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Making a Difference through Fundraising

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Making a Difference through Fundraising
Objective

The US healthcare system will have to exist on reduced funding in the future, creating a need for new funding sources for health science libraries to survive. The purpose of this study was to investigate fundraising in academic allopathic medical libraries.

Method

The methodology implemented for this research was a cross sectional design. An electronic survey questionnaire was utilized to ask fifteen fundraising questions to participants. The survey was pilot tested for readability, functionality, and content. The questions consisted of:

- current status of library fundraising
- perceptions of the central development office
- utilizing fundraising positions inside the library
- types of fund raising activities used
- most successful fundraising types
- five year average fundraising income
- fundraising advertising
- utilization of funds
- challenges and motivations to fundraising
- donor recognition.

These questions were loaded onto Checkbox™ survey software for distribution. The survey was distributed to five members of a blinded focus group for testing.

Demographics

Responses received from 71.4% of the surveyed population:

- Small Libraries (1-5 Librarians)
- Medium Libraries (6-10 Librarians)
- Large Libraries (11+ Librarians)

Government Grants (75%) and Gifts in Kind (44%) were identified as most successful.

Only 50% of libraries who participated in book sales considered it most successful.

Advertisements

Motivations to Fundraising

Reduced Revenue: 33%
Need for Services: 38%
Need for Resources: 38%
Access to Donors: 15%
Funding Experience: 15%
Time Constraints: 27%
Increased Costs: 27%
Aging Facilities: 27%

Motivations to Fundraising

Thank You Letters (100%) and Book Plates (75%) were most common.

Other choices included Donor Events (25%) and Donor Lists (25%).

Discussion

Multiple fundraising themes were discovered by the data. These discussion points should prove useful to academic medical library directors who are interested in fundraising.

Remain Determined - 93% of libraries indicated they are active or interested in fundraising.

Rethink Internal Fundraising Development

100% of libraries indicate no intent to assign or create a library position dedicated to fundraising. Directors must utilize staff and resources efficiently if they would like to take their fundraising to the next level.

Keep Working with Central Development

100% of libraries indicated that Central Development was either “somewhat attentive” or “not attentive” to their needs. Furthermore, 80% of those consider Central Development as a challenge to their fundraising. University initiatives will take priority, but remember to stay in persistent communication in hopes of being rewarded.

Administration Relationships is Key - 46% of libraries labeled university administration as a challenge to their fundraising. Administration figures such as college deans are important and could provide the library with donor lists and potential funds.

Think Small - No libraries raised more than $99,999 overall from the past five years. Starting small will allow libraries to accomplish more fundraising objectives while gaining knowledge and experience. Donors want to support success (Thompson, 2009).

Learn from others - Data from this survey highlights fundraising initiatives. Encouraging group discussion and attending conferences such as ALADN can be beneficial for library directors who want to fundraise.

References


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