



RESEARCH SUMMARY

Healthcare CPO/CDO Report

Research, Design, and Facilitation by:



Introduction

Navigating the CPO/CDO Role Without a Roadmap

Advancement Resources and the Association for Healthcare Philanthropy have observed that many Chief Philanthropy Officers (CPOs) and Chief Development Officers (CDOs), across various healthcare systems, often feel they are venturing into uncharted territory without adequate guidance when transitioning to their first leadership role. Consequently, we initiated a research project to delve deeper into this issue, aiming to foster a dialogue about potential solutions and enhanced support for current and future CPO/CDOs.

Alarming, a significant 77% of CPO/CDOs disclosed that they had not received formal training or orientation specific to their roles. In essence, these new leaders are navigating intricate roles without a clear roadmap.

A significant 77% of CPO/CDOS revealed that they had not been provided with formal training or orientation tailored to their specific responsibilities.

In other words, our research uncovered that far more often than not, new leaders are navigating intricate roles without a clear roadmap.

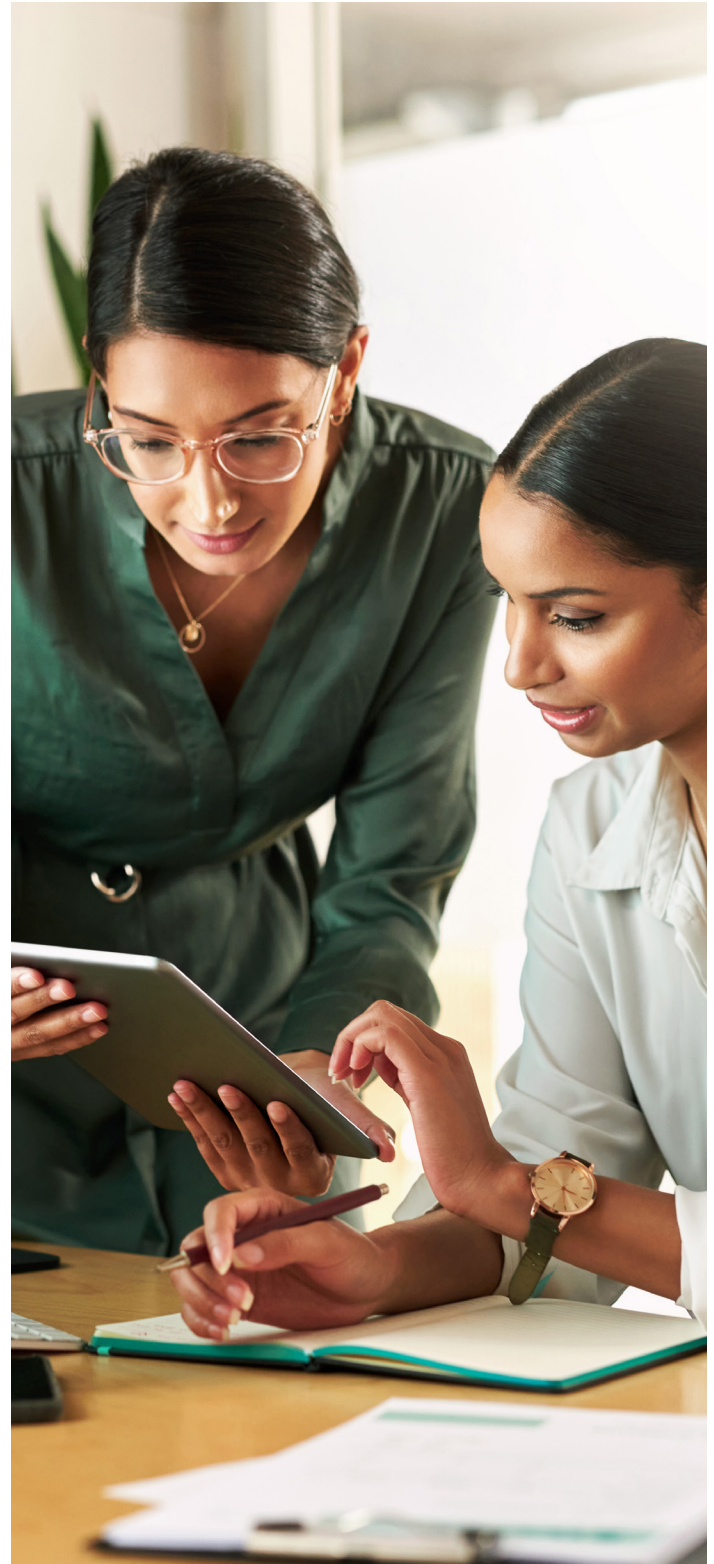


Who This Report is For

For senior or system advancement healthcare leaders, this report emphasizes the pivotal role you play in molding the organization's future legacy. By grasping the challenges new CPOs and CDOs encounter, you can position yourself as a mentor or consultant. This not only facilitates smoother transitions for your successors and those stepping into regional roles but also fortifies the future of the programs, processes, and culture you champion today.

For newly appointed CPO/CDOs, this report serves as a beacon. We hope the insights shared here not only offer valuable information but also reassure you that you're not navigating this journey in isolation. Our aim is to arm you with resources for personal growth, bolster your confidence, and assure you that with dedication, success is within reach. The initial apprehensions and uncertainties that often accompany the early stages of a CPO/CDO role will diminish over time. While the broader industry landscape underscores a pressing need for structured guidance, systemic change can be slow. If you're currently in one of these roles, this report seeks to bridge that gap, providing actionable insights to empower and assist you today.

These two audiences will be most apparent in the **Actionable Solutions** Section where we break out advice separately for each of these two groups on what they can do now.





The Evolving Landscape of U.S. Healthcare and Its Implications for Philanthropy Leaders:

The U.S. healthcare industry is in the midst of a significant transformation, marked by several key trends with direct repercussions for advancement.

Market Consolidation: The trend of smaller healthcare providers merging with or being acquired by larger entities is leading to a landscape dominated by fewer, yet more expansive, organizations. As a result, philanthropy officers are increasingly responsible for directing fundraising efforts across larger entities, often encompassing multiple facilities or regions. This growth in scale and intricacy necessitates enhanced strategic planning and coordination for fundraising campaigns.

