Speaking Truth to Power

How to Deal with Sexual Harassment in the Fundraising Profession
Authors:

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Agenda:

1. Report Overview
2. Case Scenario
SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN FUNDRAISING

- 42% fundraisers have experienced sexual harassment in the past 2 years.
- 51% LGB fundraisers have experienced sexual harassment in the past two years.
- 23% fundraisers have experienced sexual exploitation in their career.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICIES

Percent of policies that include:
- board of directors: 61%
- volunteers: 57%
- groups like donors or clients: 34%
- 88% fundraisers' employers have a sexual harassment policy.
- 76% fundraisers experienced sexual harassment at some point in their career.
- 67% fundraisers strongly agree their organization would take appropriate action in case of discrimination or harassment by an employee.
- 15% fundraisers experiencing sexual harassment by a colleague have chosen to report it.
- 27% fundraisers experiencing sexual harassment by a stakeholder have chosen to report it.

Report Contents

- Front Matter
- Infographic
- The Detailed Results
- Conclusions & Actions
- Back Matter
- Speaking the Power of Truth Sexual Harassment Toolkit
  - Scenario Exercises & Handouts
  - Sexual Harassment Prevention Assessment
  - Action Planning Template

https://ssrn.com/abstract=4109436
Experiences of sexual harassment ever in career:
- 24.22% Never
- 75.78% Either
- 62.9% Coworker
- 57.15% Stakeholder
- 57.87% Never
- 42.13% Either

Experiences of sexual harassment in past two years:
- 31.77% Coworker
- 23.91% Stakeholder
- 41.0% Hetero
- 30.3% Male
- 44.4% Female
- 51.2% LGB
- 42.3% Caucasian
- 41.2% BIPOC
Fundraisers experience sexual exploitation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pressure to dress in an attractive manner because it will benefit the organization</th>
<th>Pressure to put yourself in situations where you are vulnerable to unwanted sexual attention because it benefits the organization</th>
<th>Either kind of sexual exploitation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16.68%</td>
<td>6.38%</td>
<td>22.61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.57%</td>
<td>3.18%</td>
<td>8.10%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

There were times when it was stated, like, ‘Oh, you definitely need to be in this meeting because he’s crazy about you,’ or, ‘We definitely have to take you because this person is enamored with you. You can definitely sway him’ (11).
Fundraisers more likely to confront and report harassment by stakeholders than coworkers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Coworker</th>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>24.8%</strong> Avoided the person</td>
<td><strong>44.9%</strong> Avoided the person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>26.4%</strong> Asked/told the person to stop or set boundary with the person</td>
<td><strong>35.3%</strong> Asked/told the person to stop or set boundary with the person</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>15.4%</strong> Reported the behavior to a supervisor or other organization officials</td>
<td><strong>26.9%</strong> Reported the behavior to a supervisor or other organization officials</td>
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</table>

“There was definitely a view among ... staff about reporting; that it’s not going to go anywhere. There isn’t going to be any support. You can say it to make sure it goes in your file in case you get fired and you’ve got that protection, but there’s not going to be a resolution.”
Sexual harassment policies cover employees but not important stakeholders.
Toolkit Resources

ACTION PLANNING TEMPLATE

Instructions:
After the Sexual Harassment Prevention Assessment has been completed, identify three (or more) dimensions on which the organization would like to improve. Use this template to set a feasible goal for improvement of those dimensions and to identify specific actions that will be necessary to achieve those goals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Actions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Write a clear anti-harassment policy</td>
<td>Advance from Low to Moderate Support</td>
<td>Process: Review policy, meet with HR to ensure a safe and respectful work environment. Responsible Party: Human Resources Director.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify all stakeholders in the policy</td>
<td>Advance from Moderate to High Support</td>
<td>Target Completion Date: Board Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advance from Low to High Support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advance from Moderate Support</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advance from Moderate to High Support</td>
<td>Target Completion Date:</td>
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<td>Advance from Low to High Support</td>
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Sexual Harassment
Scenario #1

It Left a Mark
Ground Rules

• Chatham House Rule: participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of any participant may be revealed.

• Be Trauma Informed: use active listening, provide validation and compassion.
  • Useful Phrases: “Thank you for trusting me/us enough to share that.”
    • “I’m sorry that happened to you.” or “It’s not okay that happened to you.”
    • “You are not alone” or “You deserve support.”
  • Don’t: shift into problem solving, ask a lot of probing questions (they can appear judgmental).

• Make space: try to engage everyone in the conversation.
Morgan is on the development team at a large arts organization that employs about 700 staff members. The organization holds an annual outdoor festival in early Fall as a fundraiser. The event entails live music and drinks, so a volunteer committee is involved in planning, coordinating, and setting up for the event. Morgan explains experiencing sexual harassment by Luke, a member of the volunteer committee, while setting up for the event:

“This was just a single incident... It was related to a volunteer with our organization. We were doing an outdoor event. The day before we were setting up and we (being the development staff of my organization), plus this volunteer committee of organizers that were helping with the event. The group dynamic with that group tends to be very masculine. How do I say this? Like, maybe just a little bit of a more of a [macho] mindset, where some of like that casual guy type of humor is a lot more accepted. There was probably some beer being drunk while folks were working as well.”

