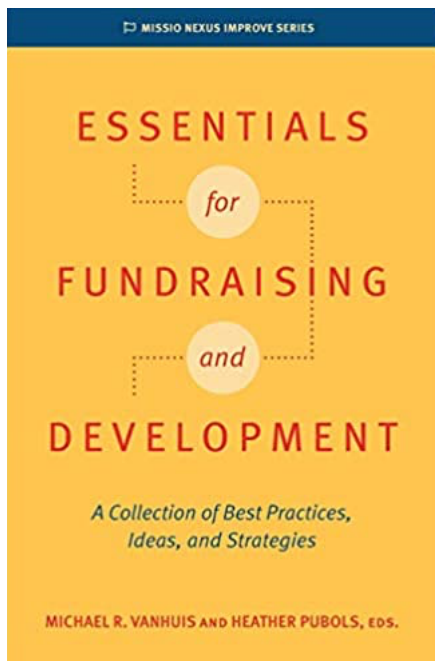


**Essentials for Fundraising and Development.**  
**A Collection of Best Practices, Ideas, and Strategies.**  
By Michael R. VanHuis and Heather Pubols, eds.

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### Summary

Practical insights and fundraising activities to get your ministry funded and flourishing. As Missio Nexus engages with mission agency leaders, one of their greatest expressed needs is for fundraising and development training and tools. It has been said that the right activities lead to the right outcomes. We believe this to be true, but that begs the question, what are the right activities? In this book, you will discover what a few of these right fundraising and development activities are.

Fundraising experts collaborated with us to bring practical insights that will help you and your agencies. No matter what your knowledge or skill in fundraising are, this book and its content will help you improve as a ministry and as ministry leaders.

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### Preface

It was a cold and blustery fall day. I landed at the Hartford, Connecticut airport with a list of potential donors to visit in the area. As I left the airport and started driving toward my hotel, two of my contacts canceled their meetings. Over the next few hours, I reached out to two other contacts who did not return my calls. I ended up with one meeting for lunch the following day.

The next day I arrived early at a classic northeastern diner to meet with a couple that had given to projects in the past with our mission agency. A few minutes later an older lady arrived alone, and we worked through those uncomfortable moments of realizing we were the ones meeting with each other. Her husband had decided he did not want to come. I barely introduced myself when she let me know they would not be giving to any more of our organization's projects. I didn't even get a chance to update her on past projects, let alone dive into a presentation.

I put my notes away, ordered coffee, and realized that this would not be about promoting our new initiative. This visit was all about hearing, listening, and being the minister on duty to this woman. I left the meeting only to find out that a storm was approaching, and all flights were being scrubbed. I rushed to the airport to find my flight canceled. I had one chance to grab a taxi with two strangers and head to a neighboring airport to get the last flight that would not take me back to Chicago but to Charlotte and then to Chicago.

My three-hour flight turned into eight hours of travel. Tired and confused, I sat on the plane flying from Charlotte to Chicago, when I should have already been home, wondering what the point was. A small quiet voice reminded me that God is sovereign. Yes but ... time, money, and effort for what? That voice said, "A woman needed a minister, and I put you there for that reason." I still had much to learn about being a major gifts officer, but that day I realized an important lesson: relationship trumps transaction.

**MISSIO NEXUS SEEKS TO CATALYZE RELATIONSHIPS**, collaboration and ideas within the Great Commission community. For over one hundred years this association has strengthened mission agencies by providing opportunities for mission focused people to learn, meet and engage together around critical issues and priorities for global evangelism and church planting.

As we continue to engage with leaders of mission agencies, one of the greatest needs is training and tools in the arena for fundraising and development. With the help of a partner foundation, we are endeavoring to not only provide new training tools, but to begin thinking through the present and future realities of funding Great Commission work.

It has been said that the right activities lead to the right outcomes. I fully believe this. But that begs the question, what are the right activities? In this book we will help you discover a few of the right fundraising and development activities.