Increase in Systems: The emergence of integrated healthcare systems signifies that care is becoming more streamlined across various facilities and specialties. For CPOs and CDOs, this evolution offers the chance to engage a wider network of potential donors, encompassing grateful patients, physicians, and staff throughout the system. Yet, it also implies that fundraising strategies must be comprehensive, reflecting the varied needs and objectives of different system components.

Rise in Regional CPO/CDO Positions: As healthcare systems extend their reach into regional markets, there is an escalating demand for regional CPOs and CDOs. These individuals, with their grasp of local dynamics, are pivotal in customizing fundraising strategies to regional nuances. Their role is essential in aligning the broader objectives of the parent organization with the distinct needs and opportunities presented by regional facilities.

Executive Preparation and Training: While the healthcare industry offers training programs and orientations for its executives, these often fall short in addressing the specific challenges and intricacies of fundraising. Consequently, CPOs and CDOs might possess general leadership competencies but lack the specialized knowledge crucial for effective healthcare philanthropy. This disparity highlights the pressing need for more bespoke training and mentorship initiatives for philanthropy leaders.

In the sections that follow, we will delve into the findings of our research project, examining the challenges, unforeseen situations, and potential support mechanisms that define the transition into a CPO/CDO role.

About the Study

In partnership with AHP, Advancement Resources embarked on an exhaustive research journey, gathering insights from over 80 of the USA's leading healthcare institutions. Each institution was represented by seasoned professionals, all of whom have dedicated at least ten years to advancement. It's worth highlighting that our participant base was diverse, representing a broad spectrum of North America's premier healthcare systems.

At this point, we'd like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to every participant. Their readiness to share insights, offer advice, and provide forthright feedback was pivotal in enriching our research. Their collective expertise and candidness were truly the backbone of this endeavor.

Our research methodology was bifurcated, integrating both quantitative and qualitative techniques:

Quantitative Insights: Stemming from two online surveys conducted in 2023, which garnered over 80 responses and more than 10,000 data points, the quantitative data offers a structured and tangible perspective. This approach not only validates our findings but also enables us to quantify specific issues, facilitating more grounded discussions. It reveals discernible patterns, emerging trends, and allows for empirical hypothesis testing. Such data is indispensable when assessing the prevalence of particular opinions or trends within the healthcare advancement sector.

