

Title:

Fundraising Fundamentals

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Summary:

Successful fundraising requires following certain fundamental steps. Here are two things you have to do with every fundraiser:

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Article Body:

Successful fundraising requires following certain fundamental steps. Here are two things you have to do with every fundraiser:

- 1) Increase community awareness of your need
- 2) Increase community awareness of your offering

Everybody reading this instantly thinks, "Yep, we've got that covered. Everybody in our group knows what we're doing."

Let's take a closer look and see, shall we?

Creating Awareness Of Your Fundraising Need:

- 1) Can your need be expressed in a single sentence?
- 2) Has everyone in your group memorized that sentence?
- 3) Is expressing your need a part of your approach to all supporters?

Test your group from top to bottom.

Randomly ask individuals to tell you why your group is raising money.

I absolutely guarantee you that you'll be surprised at how weak the various answers are.

In many groups, more than 50% of those involved with the fundraiser will not be able to tell you in a single sentence the specific reasons why they are raising

money.

What about outside your group?

Can you honestly say that you've exhausted every possible approach in getting the word out to the community about your fundraiser?

Does everybody know why you need money?

Have you done each of these?

Flyers

Posters

Press release

Roadside signs

Newspaper coverage

Public service radio announcements

Pre-kickoff letter, postcard, or email campaigns

Or, are you assuming that all you have to do is tell someone that you're doing a fundraiser and that they'll be glad to help?

Two problems with that approach. One is that most of your group can't effectively communicate your need.

The second is that you are already assuming that your group has more than enough prospective supporters to meet your goal.

Both these problems limit your potential results.

Consider these three points:

One, if your need isn't communicated clearly and concisely, it will not be understood and internalized as a deserving cause by your prospective supporters.

Two, if your sellers don't really understand your group's need, then they won't push as hard to meet that need.

Three, if your need isn't general knowledge in your community, then your fundraising job will be that much harder.

Think of "getting the word out" as being similar to softening up the beachhead during the Normandy invasion. If you don't do the advance prep work, you're much

more likely to meet a hostile response.

Creating Awareness Of Your Fundraising Offering

The second fundraising fundamental goes hand-in-hand with creating an awareness of your need.

Creating an awareness of your offering is just as important as telling people why your group needs money.

Your fundraising need and your fundraising offering should be closely linked in all your communications.

At the same time you are getting the word out, you need to make sure the message gets through on exactly what your group is doing to raise funds.

Just as with expressing your need, everyone in your group should be able to sum up your fundraising offering in a single sentence.

That sentence should also reinforce the emotional foundation that is derived from recognition of your need.

So what in the heck does all that mean?

Put simply, if someone believes your need is real and agrees with the value proposition of your offering, they will help you.

And what's your fundraising value proposition?

It's a summation of your offering, combined with a reminder of your need, that's expressed in a way that informs each prospective supporter of what's in it for them.

In other words, your prospect needs to:

- 1 - Be aware of your need
- 2 - Be linked to it on an emotional level
- 3 - Be in agreement that your offer has real value in it for them

Getting your need and your offering across to as many potential supporters as possible is the essence of fundraising.

Take the time to develop single sentence statements for your fundraiser covering

both of these fundraising fundamentals.

Teach everyone in your group how to communicate these basic value statements when they talk to prospective supporters.

Conclusion

Executing well on these fundraising fundamentals -- communicating your need and communicating your offering -- ensures that your fundraiser will be a smashing success.