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Facing Your Challenges, Finding the Finish Line

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Facing Your Challenges, Finding the Finish Line

Jared Porter, Facilitator
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ASBURY UNIVERSITY

Academic Excellence & Spiritual Vitality



Session Description

Join your colleagues to network and discuss your most pressing issue or interesting challenge. The room will be stocked with paper, easels, and whiteboards that you can use to be creative and express your ideas. There will be a spot near the Registration Desk to write your question or challenge ahead of time, then these will be moved into the room for further discussion at this session. We hope you take advantage of this open time to share your thoughts with others.

Overview

In a group discussion format, ten colleagues representing both libraries and development offices identified obstacles and solutions to seven major issues:

1. Access to alumni
2. Strategic planning
3. Finding time
4. E-Resources
5. Annual event traditions
6. Foundation boundaries
7. Unified communication

Access to Alumni

Challenge: “Please give libraries access to all alumni or at least broaden the scope considerably!”

Obstacles

- Can't see lists
- Delay in contact
- Dibs / Territorial
- Banned

Solutions

- General fund givers
- Good lists
- Former library student workers
- Parent connections

Strategic Planning

Challenge: “Deans who don’t want to do strategic planning”

Obstacles

- Dated university plan
- Disinterested leadership
- Pie in the sky but not practical

Solutions

- Leaders zealous about planning
- Action-oriented, not just conceptual

Finding Time

Challenge: “Finding time. Period.”

Obstacles

- Still have a day job
- Dual-reporting / accountable to multiple offices
- Meetings on “their schedule”

Solutions

- Blocking time
- Prioritize
- Delegate
- Leverage student interns for scheduling

E-Resources

Challenge: “The rising cost of e-resources which are difficult to fundraise for.”

Obstacles

- 5%+ annual increases
- Intangible
- Difficult to have naming rights

Solutions

- Continue talking publicly
- Department “split” costs
- Faculty input

Annual Event Traditions

Challenge: “Changing annual events (traditions) that have really lost their impact.”

Obstacles

- Backlash if you don't
- Fundraiser events at a loss
- Bad time of year

Solutions

- Online crowdsourcing
- Incorporate others / new groups

Foundation Boundaries

Challenge: “Working with the foundation’s boundaries--real and artificial.”

Obstacles

- Lingering rules
- Negative attitudes

Solutions

- Bridge relationships
- Advocacy conversations
- Encourage / Promote their work

Unified Communication

Challenge: “Coordinating a lot of independent departments and librarians to get everyone on the same page.”

Obstacles

- Silos
- Different goals/targets

Solutions

- Establish distinctives
- Strong Case Statement
- Better branding
- Infographic / Newsletters
- Liaisons and Foundation Members

The Finish Line

A single phrase that sums up the solutions to most challenges presented is:

Buy-in

We need to seek buy-in from advancement offices, deans and leadership, faculty, the community, and colleagues in other departments. Our advocacy through conversations, connections, and communication media will increase awareness and can rally others to our aid.

Bonus Material

Books: As librarians or those that tarry in the field, we listed some of our favorite or the most recent books we have read:

- *King and Maxwell Series* by David Baldacci
- *The Almost Sisters* by Joshilyn Jackson
- *How We Got To Now* by Steven Johnson
- *Lilac Girls* by Martha Hall Kelly
- *Digital Minimalism* by Cal Newport
- *The Library Book* by Susan Orlean
- *Pendergast Series* by Douglas Preston & Lincoln Child

Tech: Two technology products were identified as helpful which may be beneficial to explore or compare to others with similar functionality:

[LiveAlumni](#)

[ScaleFunder](#)