Qualitative Insights: The crux of our research is rooted in the qualitative insights we obtained. Often presented as direct quotes from participants, these insights offer a vivid, layered, and intimately personal view of their experiences and viewpoints. While qualitative data might not always be universally applicable, it delivers depth and context that mere numbers can't convey. It unveils the motivations, hurdles, and emotions of professionals in the field. Notably, some insights were critical of their respective organizations, underscoring the sincerity and authenticity of our contributors. Recognizing the delicate nature of certain remarks, we've opted to maintain the confidentiality of all quotes in this report.

In summary, the amalgamation of quantitative and qualitative data offers a comprehensive snapshot of the current landscape. While the numbers elucidate the scope and gravity of specific issues, the interviews and quotes resonate with the emotional and intricate facets of these challenges.



Findings

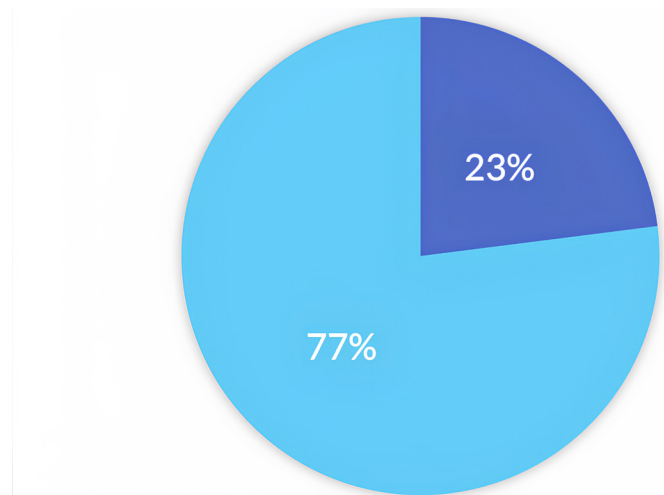
The Leadership Labyrinth in Healthcare Advancement: A Call for Structured Training

The ascent to leadership within the healthcare advancement arena is not a straightforward climb; it's a complex maze filled with obstacles, as echoed by the very individuals navigating it. One professional's candid revelation,

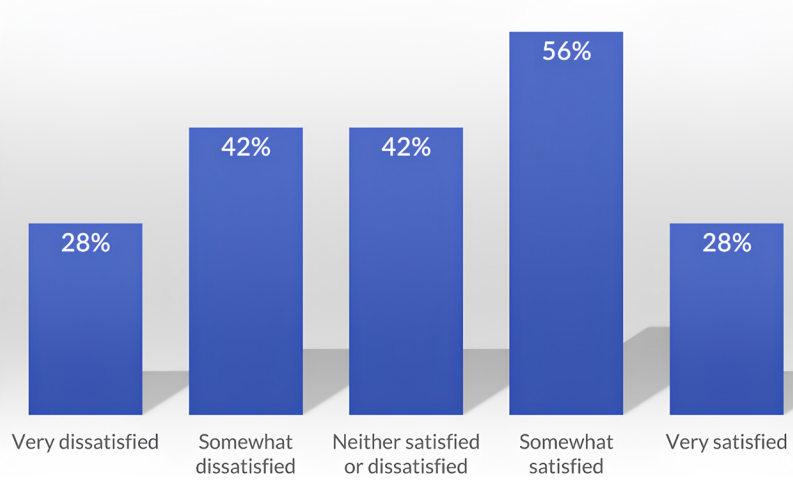
“There was zero management training. I became a manager by title and I was expected to manage. No training whatsoever!”

sheds light on a pervasive issue: the leap into leadership often comes without the necessary scaffolding of foundational training to bolster effective management.

Responses to “Did you receive any formal training or orientation specific to your role as a CPO/CDO?”



Responses to "How satisfied were you with the training/orientation in preparing for your role?"



Another veteran, reflecting on their journey and a decade-long vice-presidential tenure, voiced,

"It is not just my institution rather the industry. My career has been trial by fire, learn as you go and very painful. I have had absolutely ZERO formal training to be a manager of a large corporation however, I have been a VP now for 10 years."

This narrative doesn't just spotlight an individual's journey and the emotional challenges it entailed, but also magnifies this issue as an endemic gap across the industry. For many in healthcare advancement, leadership often translates to learning in real-time, frequently in high-pressure scenarios.

