

WHEN TO HIRE AN INTERIM DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

You may wonder when it might make sense to hire an interim development director instead of a permanent development staffer or how an interim development director can help sustain and enhance your development needs.

Here are some of the reasons organizations decide to hire an interim development director:

- To reassure donors during a transition or vacancy in the development office that fundraising efforts will continue
- If time is needed to do a search for a permanent development director, and the organization does not want to be rushed to make a selection
- When the organization is also looking for a new executive director and wants the new leader to have an opportunity to select the permanent development director
- Because the interim development director can have more candid conversations with the executive director, board, and other leaders about why there are problems with keeping development staff or staff is underperforming
- When the organization has never had a development director and needs an experienced professional to start up the development office and pave the way for a more junior development officer to be successful

A seasoned interim development director can:

- Assess current fundraising activities and make recommendations to improve strategy
- Improve fundraising efforts
- Model what a good development officer does
- Improve systems and processes within the development office
- Trouble shoot development problems
- Coach the Executive Director and Board in fundraising to boost confidence and skill
- Help with the hire of a permanent development director

A fresh perspective – backed by experience – can bring new energy and a sense of possibility to a development department. The interim's expertise ultimately creates the conditions for success of your development efforts and helps the permanent development director to hit the ground running.

Consider also keeping your interim development director around as a coach to help with the transition to a permanent development director. This can be particularly effective if the permanent person is a less experienced fundraiser.