TURNING OFF TURN-OVER

A relentless trend in the non-profit sector is the turn-over of development officers. Turn-over that can be simultaneously debilitating, costly and frustrating for an organization's leadership. Not a lesser concern from this trend is a mounting lack of confidence in the fundraising profession among volunteer and executive leadership.

While most reasons for turn-over are organization-specific, following are four suggestions an organization should consider in employing and retaining a qualified development professional.

> ➢ *Establish Realistic Goals*: In advance of a search for a development officer, volunteer and executive leadership should articulate clearly realistic goals, expectations and priorities for the position over at least an initial 12- to 24-month period.

> ➢ *Performance Evaluations*: Define for a selected candidate the professional areas to be reviewed in an annual performance evaluation, including related compensation considerations.

> ➢ *Define Relationships*: Set forth clearly-defined lines of interaction and communication of the development officer with Board members, as well as within the organization.

> ➢ *Supportive Organization*: Instill a commitment from both Board and executive leadership to support the development officer in meaningful ways, and above all in acknowledging the importance and results of accomplishments.

In my experience, this advance planning and commitment can minimize, if not eliminate, premature exit of your development officer.

What are you doing to minimize debilitating, costly and frustrating development officer turn-over?