief development officer has direct access to the board to discuss fund development issues.  
   _ _ _  

39. There are board-level committees/task forces which assist in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of fund development activities.  
   _ _ _  

### Development within the institution

40. The organization's senior management understands and supports a culture of philanthropy.  
   _ _ _  

41. Staff understand that they are each fund raisers.  
   _ _ _  

42. Fund development ethics and standards have been adopted by the board and the organization acts accordingly.  
   _ _ _  

43. The organization understands the four relationships which are critical to fund development (internal relations; relationship with community, constituents and enabling).  
   _ _ _  

### Volunteers in fund development

44. Fund development activities use both board and non-board members.  
   _ _ _  

45. Fund-raising volunteers also give to the organization.  
   _ _ _  

46. Volunteer responsibilities and expectations are clearly articulated for each fund-raising project.  
   _ _ _  

### The development staff

47. The chief development officer reports directly to the organization's CEO.  
   Yes  No  

48. Chief development officer participates along with other senior staff in strategic discussions regarding health, program and markets of organization.  
   _ _ _  

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**Below (1)**  **Standard (2)**  **Above (3)**
49. Development staff demonstrates an understanding of the organization’s mission, programs and goals. ___  ___  ___

50. The chief development officer effectively recruits and enables volunteers and staff. ___  ___  ___

51. Other development staff effectively recruit and enable volunteers. ___  ___  ___

52. Development staff (or consultants) are experienced designing and conducting fund development programs. ___  ___  ___

53. Develop staff (or consultants) are experienced using different kinds of solicitation strategies. ___  ___  ___

54. Development staff is encouraged to enhance fund development through workshops and conferences. ___  ___  ___

55. Our development staff (and consultants) are members of a fund-raising professional association and subscribe to a code of ethics. ___  ___  ___

56. Our development staff (and consultants) are certified by a national fund-raising certification program. ___  ___  ___

**Fund development management**

57. Clerical resources are in place to support fund development. ___  ___  ___

58. Space and equipment are in place to support fund development. ___  ___  ___

59. Records are kept of all fund development activities and their effectiveness and productivity. ___  ___  ___

60. Donor gift histories are maintained which include date and amount of gift, solicitor if applicable, and response. ___  ___  ___

61. Prospect histories are maintained which include date of solicitation, method, solicitor if applicable, and response. ___  ___  ___

62. Gift potential is evaluated and request amounts are targeted for each prospect. ___  ___  ___

63. Standard operating procedures, gift acceptance policies and overall fund development policies exist and are reviewed regularly. ___  ___  ___

64. Transmittal mechanisms help donors give easily. ___  ___  ___

65. Appropriate training and support materials exist for prospects and volunteers. ___  ___  ___

**Fund development planning and evaluation**

66. Our chief development officer participates in our organization’s annual budgeting process and helps establish the contributed income figure. ___  ___  ___

67. Operating budget and contributions goals are set by a thorough analysis and evaluation of current donors and available prospects coupled with an analysis of fund development cost effectiveness, return on investment and agency resources. ___  ___  ___
68. In order to make good decisions, the agency collects and analyzes: solicitation response rates; fund-raising cost effectiveness; return on investment; donor renewal, attrition, acquisition and upgrade rates; average gift size; and solicitor performance.

69. The fund development program is diversified and not dependent upon any one funding source or solicitation strategy.

70. Effective case statement(s) are developed with participation by the CEO and volunteer leadership.

71. A written fund development plan is developed with participation of CEO and volunteer leadership and addresses strategic and financial goals, staff and volunteer resources, solicitation strategies, and timetable.

72. Target markets are segmented for the appropriate solicitation strategy.

73. Prospects are solicited by the right solicitor at the right time for the right project and the right amount.

74. Strategies are developed to renew and upgrade gifts of current donors and acquire new donors.

75. Volunteer and staff leadership outline the criteria to evaluate fund development effectiveness and assess results.

76. Fund development effectiveness and success is not evaluated solely on the dollars raised.

77. Assessment results are used to develop subsequent plans.

78. Gifts are acknowledged within 48 hours of receipt, and staff understands why this is important.

79. Mechanisms exist to recognize donors and their contributions.

80. Mechanisms exist to recognize fund development volunteers.

Acknowledgment and recognition

81. There is an adequate budget to support fund development efforts.

82. Fund development compensation is sufficient to ensure top quality staff.

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