1. Stay clear on your vision... be essential!
   Leadership requires resilience, and your partners rely on your steady hand. Your mission didn’t stop and it doesn’t know there is a crisis. Double-down on your institution’s role.

2. Communication, communication, communication
   Advancement is about connecting and honouring relationships. If you have only communicated with alumni and donors by asking for money, now is a great time to change that dynamic. They believe in your institution and they want to help. With advice, ideas, time, and yes, with money.

3. Revisit your fundraising priorities
   The priorities of most of your constituents changed on March 15. So did your institution’s. Your donors will expect that your short-term priorities will be related to COVID-19. Rarely in your history has a donor been able to support a learner so quickly, so meaningfully, and so urgently related to an extraordinary situation!

4. Tell your institution’s “front line” story – build pride
   Your constituents want to hear about the impact their friends, colleagues, and classmates are having on the front line. These stories are critical now – and they can be told more often than usual – use video and social sharing opportunities!

5. Get personal
   Engaging now, in a personal way, is an important priority. Your top donors, training clients, partners, sponsors and alumni want you to be visible and personally reaching out. This can be an excellent opportunity to directly engage the board to also act personally.

ViTreo Group is a full-service consultancy focused on leadership development and fund development capacity building.

We offer a clear approach in an industry that can be overwhelming and often overcomplicated.
6. Engage deans, executive leaders, senior volunteers and faculty in stewardship
Engaging all of your leaders with key relationships now is important. Calling the CEO of a partner company, reaching out to current donors, or engaging with past supporters are just some examples of authentic stewardship. They will remember that you and your team took the time during this time.

7. Mobilize your network
Colleges are surrounded by networks. Training partners, alumni, donors, sponsors, media are all hungry for authentic, local and relevant stories. Invite them to share your story. It will help build advocacy, interest and future investment in your institution.

8. Retool the advancement team’s metrics for donor, alumni and sales visits
Face to face visits - a common metric - is not currently viable. Instead, consider metrics like significantly increased contact rates, with a wider diversity of constituents. While face to face visits are way down, personal engagements are up. They are just happening by video and phone, rather than in person.

9. Strategically outsource
Shrinking budgets, staff reductions, and declining revenues will require moving some activities outside the organization. Prospect research, event planning, interim staffing, and direct response are all examples of advancement activities that can be outsourced.

10. We will return to a new normal... don’t stop or pause ongoing efforts
Research from previous downturns suggests that organizations that continued asking for support, at the appropriate time, were the quickest