Such firsthand narratives underscore an urgent call to action: the healthcare advancement sector direly needs structured management training. While traits like resilience and adaptability are invaluable, they shouldn't be the sole pillars supporting leaders. The lack of formal training can precipitate unnecessary stress, operational inefficiencies, and lost opportunities, affecting not just the leaders but their entire teams. As evident from the charts presented earlier, a significant number of professionals aren't specifically trained for their CPO/CDO roles. And even among those who receive some training, there's a palpable need for enhancement and refinement.

The Top Challenges

From our research, the most pressing challenges for professionals in the healthcare advancement sector emerge as:

- 1. Balancing Competing Priorities and Effective Time Management:** Juggling multiple tasks and ensuring that each gets its due attention is a perennial challenge.
- 2. Financial Oversight:** Handling the financial intricacies and ensuring prudent budgeting for the foundation is paramount.
- 3. Team Leadership:** Building, nurturing, and leading a cohesive and effective foundation team is crucial for success.
- 4. Legal and Regulatory Navigation:** The healthcare sector is rife with complex legal and regulatory frameworks that leaders must adeptly navigate.
- 5. Strategic Fundraising:** Developing and executing potent fundraising strategies is the lifeblood of the role.

Yet, an insightful pattern emerged from our data: seasoned leaders, specifically CPO/CDOs with over a decade of experience, consistently perceived these challenges as less intimidating during our interviews. This observation leads to a natural inference: as leaders spend more time in their roles, their confidence swells. Challenges that initially appeared as towering obstacles gradually transform into routine tasks. Leadership, it appears, is a dual journey of personal evolution and external mastery.

A textual analysis of direct responses from comments and interviews revealed a recurring theme: the concept of “time.” It emerged as the predominant concern when discussing challenges. Interestingly, while many challenges seem to diminish with experience, the constraint of time remains a persistent adversary. However, experience does offer a silver lining. As one seasoned professional aptly put it, “At first, I would find myself attending every trivial meeting, be it about the copy machine or new shift policies. Now, I’ve learned to distance myself from anything that isn’t a judicious use of my time.”



Significant Surprises, Unexpected Challenges: The Unforeseen Realities of Leadership

Stepping into a leadership role often comes with a set of preconceived notions and expectations. However, the reality can sometimes be starkly different, as echoed by voices from the field. One professional remarked, ***“I was under the impression that the Foundation was a well-oiled machine, until I started in this role.”*** Such revelations underscore the often-hidden complexities and nuances of managing a foundation.

Another challenge that surfaced was the perceived value of fundraising within the larger healthcare ecosystem. As one leader pointed out,

“Hospital does not really want to support fundraising or see value in long-term opportunity.”

This sentiment was further echoed by another professional who highlighted,

“The lack of a long-range vision and an execution of that vision by the Hospital and Health system. We need donors, a vision, and the retention of MGOs to do our job effectively.”

Moreover, the multifaceted role of a Chief Development Officer (CDO) came to light with comments like, ***“The amount of non-fundraising activities the CDO needs to participate in. Also, the knowledge of healthcare policies/procedures that the CDO needs.”*** This highlights the expansive scope of responsibilities, extending beyond just fundraising.

A recurring theme was the gap in understanding the intricacies of fundraising, with one leader noting the ***“Lack of understanding of fundraising by executive leadership and physician leaders.”***

Such gaps can pose significant challenges in aligning organizational goals with fundraising strategies.

Furthermore, the often-underestimated task of board management was spotlighted by a professional who shared,

“Managing the board and its many subcommittees. I didn’t realize that the majority of my time would be spent preparing for and executing meetings.”

This emphasizes the importance of effective board management in the overall functioning of the foundation.

Lastly, aligning system leadership with donor and community expectations was highlighted as a challenge: “Getting the system leadership to develop priorities that were challenging and attractive to donors and the community.”



The Triad of Stressors: Time, Loneliness, and Metrics

1

Time:

Time, often perceived as an inexorable force, stands out as a predominant stressor for leaders. As previously discussed, the challenge of juggling multiple tasks and ensuring each receives adequate attention is ever-present. Leaders are inundated with a plethora of responsibilities, from strategic foresight to hands-on team management, from deciphering intricate legalities to spearheading fundraising campaigns. In this whirlwind of duties, every second counts. The relentless pressure to optimize every moment, to achieve more in constrained timeframes, can lead to feelings of being overwhelmed, potentially culminating in burnout and diminished efficacy.

