



A Fundraiser's Year in Review

A reflection for those who carry the work—and the weight. Grab a notebook or your laptop and write your answers.

Fundraising and nonprofit leadership are uniquely personal forms of work. You are not just managing strategy or revenue, you are stewarding relationships, holding expectations, navigating pressure, and carrying hope on behalf of others. Before looking ahead, this reflection invites you to pause and look back, not to evaluate your

worth or performance, but to tell the truth about the year you just lived. What you notice here becomes the foundation for how you move forward, with clarity, integrity, and momentum that is actually sustainable.

1. The Year as It Was

When you reflect on this past year in your fundraising or leadership role, what moments stand out most?

- What felt heavy or draining?
- What felt energizing or affirming?
- What surprised you?

Write without editing or justifying. Name what happened.

2. The Wins (Beyond the Metrics)

What were your wins this year—both visible and invisible?

Consider relationships strengthened, courageous conversations, boundaries held, systems improved, confidence gained, or results achieved despite constraints.

Which wins required the most from you?

Which wins came with an unseen cost?

3. The Losses and Letdowns

What didn't work this year?

Consider goals missed, donors lost, efforts that drained more than they returned, or moments of discouragement or misalignment.

What do these moments reveal about the system you are working within?

What do they reveal about your limits?

4. The Board as a Factor

Whether supportive, disengaged, or challenging, your board influenced your year.

In what ways did the board support the work?

In what ways did it limit or complicate progress?

Where was there clarity—and where was confusion?

Where did you carry responsibility that should have been shared?

Where did you experience genuine partnership?

Finish this sentence:

This year, my relationship with the board taught me that...

Bridge: From Reflection to Alignment

The purpose of reflecting on the board's role is not to assign fault or revisit old frustrations. It is to clarify what has been carried, what has been shared, and what has been assumed. As you move forward, these insights are not meant to become demands or critiques, but data, information that can help shape clearer expectations, healthier partnership, and more sustainable leadership. You are not preparing an argument; you are preparing for alignment.

5. The Best Experience

What was the single best experience you had this year in your work?

What made it meaningful?

What does this moment tell you about what sustains you?

6. The Hardest Moment

What was the hardest moment you faced this year?

What did it require of you?

What did you need at the time that you did not receive?

7. What This Year Taught You About Yourself

Looking across the year, complete this sentence honestly:

This year showed me that I am someone who...

8. What Needs to Change

Based on what this year demanded of you, what can no longer stay the same?

Name one to three changes that feel necessary—not aspirational.

9. What You Are Carrying Forward on Purpose

What worked well enough that it deserves protection next year?

What would be lost if you abandoned these?

Closing Reflection

Given what this year required of you—and what it taught you:

How do you want to show up in the year ahead?

Not bigger. Not busier. But more aligned.