Morgan goes on to explain:

“What happened to me was, I was on a ladder, climbing up and hanging up banners for the organization. [Luke], one of the [volunteers] on the committee, who hadn’t really interacted with me ever before, but came over and said something about like, ‘Well look at you, sweetheart.’ I was uncomfortable with that, ...the thing that I am most upset about is he had a piece of wood laying around from our work that he was doing. He smacked me on the behind with the piece of wood, while I was on the ladder. It wasn’t extremely painful, [but] when I stop and think about it, I maybe even had a little bit of a mark afterward.”

While there were other employees and volunteers setting up nearby, Morgan explained that no one saw what happened.
Discussion Questions:

• What do you notice about how Morgan tells this story of sexual assault?
• As you read the story, what gender did you imagine Morgan identified with?
• Has anything like this happened to you or a colleague?
• If you were Morgan, how would you respond to Luke in the moment?
• If you were Morgan, how would you cope with this experience afterward?
BREAKOUT GROUPS
(15 minutes)
Discussion Areas for the Case Scenario:

**THEMES WE HOPE COME UP:**

- Assault vs. Harassment
- Minimizing Sexual Harassment
- Gender
- Sexual Orientation
- Someone Shared an SH Experience
- Being Caught Off Guard by Harassment
- Reporting to HR or Supervisor
- Sexual Harassment Policy

**EXCELLENT POINTS FROM AUDIENCE:**

- Minimizing is a survival/coping strategy
- Gay Inc, a book recently published, talks about this harassment among LGBTQ+ groups
- We minimize the professionalism of fundraising and still continue to allow board and volunteers to treat us like charity workers
- Unhealthy dynamic of using language that signals that certain donors or stakeholders are "more important" than others makes internal staff afraid to speak-up

*It Left a Mark*
Scenario #1 Exercise: It Left a Mark

Discussion Questions:
1. What do you notice about how Morgan tells this story of sexual assault?
2. As you read the story, what gender did you imagine Morgan identified with?
3. Has anything like this happened to you or a colleague?
4. If you were Morgan, how would you respond to Luke in the moment?
5. If you were Morgan, how would you cope with this experience afterwards?

Role Play:
1. Bystander: Imagine that Morgan hadn’t noticed but another staff member was nearby and did see what happened. One person take the role of Morgan, one person take the role of Luke, and one person take the role of the bystander. What should the bystander do? Take 5 minutes for everyone to make some notes about how they plan to enact their role and then begin the play with the bystander’s intervention.
2. Manager: Imagine that Morgan is a young, aspiring fundraising manager that has been assigned a mentor. One person take the role of Morgan and one person take the role of mentor. Take 5 minutes for everyone to make some notes about how they plan to enact their role and then begin with Morgan making a disclosure to the mentor. How can a mentor effectively coach Morgan on handling this situation?

Scenario #2 Exercise: The Very Handsy Donor

Imagine Lucy and Ellis work at your organization. Have your organization’s sexual harassment policy available for reference.

Discussion Questions:
1. Have you ever come across a “Bob” in your work?
2. If you were Lucy or Ellis, how would you respond to Bob in the moment?
3. How would your sexual harassment policy apply to Lucy and Ellis’ experience?
4. How might this scenario have played out differently?
5. If Lucy and Ellis report this to human resources, what can or should be done?

Role Play:
1. Manager: One person take the role of Ellis and one person take the role of Lucy. How might Lucy respond? Take 5 minutes for everyone to make some notes about how they plan to enact their role and then begin the role play with Ellis’ disclosure to Lucy.
2. Executive Director: Imagine that Lucy and Ellis go to HR and the Executive Director to report the harassment. The decision is made to speak with Bob. One person take the role of the Executive Director, and another person take the role of Bob. What should the Executive Director say? Take 5 minutes for everyone to make some notes about how they plan to enact their role and then begin the role play with the Executive Director and Bob sitting down to meet.

Scenario #1 Instructions: It Left a Mark

Print out the scenario described on page 26, and the exercise questions on page 44. Provide these handouts to each of the participants. Ask them to read the scenario and then begin discussing.