2

Loneliness and Imposter Syndrome:

The age-old saying, “It’s lonely at the top,” resonates deeply with many at the helm of leadership, a sentiment echoed frequently during our research interviews. This solitude is often magnified by the gravity of decision-making responsibilities and the inherent detachment from day-to-day team dynamics. Alongside this solitude, the specter of imposter syndrome looms large. Many accomplished leaders, despite their commendable track records, wrestle with gnawing self-doubt. They often question their own competence, fearing that they might be unmasked as “inadequate” or “unworthy.” This emotional turbulence, especially when navigating the often treacherous terrains of leadership without structured guidance or mentorship, can exact a heavy mental toll.

3

Metrics:

Metrics, undeniably vital for gauging progress and ensuring accountability, paradoxically emerge as a pronounced source of stress for many CPOs and CDOs. Our research delineated three core reasons for this metric-induced anxiety:

- **Financial Tunnel Vision:** A significant number of institutions predominantly focus their metrics on financial outcomes. This limited perspective often sidelines the intricate and pivotal process of relationship-building, a cornerstone of advancement. When the painstaking efforts invested in nurturing relationships go unrecognized, leaders may feel undervalued, pressured to skew their focus towards immediate financial returns at the expense of long-term relationship development.
- **Unfounded Goal Setting:** Another source of unease is the often capricious nature of annual fundraising and campaign objectives. When these targets lack clear justification or alignment with overarching organizational goals, they can appear disjointed and unattainable. This misalignment can instigate undue pressure, potentially diverting efforts in non-strategic directions.
- **Dissonant Measurements:** A significant disconnect arises when the metrics championed by the advancement team fail to resonate with the executive leadership. This discord can sow seeds of misunderstanding, miscommunication, and missed synergies. When the benchmarks that advancement professionals deem crucial are dismissed or undervalued by the executive echelon, it can widen rifts, fostering friction and operational inefficiencies.

Actionable Solutions

For New CPO/CDOs

Fundraising First: Your primary mandate is fundraising. It's not just about the financial outcomes; it's about leveraging your unique expertise, experience, and passion. This is where you can truly shine, instigate change, and leave an indelible mark. Remember, you were selected for this role because of your prowess in this area. It's likely also the aspect of the job that ignites your passion the most. Embrace it wholeheartedly.

Balance Over Breadth: In the vast expanse of organizational responsibilities, it's easy to get lost. While understanding the organization's multifarious functions is essential, it's paramount to ensure that these don't eclipse the primary function of your role: fundraising. The challenge is to find equilibrium. Engage in organizational activities, but always keep fundraising as your North Star, guiding your actions and decisions.

Strategic Portfolio Management: The art of prioritization is pivotal in your role. While the allure of pursuing every potential major donor or opportunity is strong, it's essential to remember that depth is more impactful than breadth. As a CPO/CDO, your portfolio should be more refined than in your days as a frontline fundraiser, acknowledging the broader responsibilities you now shoulder. Concentrate on fostering high-impact relationships and seizing opportunities that resonate with the organization's overarching vision and objectives. Aim to make significant strides rather than spreading yourself too thin.





Words of Wisdom: Seasoned Advice for New CPO/CDOs

Obviously many aspects that make transitioning to a leadership role challenging are outside of your sphere of control. But there are many ways you can help yourself—we discovered 8 of them in the course of this research that will empower you to help develop the 5 core skills for yourself. During the research we made sure to ask long established advancement leaders what their advice would be for new CPO/CDOs. We have distilled that advice down to the following points:

1. **Value Internal Bonds:** As one leader insightfully shared, “The internal relationships are just as important as external relationships.” Nurturing relationships within the organization can be the bedrock of successful external engagements.
2. **Foster a Supportive Ecosystem:** Emphasizing the importance of a strong support system, another professional advised, “Build your inner cabinet! It takes a village!” Surrounding oneself with a trusted team can make all the difference.
3. **Empower Your Team:** Leadership is as much about elevating others as it is about personal growth. One leader’s advice was clear: “Mentor and empower your team members so they can achieve their potential.”
4. **Invest in Early Learning:** The initial phase in any role is crucial. A seasoned CDO recommended, “Read the book or take a training course on the first 90 days.” This foundational period can set the tone for future success.
5. **Seek External Mentorship:** The value of mentorship was a recurring theme. Professionals advised, “Choose a set of professional mentors outside your organization” and “Find a great mentor.” External mentors can offer unbiased perspectives and insights that can be invaluable.
6. **Build a Robust Network:** Networking is a powerful tool for any leader. One professional emphasized, “Create a national network of peers you can turn to for advice. Get involved in AHP. Find some internal champions. Turn to consultants to help address gaps in your leadership, expertise, or program.”
7. **Align with Organizational Vision:** A key to successful leadership in philanthropy is alignment. As one leader advised, “Strive to align philanthropy with institutional vision and strategy.” This alignment ensures that philanthropic efforts resonate with the broader goals of the organization.
8. **Stay Connected with Peers:** The journey of leadership can be isolating, but it doesn’t have to be. One piece of advice was clear: “Be sure to be connected with other CPO/CDOs.” Peer connections can offer support, insights, and camaraderie.