Key fundraising practitioners collaborated with us to bring practical insights for you and your agencies to help you determine how to get your ministry funded and flourishing.

The original intended audience for this book were small to mid-sized ministries that did not have a plan for fundraising or had only established small gains in this area. But it has become clear as the chapters have been submitted that no matter where you are in your knowledge and execution of fundraising activities, this book and its content will be of great benefit.

James 5:16 says, "The effectual fervent prayers of a righteous man availeth much" (KJV). As you enter the world of fundraising, it becomes quickly apparent that being a hard worker is not enough. Instead, this is a spiritual act of faith and dependence upon God. Only through prayer and seeking God to move in the hearts and minds of his people will you see the resources provided for his work among the nations. You can labor all day with good work, but unless it is consecrated in prayer it will avail little and leave you frustrated and worn out.

Prayer begins with our boards and senior leaders as they ensure funds are raised for the activities that God established and not just things that feed your ego or make our organizations look good. Prayer guides your teams and staff as you consider the culture of your organization and the way in which you will approach potential resource partners. Prayer comes before every phone call, email, text message, and meeting. It precedes every conversation and follows every interaction.

Prayer increases our awareness of our dependence upon God and not on our own efforts. Without prayer our efforts become hollow and self-serving and, in the end,

unproductive. With prayer, we are transformed into people dependent on a sovereign God who will direct his resources to meet the needs of his work among the nations.

**AS YOU BEGIN THIS BOOK,** I would encourage you, even now, to spend a few moments in prayer. I hope and pray that God has something new and fresh for you as you read the ideas and concepts that have been curated in the following pages. You will identify several recurring themes as you engage in the following chapters.

**CHARACTER MATTERS:** Knowledge without character leads to short cuts and tactics that leave potential partners feeling used. Strong character fosters healthy relationships that enables your ministry to flourish and partners to celebrate the opportunity to steward resources effectively. Character is essential in approaching potential partners, reporting information to foundations and in the people you hire to be part of your development team.

**INTENTIONALITY MATTERS:** Take time to know your culture and know your comfort level with different fundraising strategies. Be intentional with knowing your audience whether that is a couple you are meeting for a first time or a foundation that you are preparing a grant request. Intentionality takes time, but the

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benefits are exponential. Intentionality values relationships over transactions.

**INTEGRATION MATTERS:** Placing all the weight of fundraising on one person may produce short-term results, but long-term it leads to frustration and burnout. Fundraising is a team sport. Integration of efforts from the board to individual missionaries is essential. It results in a collective effort that leads to broader impact and sustainability for the organization and those directly caring out development efforts.

**RELATIONSHIP MATTERS:** As you engage with potential donors, your mindset needs to be one of relationship building and stewarding. Too often donors feel like they are simply receiving a sales pitch. Your mindset in engagement should deeply value establishing relationships and caring for people. It is an honor to help people see the broader picture of global needs and how God has equipped them to serve through giving. Relationship is what you want to achieve, not securing a transaction.

**DISCIPLESHIP MATTERS:** Relationships with potential and current donors go beyond interpersonal. The heart of fundraising is discipleship. It is an invitation you give to another to journey more deeply into God's mission. As you walk with donors, God works to bring transformation not only in the lives of those your ministry serves, but also in your donors' hearts as well as yours.

**ATTUNEMENT WITH GOD MATTERS:** When your plans and efforts inevitably fail along the way, as happened to me in Hartford, remember that you are nested in a bigger story – God's story. As kingdom workers, sometimes the King's plans diverge from ours. Don't miss the moments God gives you to attune to what he is doing as well as the opportunities he presents to discover ways to work more effectively.

Each chapter will provide you with questions to ponder and resources to allow you to take next steps. Heather Pubols and I, along with the writers of these chapters, hope that you will take time to deeply reflect and consider the ideas and suggestions you

will find in the following pages. You are not alone. All of us are learning and growing together. We are each deeply dependent on our Heavenly Father to steward donors and resources for his glory and his name to be proclaimed among the nations.

**MICHAEL R. VANHUIS**

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