

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Early in 2010, the AFP Ottawa Chapter Board of Directors endorsed a strategic planning exercise to provide direction, clarity, and focus for the Chapter's next three years. Although the Chapter had conducted a strategic planning exercise in the past, this team thought it would be beneficial to develop a strategic operating plan that was visionary and had identifiable actions to align with the spirit of moving the AFP Ottawa Chapter forward.

The following **Vision Statement** was recommended and adopted by the Chapter Board:

The AFP Ottawa Chapter is the professional association to advance, network and feel a sense of community in the fundraising profession.

The “go to” place for fundraising.

The Strategic Planning Task Force next engaged in an exercise to determine the **Chapter's Core Values** – the guiding principles and most essential beliefs of the Chapter. Six values, which are shared with AFP International, were adopted:

- **Philanthropy:** The belief that ethical and effective fundraising are the cornerstones of philanthropy and that philanthropy changes the world.
- **Inclusiveness:** Embracing diversity in the fundraising community, with a commitment to understanding and addressing the shared and unique needs of all members of that community.
- **Excellence:** Providing the fundraising community with the highest quality of knowledge, research, advocacy, career support, news and information, strategic alliances, and related tools and insights to ensure a successful future.
- **Integrity and Credibility:** Conducting business according to the highest ethical principles and serving as trustworthy stewards of our resources.
- **Collaboration:** Recognizing that we can accomplish our purpose only with the strong support and partnership of other individuals, AFP chapters and other groups who share our vision.
- **Service Responsiveness:** Understanding that our focus is on service to our members, our chapters, stakeholders and customers and that it is provided in a timely and thoughtful manner, open to new ideas, and exceeding expectations.

After the Core Values were named, the Task Force determined the **Core Purpose** which is the most fundamental reason for AFP Ottawa Chapter's existence. It states what will be important 100 years from now and won't shift with market conditions.

The group felt AFP International's Mission was right for the Ottawa Chapter:

To advance ethical and effective fundraising

The core activities through which AFP fulfills this mission include education, training, mentoring, research, credentialing and advocacy.

When investigating the potential of the Chapter, the Task Force considered membership, infrastructure and communications as the three pillars upon which the Chapter rests. At the same time, diversity and ethics are the threads that run throughout all its members' work.

At its final meeting, the Strategic Planning Task Force reviewed, revised, and endorsed the three over-arching goals:

- *Membership Services* – Goal: To deliver core services and programs that resonate with and meet the needs of our membership.
- *Infrastructure and Operations* – Goal: To strengthen the Chapter's effectiveness.
- *Communications* – Goal: To effectively involve, engage and inform key stakeholder groups about the value of philanthropy and the role of the Chapter.

Within the Strategic Plan, each of these goals is matched with a very specific set of objectives: ones that are both achievable and measurable.

The AFP Ottawa Chapter's objectives focus on capturing the intellectual property that currently exists and harnessing it for future leadership. The Board will review and refine best practices: from succession planning, to infrastructure to member and volunteer engagement.

At the same time, it will focus on encouraging the spirit of philanthropy, both inside and outside the profession. There's a huge opportunity to engage the community, build dynamic partnerships and get rid of the silos that are so prevalent in both the profession and within the Chapter.

At the end of the day, the AFP Ottawa Chapter will take a proactive rather than reactive approach to its Chapter operations, membership, fundraising and philanthropy. By doing so, it will lead by example for the whole industry. This is not a minor change: it means a culture shift starting with the Board of Directors.

OVERVIEW OF KEY RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Leverage the experience and success of both the AFP Ottawa Chapter as an entity and that of the membership to develop a strategic operational plan that is designed to capture this intellectual property in a written and professional manner.
2. Focus on increasing the membership experience through mentorship, education, accreditation and networking. Each of these members' service offerings would benefit tremendously from analysis and research in order to determine how AFP Ottawa can continue to strengthen its member relationships.
3. After thoughtful analysis is complete, develop an overall membership plan to help support the Chapter's focus on the membership experience.
4. Recruit a Communications Chair on the board who would spearhead the development of an over-arching communications plan. This plan would include a communications audit, the identification of key messages that would resonate with all stakeholder groups, as well as customized ones, a tool kit to support the implementation of the plan, as well as metrics to monitor success over the three year period.
5. Review of processes and policies are required to support the AFP Ottawa Chapter's effectiveness. Not all policies and procedures need to be redesigned, but potentially *refined*. Objectives for governance, succession planning, nominating, committee engagement, financial reporting, revenue generation, human resources and organizational structure have been identified to provide some guidance to the individual portfolio leaders who will be responsible for reviewing their procedures and presenting recommendations.
6. Use metrics within both the overall and portfolio plans to help communicate and determine the progress toward achieving each goal. This includes the introduction of an annual presentation of portfolio plans to the Board of Directors.

The reality is that a strategic plan is only as good as its execution. In order for it to be effective and impactful, it will need to provide guidance to board meetings, committee work, volunteers and

agendas. It will require the commitment of all members to make it work, to provide input and to make adjustments along the way.

To help build the membership base and revenue, the team recommends that the AFP Ottawa Chapter focus on writing formal work plans for each Portfolio Leader. This would include annual presentations of these plans to the board as well as an end of the year report on accomplishments and lessons learned.

The Strategic Plan is meant to challenge each member to strive for excellence and the highest levels of achievement in our efforts to fulfill the AFP vision.