Words of Wisdom: Seasoned Advice for New CPO/CDOs

The path treaded by a CPO or CDO is intricate, filled with lessons to be learned, relationships to be nurtured, and visions to be aligned with. Drawing from the experiences and insights of those who have journeyed before you can offer invaluable guidance, providing a compass in a landscape that often feels vast and uncharted.

While the adage goes, **“It’s lonely at the top,”** the deeper truth is that leadership, especially in the realm of philanthropy, is not a solitary endeavor. It’s a collaborative dance, requiring the harmonious interplay of diverse talents, perspectives, and energies. The essence of leadership in this space isn’t just about steering the ship but ensuring that you’re not doing it in isolation. It’s about recognizing when to seek guidance, when to lean on others, and when to forge ahead with the collective wisdom of your team and peers.

To encapsulate this sentiment, we leave you with a poignant quote that underscores the importance of collaboration for this role:

“You need to be passionate about the work. Evaluate where the organization is regarding a culture of philanthropy. Will internal allies be formed and support your work? Or will you have to fight to be included and understood about how your role impacts and supports healthcare delivery?”



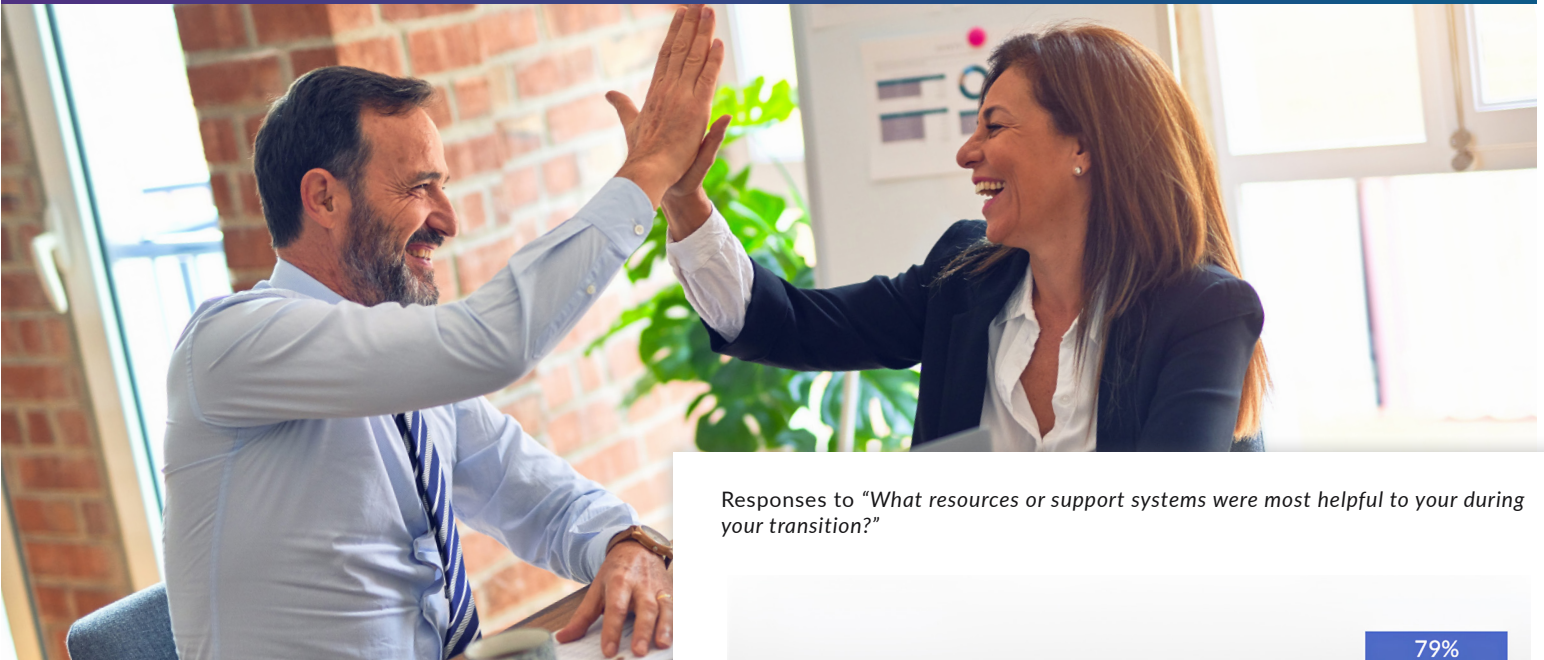


For Senior Leaders

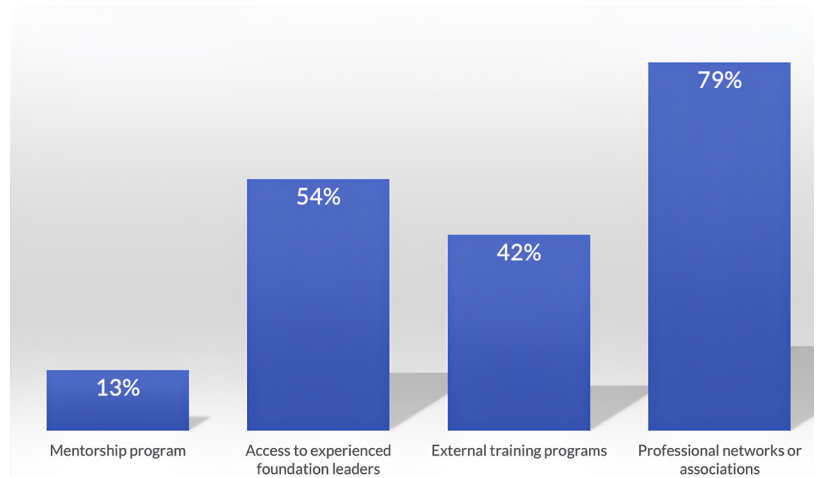
Support and Guidance: It's imperative to acknowledge the crucial role that new CPOs and CDOs play in shaping the organization's trajectory. While their primary expertise lies in fundraising, their responsibilities extend beyond this realm. They don't necessarily need hand-holding, but they do require direction to ensure that fundraising remains central to their role. By providing them with the necessary tools, training, and mentorship, you empower them to navigate the broader organizational landscape with confidence and efficacy.

