Making the Ask

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Who’s in the room?

• 1/3 are Board Members
• 1/3 are Executive Directors
• 1/3 are Program Staff, Development Staff or Volunteers

• ½ have an annual budget smaller than $100,000
• ½ have an annual budget between $100k and $500k

• Fundraising plan? 50%
• Board Member Giving? 40%
• Individual Giving Program? 60%
• Individual donors and Private foundations are primary sources of funding for those who answered the survey.
When I say the word “Money” what one word comes to mind?

- Private
- Growth
- More...
- Opportunity (2)
- Ability
- Personal
- Save
- Important
- Necessary
- Resources
- Wealth
- YES!
- Eeek
- Limited

Individual giving made up ____ of all charitable giving in the U.S. in 2016.

What were the top three sectors for charitable giving in the U.S. in 2016?
What percentage of American households give to charity?

Understanding a variety of motivations for giving is important because understanding people’s motivations leads to fundraising strategies that are more efficient at targeting and retaining donors.

Sargeant & Woodliffe, 2007

Fundraising and You

How do you feel when you make a gift?
Why do people give?

• Fear  • Altruism
• Hope   • Guilt
• Anger  • Praise
• Exclusivity  • Salvation

Adrian Sargeant, Lucy Woodliffe 2007

What are your fears about fundraising?

• Spending too much energy and money on an event and failure
• Asking the wrong person for the wrong donation
• Fear of being turned down!
• The Ask. How do I connect with potential donors and express a need without desperation?
• That we haven’t encapsulated our story enough to start asking.
• Asking the same donor in a small community to decide “which” nonprofit.
• Falling flat
What are your fears about fundraising? (cont.)

- Not having enough time to follow through on asks
- Not asking for enough
- Embarrassing a potential donor
- Unrealistic expectations from the board
- Not being able to adequately communicate the importance of our program to the community
- Asking too high
- Competition with other programs in the community
- Lack of interest in our program

Fundraising Overview

Identify

Invite

Cultivate

Educate

Ask

Thank

Steward

Fundraising Overview

Who? How do you know who?

Now what? How do they get to know your organization? Do they have an affinity?

Again – how do they get to know your organization?

So...you HAVE to do this in order to fundraise...

How do we treat donors after they give?
Ladder of Effectiveness

- Personal Solicitation — 50%
  *(Teams of two are ideal!)*
- Personal Phone Call — 25%
- Personal Letter or Email — 10-15%
- Effectiveness of social media varies, increased 8% last year

*Use personal approach for $____ + donors*

Language...

Give, or we are all going to die!!!

Language...

- Kind
- Caring
- Compassionate
- Helpful
- Friendly
- Fair
- Hard-working
- Generous
- Honest
- Responsible
- Loyal
- Generous
- Honest
- Responsible
- Loyal

Example: Men and women respond differently to certain words in fundraising asks. Studies show that when appeals use adjectives like "kind and compassionate," women increased their giving on average by 10 percent. On the other hand, male donors are prompted to give more when solicitations use adjectives like "strong," "responsible," and "loyal."

*Jen Shang, 2012*
Be Okay with No (50% will say no)

It’s not about you when people say no! They say no because:
• They have other giving priorities
• This isn’t a project they care about
• They don’t have the money
• Etc

Steps in a Successful Solicitation

Start with Your Own Gift

• Begin every ask with “Join me”
• The first gift to any campaign begins with you which means your first ask will be a success!
• Give at a level that is personally significant
“It’s easier to get the gift than the visit.” - Jerold Panas

Make Arrangements to Meet
- Send a letter or email first
- Avoid getting trapped on the phone
- Be honest
- Overcome objections
- Get the meeting

#1 – Do Your Homework
- Get the right team in place
- Agree on roles
- Know what you are asking for. Have a number in mind when you ask.
- Practice your script and asking out loud

Know the person you are talking to – and know how they want to be asked! What emotion drives them? What language are you going to use? What project are you going to highlight?
#2 – Practice

You’ve done your homework.
Now work out the jitters!

#3 – The Ask

- You’re not asking out of the blue. You’ve built relationship. You’ve invited, you’ve educated. They’re ready!
- Ask for advice – pose questions – the conversation is about the donor, not you.
- Ask.
- WAIT . . . Silence is a thinking time. Be patient.
- They will respond.

#4 – The Response

- “Yes – I think I can do that.”
- “Um – I’m not sure. I have to check with my spouse.”
- Um – I don’t typically support organizations like yours. But I’m intrigued.
- I’ve already made my charitable commitments for this year.
The asker is a current board member.

The prospect is a former board member who has been giving $500 a year since finishing a three-year term in 2015. You were on the board for one year with the prospect. She has not given this year yet.

Ask for a gift of $1,000 for the new project you are launching this year. ($500 to sustain her giving and $500 to increase.)

#5 – The Donor Centered Thank you

- Immediately thank the donor. IMMEDIATELY.
- What did their gift do? Make specific reference to intended use of funds.
- How did you feel when you received the gift?
- The letter is PERSONALLY signed and PUNCTUAL.
- It communicates excitement, warmth.
- It ABSOLUTELY does not involve an ask. Of any kind.
- The opening sentence grabs the reader.
- Always thank potential donors for the meeting.

Penelope Burk, "Donor Centered Fundraising, 2005
Thank you

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