

Evaluating Your Development Officer

Increasingly governing boards and management of our nation's non-profit institutions have been calling for evaluations of their Development Officers on the basis of their "metrics", i.e. measuring objectively and strictly by-the-numbers the frequency of personal contacts made with assigned potential donors.... leading to the number of donor cultivation events and activities..... in turn leading to the number of direct gift solicitations.... resulting in indicated dollar gift commitments....all within specified time frames.

While there is nothing inherently wrong with such metric measurements, they fall well-short of a valued performance evaluation when not combined with assessment of key subjective criteria such as:

- "Boardroom poise" manifested by level of comfort when among top executives and community leaders.
- Ability to work with, motivate and gain the respect of volunteers.
- Self-initiative in seizing opportunities as well as addressing concerns having a positive impact on fundraising.
- Communication skills, both written and oral.
- Ability to establish task priorities and meet agreed upon deadlines.
- Responsiveness to criticism and advice.
- Personal appearance.
- "Team player" demonstrated by the ability to work well with staff members regardless of their hierarchical positions.

How would you evaluate your organization's Development Officers?