



PPGC 2020 / SERIES

Practical Planned Giving Conference

Retaining Top Talent

With Eddie Thompson, Ed.D., FCEP

Founder and CEO, Thompson & Associates

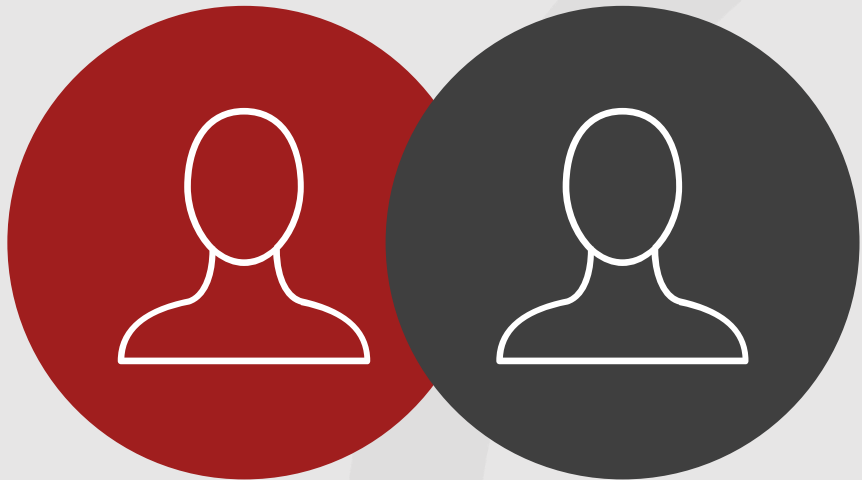
If we merely aim for industry standards, then our goal is mediocrity. Emulating the average nonprofit, we are destined to live with all the problems the average nonprofit faces. So, I suggest you aim to be exceptional in your approach to fund development.

- Eddie Thompson

TODAY'S AGENDA

1. *Why is retaining top talent important?*
2. *What is the impact of high turnover?*
3. *Why is turnover rate high?*
4. *What can an organization do to retain top talent?*

TURNOVER RATE EXAMPLE



For 2 Major Gift Officer roles:

- 35 Major Gift Officers in 12 years
 - The shortest was 2 days
 - The longest was 14 months

WHY RETAINING TOP TALENT IS IMPORTANT

How the revolving door effects:

A nonprofit

Loss of institutional history, production and donor connection

Nonprofit leadership

Needless time and money spent on recruitment and training

A nonprofit's team

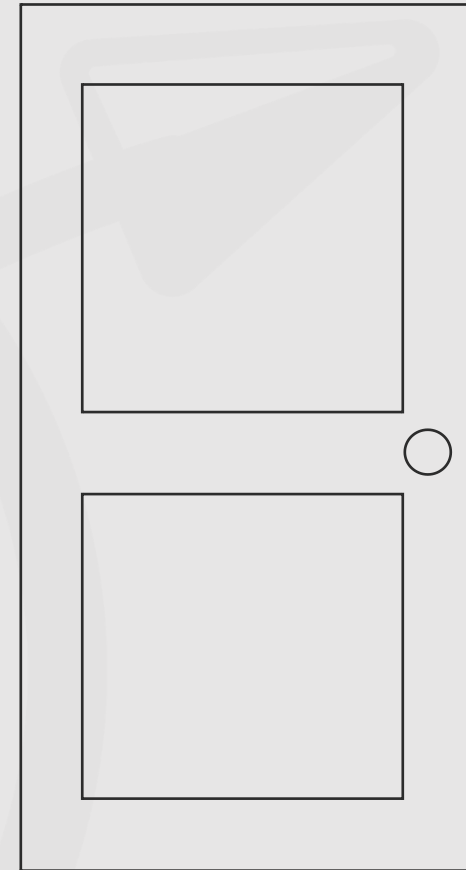
Creates uncertainty and reduces the feelings of a team

A nonprofit's mission

Fewer dollars will be raised to support the mission

Donors

Less likely to give big gifts if no established relationship



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

- Is it hard to find seasoned and successful fundraisers to fill positions?
- And yet, there are so many open positions that need filling
- What is the problem?
- What turnover rate is acceptable?
- Should we begin by looking at why **WE** are losing talented people?

HOUSTON: WE HAVE A PROBLEM!

*The voluntary annual turnover rate is 19%!**

That is too high!

Why are we losing top talent?

**According to [Forbes 45% Of Nonprofit Employees To Seek New Jobs By 2025: Report](#)*

WHY FUNDRAISERS LEAVE, AND HOW TO KEEP THEM

Heather Joslyn

August 4, 2019

The Chronicle of Philanthropy

HOW THE SURVEY WAS CONDUCTED:

- Commissioned by *The Chronical of Philanthropy* and AFP
- Conducted May and June 2019 by Harris Insights & Analytics through Harris Poll
- Sent to *Chronical* subscribers and AFP members
- 1,035 responses
- 90% were either frontline fundraisers or leadership in USA and Canada
- 46% worked for organizations between \$1 M to \$10 M
- About 25% worked for organizations whose budget was less than \$1,000,000
- Median of three development professionals

THE PROFESSIONALS THAT COMPLETED THE SURVEY:

- 57% worked in fundraising for more than 10 years
- 45% have been in their current jobs two years or less
- Just over 75% were women
- 85% were white
- 4% were Hispanic
- 3% were African-American
- Social services were 17%
- Education was 15%
- Healthcare was 11%

WHAT WERE THEIR PLANS?