Collaborative Engagement: Cultivate a culture that encourages new CPOs and CDOs to immerse themselves in cross-departmental meetings and projects. This approach not only equips them with a holistic understanding of the organization but also infuses broader strategies with their specialized insights. Their participation can lead to more comprehensive and effective organizational strategies, ensuring that all facets of the institution benefit from their expertise.

Feedback and Recognition: Constructive feedback is a cornerstone of growth. Regularly engage with new leaders, offering insights into their performance, highlighting areas for enhancement, and discussing potential growth trajectories. Such sessions can be instrumental in refining their approach and ensuring alignment with organizational goals. Moreover, taking moments to recognize and applaud their accomplishments not only bolsters their morale but also underscores the pivotal role of fundraising in driving the organization's overarching success.



Responses to “What resources or support systems were most helpful to your during your transition?”



The chart above paints a clear picture: professional networks, associations, and external training programs are currently bearing a significant portion of the responsibility in equipping CPOs and CDOs for success. These external resources play an indispensable role in providing specialized knowledge, fostering connections, and offering platforms for shared learning and best practices.

However, while the value of these external resources is undeniable, it’s essential to recognize the potential of complementing them with robust internal training and support mechanisms. Imagine the compounded impact when the insights and training from external sources are layered atop a solid foundation of internal mentorship, training, and resources.

By bolstering internal support structures, organizations can ensure that their CPOs and CDOs are not only well-equipped with the broader industry knowledge but also deeply

attuned to the organization’s unique culture, goals, and challenges. This dual approach—leveraging both external expertise and internal support—can create a more holistic, well-rounded, and effective leadership framework, maximizing the potential of CPOs and CDOs to drive success.

