Prospect Coordination
Or, How to Play in the Sandbox and Love It

Karen T. Isble, Assistant Vice President for Development
University of Michigan
Prospect coordination
  - Why
  - What
  - Who

How does a large, decentralized org coordinate
  - Leadership buy-in
  - University-level policy(ies)
  - Processes to make it easier
  - Oversight

Benefits of coordination

Case studies
Have visits to your top donors ever looked like this?
Our Organizations are Complex

- Central Development
- Campus 1
- Medical Center/Hospital
- Campus 2
- Musical Society
- School 2
- Athletics
- School 1
The Michigan Development Community (~550)

19 Schools and Colleges
- Taubman College
- Art & Design
- Ross School
- Dentistry
- Information
- Medical School
- Law
- SNRE
- Public Health
- Music, Theatre & Dance
- Nursing School
- Ford School
- Social Work
- Education
- Engineering
- Kinesiology
- Dearborn
- Flint
- Rackham
- ISR
- Alumni Assn
- BEC
- Athletics
- Clements Library
- UMS
- MBGNA
- Museum Nat. Hist.
- LSA
- Michigan Media
- ISU
- Museum of Art
- Student Life
- Exhibits Museum
- LSI
- CEW
- Univ. Library
- Student Pubs.
- Museum Nat. Hist.
- Health System
- Bentley Library

18 Units (with development functions)

2 Campuses

~360 in Schools, Colleges, Units
Complex Organizations Require Coordination

...Coordination Requires Process
Implementation of robust prospect coordination is a philosophy has to be imbedded in an organization whose core values resonate with a statement like:

“Optimizing donor outcomes for the betterment of the University”
Especially in a decentralized environment, it also requires clear policies which explain why we’re taking the extra effort:

“...The success of our efforts to secure large gifts in recent years has been due in large measure to the collaboration between the University’s central administration, schools, colleges, regional campuses, units and volunteer leadership. A key factor in this cooperative process was the decision to institute a University-wide system for the coordination of activity related to major gift prospects...

More broadly, and in order to maintain a long-term program that is donor-centric in nature, coordination guidelines are necessary for donors at all levels.”
“...Prospective donors to the University are a significant institutional resource... By encouraging open communications, collaborative planning, avoidance of duplication of effort, and by equitably resolving competing claims, prospect coordination helps ensure that the greatest possible return in support of the University’s foremost priorities is secured from each donor.”
Key Policy Elements

• Vice President for Development is responsible for the operation of the Prospect Coordination process

• Functional responsibility delegated to the director of Prospect Development & Analytics

• Includes responsibilities/expectations not only for gift officers, but for:
  – university officers
  – deans/directors
  – key faculty
  – volunteer leaders
Key Policy Elements

• In making these determinations, we take into account factors such as a prospect’s:
  – degree relationship(s) to the University
  – giving history
  – volunteer history
  – other demonstrated affinity
  – close institutional contacts

• Guidelines are **not absolute** when particular circumstances would suggest otherwise.

• The primary consideration in prospect assignment is the **probability of obtaining the largest possible gift** in support of one or more University priorities
Key Process Elements

• Qualified prospects with capacity and inclination to give $100,000 or more are assigned to a Prospect Manager who will coordinate with colleagues to develop a prospect plan
• The Prospect Manager develops and drives the cultivation and solicitation strategy
• Prospects with multiple affiliations may have a need for an “honest broker” who can be “Switzerland,” and are often assigned to MGOs in the central office
• There can be multiple plans and participants working in close coordination, or a single plan with multiple parts
• All staff assignments and proposed plans are recorded in the central CRM*

*Michigan uses Blackbaud Enterprise CRM
Disagreements - Chain of Escalation

→ Prospect manager and interested gift officers, with prospect development staff
→ Deans/Directors of units
→ Provost and VP for Development
→ President, in consultation with Chancellors and VP for Development

The response to an interested party should never be “no” – if there is a viable strategy – only “not now” with a valid reason AND a timeline to revisit
Aren’t these just roadblocks?

• Successful, **donor-centric** fundraising requires:
  – shared information
  – open communication
  – cooperative participation

• The coordination system can help us meet these criteria and **serve as a stimulus to vigorous additional activity** among University faculty, staff, volunteers, and prospective donors

• The system **doesn’t eliminate all conflicts** ... but in its best form, can provide an arena for the constructive give-and-take that is essential to maximizing the returns to all units and the University at large
Does it always work?

