

Through the looking glass: Articulating your identity as a professional fundraiser
Presented by Sarah K. Nathan & Genevieve G. Shaker
Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy
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Describe your role as a fundraiser in a short phrase:	Thinking about how fundraising is described in the literature, which role(s) do you identify with?
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Take a few minutes to think about these questions and your responses.
Next, interview a neighbor about how they are as professionals and who they seek to become.

Think about your identity – personal and professional; how does one shape or influence the other? What are the key elements of your personal identity? How might these affect your professional pursuits and choices?

What does being a professional mean to you? What makes you feel satisfied in your work?

What are your central areas of interest in the nonprofit sector generally, or fundraising specifically (so far)? How did you come to them?

What kind of work life do you have or want to have? Do you think in terms of “career” or “job”? Is your sense of being a professional defined by the position you hold or is it a work philosophy that moves with you from job to job?

Think about the characteristics of successful fundraisers identified in the literature:

In what areas do you feel confident?

In what areas would you like to grow?

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While not an exhaustive list of the vast literature on professionalism, the following bibliography provides an excellent introduction to professional identity and the professionalization of fundraising.

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