Discussion Moderator Notes:
1. What do you notice about how Morgan tells this story of sexual assault?
   - Morgan begins by saying “This was just a single incident,” which minimizes the experience as if it is irrelevant. Similarly, toward the end of her story she says, “It wasn’t extremely painful.” Sexual harassment of all forms is important.
   - She goes on to describe the culture of the event and community as if she is trying to explain the behavior, but there is no good explanation for sexual harassment.
2. As you read the story, what gender did you imagine Morgan identified with?
   - Most will assume Morgan is a woman, but as this report indicates male fundraisers experience harassment, and same-sex harassment occurs too. Look at the statistics together.
   - We had male interviewees that described experiences similar to this one. So, while Morgan could just as easily be a man, in this particular case Morgan identified as a woman.
3. Has anything like this happened to you or a colleague?
   - Sharing the experience of anonymous people can be helpful in hearing about the experiences of people you know and respect as even more important.
   - It may be hard to share personal experiences about sexual harassment, so no one should feel forced to share. If the moderator has an experience, they may choose to go first. The moderator should show empathy and support if the experience is told. Look at the statistics together.
   - If you choose to share an experience, you might consider a raising of hands (‘make your hand if you’ve experienced sexual harassment’) or giving participants a moment of personal reflection to jot down notes about any experiences they’ve had. Many of our interviewees didn’t remember an experience they had until halfway into the interview. Lastly, you might try having participants write down their experiences on paper and submit them anonymously, then collect and redistribute them so that they are read out loud by a colleague.
4. If you were Morgan, how would you respond to Luke in the moment?
   - Most targets of sexual harassment describe freezing in the moment and then later wishing that they had said something more forward than they did.
   - More forward comments can range from being playfully (‘I’m watching you!’), to joking on serious (‘I wonder what HR would say about that’), to more factually (‘you can’t be doing that’), to asserting (‘please don’t do anything like that again’). What do participants think is best?
5. If you were Morgan, how would you cope with this experience afterwards?
   - A key question is whether Morgan should tell anyone formally or informally. Participants may want more information, but ask the group in what ways are these important considerations? In all sexual harassment/hed?
   - Morgan works under the Director of Development, a woman.
   - The organization has a sexual harassment policy, training, and HR department, but the policy doesn’t cover harassment only.
   - This was Luke’s first volunteer role with the organization, and he has only made minor financial contributions to the organization.
   - If there are other questions, you can make up an answer and discuss.
   - Discuss the importance of Morgan sharing the experience with someone she trusts, whether it’s a colleague, friend, mentor. Use this discussion group as a support option if anyone needs to.
Facilitation Considerations

• Maximize the comfort of participants:
  • Consider using small groups, create groups based on comfort (e.g., self-selected, or shared gender)
  • Consider the role of the facilitator (a third party is ideal, or someone trusted)
  • Consider the location, making it a safe space (e.g., the office may not be the right place)
  • See moderator notes about how to discuss personal experiences safely

• These sessions tend to take longer than expected, leave space for it
  (...definitely more than we did!)

• Be prepared with handouts or materials (links available in moderator notes)
We hope you are equipped with:

- Data to raise awareness
- Tools to improve practices
- Knowledge to facilitate training

In solidarity,

REPORT: https://ssrn.com/abstract=4109436
Q&A on Research Findings

• Do you think the lower rate of sexual harassment over last two years is because in the pandemic there were fewer events and in-person meetings?
  
  • This is a great point. These data were collected via survey in mid-2020 and asked fundraisers about their experiences from mid-2018 to mid-2020. As such these results are largely pre-pandemic. That said, we have anecdotal evidence from additional survey work, interviews, and conversations to suggest that rates have been lower during the pandemic. Still, we shouldn’t forget that harassment can happen via video, text message, and email.

• I'm interested in your finding that fundraisers are more comfortable reporting harassment from stakeholders. Given the lack of policy coverage and power dynamics, I'm surprised that they would be more comfortable reporting.

  • We were surprised by this too. The study looked at both formal reporting as well as informally telling a superior. Our interviews suggest that fundraisers sometimes discuss harassment by a donor with their supervisor in the hopes of shifting the relationship to a colleague and/or limiting contact to phone or online communication. Also, it may also be easier to disclose an uncomfortable experience with an outsider versus someone internal. As one participant in the webinar noted: “reporting internally means you see that individual daily and if not resolved properly its much more awkward and difficult than reporting an external stakeholder.”
Q&A on Toolkit and Case Scenario

• Who do you suggest conducts the sexual harassment prevention assessment (contained in the toolkit)?
  
  • There are a lot of groups that would be qualified to conduct the assessment. It might be at the board level, the ED/CEO level, the HR level, or a self-convened employee committee with support from leadership. There are good reasons, if there are resources to do so, to hire an external party/consultant to reduce bias. However, we are in favor of anyone conducting the assessment that is willing to do the work and has some level of authority in the organization.

• How do I get a copy of the report and toolkit?
  
  • The report and toolkit are a single PDF document that you can parse out as needed: https://ssrn.com/abstract=4109436

• A common question I have heard: How do organizations share internally that a donor or volunteer has displayed concerning behavior, as a warning to other colleagues?
  
  • We have heard from interviewees that they have tried “flagging” the person in the donor management system, but there are concerns with this approach because donors have the right to request their file. We had interesting discussions with some software representatives at ICON and they were interested in a tech solution. This is a fruitful area for further consideration/action.