5 Core Skills Areas: The Foundations For Success

New CPO/CDOs should not need help fundraising and building relationships with donors, expertise in that area is a prerequisite for the position. While expertise in fundraising and donor relationship building is undeniably essential for any CPO or CDO, it is merely the tip of the iceberg. The multifaceted nature of these roles demands a broader skill set that goes beyond the traditional realms of fundraising. To truly thrive and drive success, as a senior leader you can help new CPOs and CDOs by focusing on honing their proficiency in the following five core skill areas:

1. Internal Relationship Building:

- Importance: Building strong relationships within the organization is as crucial as external donor relationships. It ensures seamless collaboration, fosters mutual respect, and aids in aligning organizational goals.
- Application: This involves regular interactions with various departments, understanding their challenges, and collaborating on shared objectives. It also means being an active listener, mediator, and facilitator within the organization.

2. Mentorship and Networking:

- Importance: Mentorship provides guidance, support, and a fresh perspective, while networking offers opportunities for collaboration, learning, and growth.
- Application: New leaders should actively seek mentors both within and outside their organization and participate in industry events, workshops, and seminars to expand their professional network.

3. Understanding Hard Skills:

- Importance: Hard skills, such as budgeting, project management, and data analysis, provide the technical foundation required to execute tasks efficiently.
- Application: Regular training sessions, workshops, and courses can help in updating and refining these skills. It's also beneficial to stay updated with the latest tools and technologies relevant to the role.

4. Improving Soft Skills:

- Importance: Soft skills, including communication, empathy, and adaptability, are essential for effective leadership, team management, and conflict resolution.
- Application: Engaging in leadership training, team-building exercises, and even personal development courses can enhance these skills. Regular feedback from peers and subordinates can also provide insights into areas of improvement.

5. Strategy and Vision:

- Importance: A clear strategy and vision guide the direction of the organization, ensuring alignment with broader goals and objectives.
- Application: Regular strategy sessions, brainstorming meetings, and feedback loops with both the team and higher management can help in refining and implementing a clear vision. It's also crucial to stay updated with industry trends and shifts to ensure the strategy remains relevant.

Fundraising and donor relationship expertise are foundational for CPO/CDO roles but the broader skill set encompassing these five core areas is what truly differentiates a good leader from a great one. Investing time and resources in these areas will not only enhance their personal growth but also significantly contribute to the organization's success.

In Conclusion: Investing in Tomorrow's Visionaries Today

As we reflect upon the insights and challenges illuminated in this report, a compelling vision emerges for the future of leadership within the healthcare advancement sector. The narrative is clear: the investment we make in our leaders today will shape the trajectory of our institutions tomorrow.

By actively investing in your leaders, you lay a robust foundation for seamless succession planning. This ensures that as new torchbearers rise, they are not only equipped to carry forward the legacy but also to innovate and elevate it. The message is unequivocal: **"You matter."** Every new leader stepping into the realm of responsibility and challenge matters immensely. Their success, their growth, and their well-being are intertwined with the very fabric of the institutions they serve.

A few critical takeaways underscore this vision:

Retention Through Reinforcement: Continual investment in the professional and personal growth of leaders directly correlates with improved retention. When leaders feel valued, supported, and equipped, they are more likely to stay, contribute, and thrive.

Empowerment Equals Success: New leaders, when provided with the right tools, resources, and mentorship, are not just set up for personal success but also drive the success of the entire organization. Their achievements resonate beyond their immediate roles, influencing teams, departments, and the broader institutional ecosystem.

The Ripple Effect of Resource Allocation: Ensuring that new leaders have access to appropriate resources is not a mere act of support—it's a strategic move. Leaders equipped with the right tools are better positioned to navigate challenges, drive innovation, and foster growth.

Visionaries of Tomorrow: Today's CPOs and CDOs, with the right nurturing, will evolve into the system leaders of tomorrow. Their perspectives, strategies, and leadership will shape the future direction of our institutions. Investing in their growth today is akin to investing in the long-term success and sustainability of our organizations.

The path forward is illuminated by a simple yet profound understanding: by nurturing the leaders of today, we are crafting a brighter, more resilient, and innovative future for our institutions. Let us commit to this vision, recognizing that in the success of our leaders lies the success of our collective legacy.