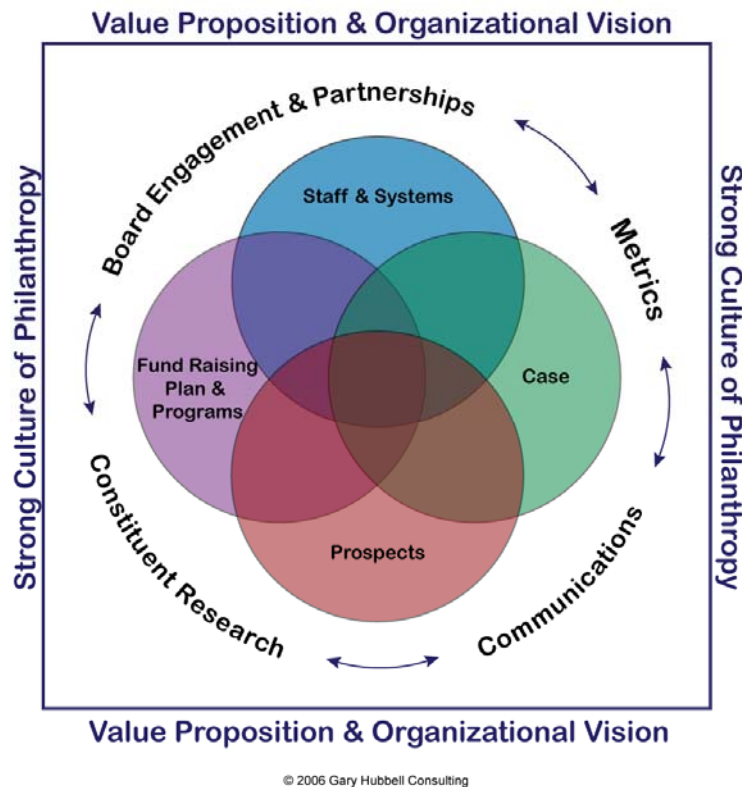


A Conceptual Model for Viewing
the Development Program



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During planning and assessment work, the question always arises, “are we doing the right things in development?” The lens through which we examine the development program is represented by the graphic below.



This diagram represents the three-level focus of an effective, balanced development program. Working from the outside in, we offer these descriptions:

Level One: The framework and intangible operating platform for a successful development program comes from the intersection of its value proposition and organizational vision and the presence of a strong culture of philanthropy. The value proposition articulates the differentiating value that the foundation’s “customers” (donors, volunteers, funders, partners, et al) receive. The organizational vision is that compelling statement of an imagined future so bold that it creates the gravitational pull for human and financial resources, leaving people saying, “Yeah! I want to be part of that!” A strong culture of philanthropy finds deeply embedded throughout the organization the attitudes and behaviors that prioritize relationships and integrate development with all aspects of organizational planning and execution.

Level Two: Out of the above framework grows a focus on the organization's marketplace and partners. Constituent research becomes an indispensable tool to identify needs and desires (which every donor has, but only indirectly expresses), as well as to identify giving capacity. By deeply engaging the board as thinking partners and network advocates for development, the program's reach and effectiveness is extended. Communications (listening and telling the story) is the very core of all fundraising, regardless of the medium. Explicit performance metrics clarify our expectations and provide a vehicle against which leaders can measure progress and make real-time adjustments when finding themselves off course.

Level Three: Four balanced program components must be in place, through which the specific work of fundraising takes place. First, a fundraising plan must state the strategies, goals, and objectives of the development program, thereby providing the framework for selecting the programs (e.g., major gifts, annual gifts, stewardship work, recognition, etc.) through which to execute the fundraising activities. Even the strongest plans and programs require a clear, concise, and compelling case for support which articulates the presenting challenge, the organization's proposed solution, and the intended impact. Professional staff and information systems are fundamentally important to drive the design and execution of strategies on a daily basis. The size and scope of the staff is governed by the prospect pool potential and the fundraising program mix. The prospect pool must be identified and qualified, thereby enabling the development team to target its relationship-building efforts.

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