Editorial

Guest editor's note

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'Human capital management'. 'Strategic talent management'. 'Progressive human resources management'. These are phrases that are capturing the attention of advancement professionals and leaders all across the globe. And they should be.

Although the current economic situation has kept development officers in their jobs a bit longer than usual, many continue to be restless and are currently contemplating their next move as the economic situation recovers. We know that nearly half of the highest-performing gift officers across the country are strategizing about their next career move. Why? Because advancement organizations are behind the times in how they manage their people. Development officers are frustrated with the lack of professional development and training opportunities afforded to them. These mission-driven people are unsure of how their success is making a difference in their institutions, and they remain frustrated at the lack of skills their managers have in effectively motivating their teams.

The profession is making progress, however. Human capital management professionals and programs embedded within advancement departments are emerging all over. And, they are doing great work. These people and programs are helping vice presidents and directors think more strategically

about their most critical asset, their people. Advancement organizations are devising cultivation strategies for their most effective employees – the way they do their top donors and volunteers.

This special issue of the journal just scratches the surface. More and more research is being conducted and needs to be carried out in this field, and the impact that human capital management is having on the success of advancement divisions becomes more measurable. This special issue is an introduction, a primer, if you will, on human capital management in our profession. It explores topics such as how a human capital management position can help reduce gift officer turnover, recruitment of nontraditional candidates and beginning a dialogue on succession planning and career paths.

It is my hope that there will be subsequent issues devoted to this topic and that additional contributions to this field will be made, all in the hopes of bettering our advancement organizations – the organizations that undoubtedly have an enormous impact on our institutions' ability to improve the quality of life for all.

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