• No...because we’re all human

• For true and consistent collaboration to take place:
  – Clear accountability measures that are enforced AND practiced at the highest levels are required; no one has immunity
  – Widespread stakeholder buy-in across the organization is needed
  – Gift officer should practice “in good faith” and expect it of their colleagues in return
  – The prospect development team advises on process and strategy and handles the logistics – they can’t make the organization play nicely!
A Case Study: Building Order from Chaos

THE MICHIGAN DIFFERENCE CAMPAIGN (2001-2008)

- Database with 1.1 million+ records, 500K living alumni
- 400+ development staff on three campuses – 90% decentralized in geography and reporting structure
  - Central staff with VP, regional gift officers and central services, including prospect development and database management
  - Most gift officers report directly to their dean, director, or, in some case, department chair
- Approx. 130 major gift officers
- 2 prospect management staff – hired in last 2 years of campaign
- 5.5 researchers – ratio of more than 20:1
A Case Study: Building Order from Chaos

THE MICHIGAN DIFFERENCE CAMPAIGN (2001-2008)

- 17-year-old homegrown database, lots of shadow systems outside of central office
- Big schools vs. small schools vs. non-degree granting units
- Lack of uniform gift officer and other staff training
- No widely adopted metrics standards for MGOs
- No prospect coordination / management to speak of (policy drafted, but no oversight)
- Little or no dynamic collaboration with prospect research
- $2.5 Billion Campaign...
• Despite these significant organizational challenges, the campaign surpassed its goal, raising $3.2 Billion...which begged the questions:
  – How much *could we have raised*?
  – How much earlier would the sense of transparency and collaboration have come together with a better prospect management and coordination system in place?

• Leadership ultimately realized the Prospect Management void needed to be filled – dedicated staff hired

• Leadership realizing they were not getting the most “bang for their buck” from the research program; time to invest
Case Study 2: The Multi-Unit Donor

MICHIGAN DIFFERENCE CAMPAIGN and the
VICTORS FOR MICHIGAN CAMPAIGN (2011-2018)

Bill (alum) and Dee

• $52M+ gift to the Medical Center
  – To name/construct the Diabetes Center
  – To fund medical school scholarships
  – To create two professorships
  – To fund Type I diabetes research

• $5M to endow undergraduate scholarships for students from his high school alma mater

• $12M to School of Music Theatre & Dance to anchor its recent building renovation/expansion
Who’s the Competition?

• It’s easy to look across campus and see your colleague as your competition – we all have bottom lines to meet

• Your true competition:
  – Your donors’ local hospital
  – Your donors’ local symphony and museum
  – Your donors’ local nature conservancy
  – The schools/universities your donors’ children attend(ed)
  – Anything in Silicon Valley

• Can you pique your donors’ interest and engage their passions with institutions’ own medical center, music school, environmental programs, botanical garden, museum, etc.?
What about Athletics?  
(aren’t they stealing all our donors?)

Not really...
Athletics Can be Great Partners
Athletics can actually bring $ to other units
Volunteer Coordination
Key volunteers need coordination, too!

- Volunteer policies should **volunteer-centric** just as they are **donor-centric**
- Follow same general guidelines as the Prospect Coordination Policy
  - Start with the prospect manager
  - Discuss strategy with all interested parties
    - Greatest areas of engagement
    - Where strengths and network will have most impact
    - Willingness, time and ability to serve in multiple capacities
    - How (and by whom) volunteer should be recruited
# The “Great American Campaign Volunteer Coordination Project”

## Campaign Volunteer Prospects – Unit A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Lookup ID</th>
<th>Spouse Lookup ID</th>
<th>Prospect Manager</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>Campaign Leadership Board</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>SMTD</th>
<th>Dearborn</th>
<th>UMHS</th>
<th>LSA</th>
<th>AAUM/OFA</th>
<th>Southern States</th>
<th>LSUCVC</th>
<th>Israel Adv</th>
<th>Greater Detroit</th>
<th>Law</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diane R. Tracy</td>
<td>1735871</td>
<td>1735883</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret E. Burns-Deloria</td>
<td>3907533</td>
<td>7083439</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erica A. Munzel</td>
<td>7011741</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teresa M. Clark</td>
<td>2430538</td>
<td>2407735</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8709873</td>
<td>2593181</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly A. Dyer</td>
<td>1361466</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diane R. Tracy</td>
<td>691410</td>
<td>8244455</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard E. Porter</td>
<td>2773089</td>
<td>8420478</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teresa M. Clark</td>
<td>3257629</td>
<td>8498439</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephen R. Kamm</td>
<td>7252286</td>
<td>7204966</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul R. Harkins</td>
<td>958441</td>
<td>958438</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kimberly A. Morris</td>
<td>1746844</td>
<td>1746832</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara A. Ackley</td>
<td>2571961</td>
<td>4091425</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret E. Burns-Deloria</td>
<td>1105037</td>
<td>5414209</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Where to Start?

- Does your institution have a coordination policy?
  - Is it University-level policy or simply development policy?
  - Is it published?
  - Is it part of standard orientation for deans and MGOs?
- Are your policies realistic? Understandable? Up-to-date?
- Do MGOs have any incentives (or consequences) for compliance?
- Philosophy should drive the creation of processes, NOT the other way around
- CAVEAT: It’s often easier, in the heat of the moment, to “do” than think about “why we do,” so make processes as simple, clear-cut, and consistent as possible
Coordination and Collaboration can Reap Sweet Rewards

Recognize Great Work!
Nominate colleagues for the Collaborative Fundraising Recognition

- For anyone in Development
- Selfless collaboration across units
- Engaging, soliciting and stewarding donors
- Above and beyond

Nick Delaney  Heidi Miller
Donna Parr  Monica Philipp
Discussion

ktisble@umich.edu