51%

Will leave their current nonprofit within 2 years

30%

Plan to leave fundraising altogether

12%

Plan to retire or have family changes or personal reasons for leaving the profession

8 REASONS FUNDRAISERS LEAVE

1. Pressure
2. "I don't feel appreciated"
3. Not enough staff and board help
4. Unrealistic goals
5. Poor managers
6. Lack of resources
7. Poor career advancement
8. Poor compensation

1. PRESSURE, PRESSURE AND PRESSURE!

84% feel
tremendous
pressure

- “We can’t seem to land the BIG gift.”
- “It seems that the middle class is giving less.”
- “There are more charities each year to compete for each charitable dollar.”
- “It seems like we are all going after the same rich donor!”
- “I wear too many hats.”
- “The pressure is exhausting and I am tired of it!”
- “My tank is empty.”

PRESSURE

34%

Have seen a decline in gifts the past 2 years

21%

Say the pressure/negatives outweigh the benefits

78%

Wish they had more time to spend with donors

One Solution: Create a **Fundraising Strategic Plan** that leadership approves and commits to supporting.

2. I DON'T FEEL APPRECIATED

- "I don't feel wanted!"
- "It is never enough!"
- "It has been years since anyone in leadership said 'thank you!'"

55% don't believe their work is appreciated

NO APPRECIATION

30% are dissatisfied with the level of recognition for their success

29% don't feel support from their CEO

25% are dissatisfied with their access to professional development

61% of those who left their jobs were dissatisfied with access to leadership training

26% are dissatisfied with their salary

20% are dissatisfied with their benefits

One Solution: Create a leadership position/committee whose task is to initiate a spirit of gratitude within the organization

EXTRA TIPS

- Send handwritten personal notes
- Recognize and honor good workers
- Create new and improved job titles
- Give gifts for special occasions
- Provide free coffee, tea and snacks
- Create a pleasant working environment
- Reserve a monthly parking space for achiever

3. NOT ENOUGH STAFF AND BOARD HELP

Staff support is a major issue

- “I don’t have time to visit donors.”

One Solution: Prepare a Fundraising Strategic Plan that leadership approves and commits to supporting.

Board support is an issue

- “I have Board Members who will not raise money.”
- “We have a Board that just does not get it!”
- “We have a Board Member who will not give.”
- “Our Board is useless.”

One Solution: Consider creating a Board Management Committee!

4. UNREALISTIC GOALS

- “Our CEO set a goal to raise three times the amount of money next year!”
- “Our CFO wants us to raise 20% more money next year, but he has just cut our staff 15%. Is he crazy?” **YES!!**
- “My supervisor wants me to see more donors, but I have too many tasks and meetings assigned to me by my supervisor.”

One Solution: Create a Fundraising Strategic Plan that leadership approves and commits to supporting.

5. POOR MANAGERS

70% of employee departures are due to bad relationships with managers

Solutions: Here are 6 things to do:

1. Get a written job description
2. Document everything
3. Back-up everything
4. Don't respond in-kind
5. Watch what you tell others
6. Quit if there is no other option

6. LACK OF RESOURCES

“We don’t have enough support staff so we must do what they would do for us.”

“I can’t even get a laptop for our major gift officers.”

“They want me to travel to see donors on my dime.”

“Our technology is from the 16th century.”

One Solution: Create a Fundraising Strategic Plan that leadership approves and commits to supporting.

7. POOR CAREER ADVANCEMENT

- “I am going nowhere fast.”
- “My boss is only three years older than me.”
- “They keep promoting people over me.”

Solutions:

- If you are the supervisor:
 - Share the power
 - Invest in training for upward mobility
 - Communicate
- If you are the supervised:
 - Communicate: Sit down with your supervisor to see what your options are
 - Look elsewhere for an opportunity
 - Grass is not always greener

8. POOR COMPENSATION

- “I make about 60 percent of what my peers make across town.”
- “I have not had a raise in two years.”
- “My new counterpart makes more than me.”

Solution:

- Request a market analysis for a better understanding of the market competition
- Remember that poor talent is expensive and that great talent has a wonderful ROI

I WOULD ADD:

- *Too many hats, licking stamps and picking out napkins*
- *Cutting "costs"*
- *Not understanding that fundraising is the best ROI*
- *Spending too much time in the office*
- *Afraid to ask for a gift*
- *If at all possible, grow where you are planted*
- *The absolute need for a Fundraising Strategic Plan!!*

OBVIOUS SOLUTIONS TO KEEPING TALENT:

- Hire the right person in the first place
- Offer competitive pay and benefits – a great person has never cost me money
- Give honest praise, show respect and trust from multiple directions
- Show career path by allowing career development
- Allow flexible work schedules to balance personal and professional life
- Perform employee exit interviews
- Provide solicitation training
- *Fundraising* strategic plan
- 360 feedback
- Get to know staff and get them to know each other
- Interview employees who stay
- Create loyalty by showing loyalty
- Ensure workload is reasonable and fair
- Listen, listen and listen

HOW TO SPOT AN OUTBOUND PERSON

- Passive or indifferent
- Less communications
- More frequent absences
- Quietly taking personal calls
- Clearing personal belongings

WHEN SHOULD YOU LET A STAFF PERSON GO?

When they:

- Cause problems that will not resolve
- Will not do what they are hired to do
- Are unethical
- Are lazy
- Will not listen

WHEN SHOULD YOU LEAVE?

- When you have an amazing opportunity with an amazing mission. But, is the grass really greener?
- When the mission is not important to you
- When you are no longer fulfilled
- When you are satisfied that you are not the problem
- Should you grow where you are planted?
- Prepare with excellence and success will come

THANK YOU!

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