8 Steps for a Successful

Capital Campaign

For Historic Sacred Places

Key Steps to Driving a Successful Fundraising Campaign for Your Religious Property

Partners for Sacred Places
AT THE INTERSECTION OF HERITAGE, FAITH, & COMMUNITY

A New Approach to Building Restoration and Fundraising

Our 30 years of helping congregations of historic sacred places build capacity make us uniquely qualified to help you raise capital funds. Partners for Sacred Places has compiled a thousand details into 8 steps to shepherd you toward a successful capital fundraising campaign.

Partners for Sacred Places has also developed tools to measure your public value to help you build a strong case statement for your campaign. We not only help you leverage your internal assets, but we engage with community institutions, civic leaders and stakeholders leading to a community-wide fundraising effort.

When you find the right partner, your capital campaign will succeed

"80% of our clients raise more money than expected, and 40% of those funds come from the wider community."

— Gianfranco Grande, Executive Vice President
Partners for Sacred Places

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A successful campaign is a blend of a thousand details.

1. Developing A Preliminary Plan
- A. Assessing Needs: The Conditions Survey (Building Assessment)
- B. Setting Priorities

2. Developing Consensus

3. Do We Need Help in Developing Our Fundraising Plan?

4. Developing a Preliminary Fundraising Plan
- A. Preparing the Case Statement
- B. Creating a "Pyramid of Gifts"
- C. Identifying Potential Donors

5. Testing the Preliminary Plans is a Fundamental Key for Success—The Feasibility Study

6. Finalizing Campaign Plans
- A. Leadership, Legal Structure and Campaign Policy
- B. Options for Establishing a Separate Organization or Fundraising Partnership
- C. The Importance of "Advance Gifts" and Where to Get Them
- D. Refining the Message
- E. Determining the Campaign Structure and Recruiting the Campaign Team
- F. Record Systems that Keep Campaigns on Track
- G. Materials that Win Friends and Influence People

7. Implementing the Plans
- A. The Solicitation Process
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8. Implementing the Community Campaign
- A. A "Community Campaign" The Secret for a Community-Wide Campaign
- B. The Markets for a Community Campaign
- C. What Publicity (PR) Can Do For You
- D. The Role of Special Events in a Restoration Campaign
- E. Frequently Experienced Problems and How to Solve Them

Do you notice an emphasis on planning?

Successful campaigns are 70% planning and preparation and less than 30% active solicitation. The most critical stage in any campaign is not after it is launched, but before it is announced.

Guiding Principles for a Successful Capital Campaign

1. **There is no substitute for leadership. Every campaign must have a core of individuals willing to give sacrificially, to solicit enthusiastically and to provide consistent, committed leadership.**
2. **Your building and your history can lead you to unexpected sources of support. Be creative in preparing your case.**
3. **Expert help in building improvements and fund raising is available and, in some cases, can save time and money over the long run.**
4. **In any restoration or building repair effort, a Conditions Survey (Building Assessment) of the building's physical problems is an essential first step.**
5. **Few congregations can afford to address every need identified by a Conditions Survey (Building Assessment). Clear priorities and a program for phased repairs must be established.**
6. **Consensus and commitment on the part of the congregation are prerequisites for a successful campaign.**
7. **Wise campaigners test their case and the strength of their "markets" of potential donors with a feasibility study.**
8. **"Advanced Gifts" will determine the success of your campaign.**
9. **A "Pyramid of Gifts" is the most important tool in a fund raiser's repository.**
10. **See your prospects in person. A telephone call is a poor second choice, and mail an even poorer third.**
11. **Never hesitate to tell a prospect what it will take for the campaign to be successful. Ask for a specific amount.**
12. **Don't forget to say "Thanks."**

Step 1 Developing a Preliminary Plan

A capital campaign begins with the building itself. What are the specific needs of the building? How much are repairs likely to cost? In what order should repairs need to be addressed? A Conditions Survey (Building Assessment) is essential to answering these questions.

Assessing Needs: The Conditions Survey (Building Assessment)

Few institutions have within their membership the depth of expertise that is needed to determine the true physical condition and repair needs of their building(s). Most will need to retain an architect or engineer to examine the wood, masonry, roof, electrical, plumbing and heating systems, the stained glass and other special features such as furnishings and decorative elements such as stenciling, murals and painting.

> *...Architects are normally the best professionals to consult...they will bring to your project a general understanding of the way buildings function...*

Architects are normally the best professionals to consult, because they will bring to your project a general understanding of the way buildings function, and can call in engineers, historians, mechanical systems engineers (for the heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems), and other specialists to supplement their own expertise. An engineer may, on occasion, be the only consultant a congregation will need if a building's repair problems are entirely structural in nature, such as settling foundation walls or cracked roof trusses.

How do you find a good consulting architect?

Local preservation organizations.

The American Institute of Architects (AIA)

How does an institution cover the cost of a building Conditions Survey (Building Assessment)?

Funds for Conditions Surveys (Building Assessments) have traditionally come from one of three sources:

- Existing reserve funds
- A wealthy member of the congregation
- A grant

In recent years, however, some organizations have been increasingly willing to cover the cost of these surveys. Resources differ by religious organization, city and state, but the following avenues should be explored:

- Denominational sources
- Preservation Services Fund of the National Trust for Historic Preservation
- Preservation Organizations (In New York State, for example, the New York Landmarks Conservancy's Sacred Sites and Properties Fund can provide financial support for building surveys. In Philadelphia, the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia offers similar assistance.) Refer to the Landmark Yellow Pages to see if there might be a preservation organization in your locality that could offer assistance.
- Community Foundations
- Local Foundations

It is important to seek the *entire* cost of the survey from one source. Savvy individuals and foundations will understand the importance of the Conditions Survey (Building Assessment) and one should be willing to play this pivotal role. Avoid seeking multiple funders for the survey since it can "use up" donors that will be needed when the real campaign begins. There is, however, an exception: sometimes funding organizations will consider only a "matching" grant. In these instances, try to use only one other source in making the match.

The First Presbyterian Church in Stamford Connecticut successfully raised $1.7 million to help rejuvenate its beautiful stained-glass windows along with other architectural features.

Setting Priorities

Questions which the planning committee must address include:

1. If the congregation cannot raise all the money needed, which repairs will take priority? Which will be postponed? What can be omitted?
2. In what order will priority needs be addressed? Are there some problems which must be corrected before other repairs are made? For example, some congregations have made the mistake of completing interior work before making crucial exterior repairs. Persisting problems such as a leaking roof have subsequently damaged newly restored interiors, compounding the costs of repair and restoration.
3. Can savings be achieved by grouping projects together? For example, can scaffolding erected for repointing of the masonry be used at the same time for repair of the stained glass windows?
4. Are there projects which must be completed to coincide with special events in the life of the congregation? For example, you might need to finish the kitchen in time for the Thanksgiving meal for the homeless, the balcony in time for the overflow crowds at the high holy days, or the parish hall in time for the summer youth program.

The planning committee should emerge from its deliberations with a preliminary restoration plan, a preliminary budget and a preliminary timetable. The Church of the Holy Trinity's plan, budget and order of approach looked like this:

Church of the Holy Trinity Restoration

Phase 1

St. Christopher's House	
Exterior	$ 81,250
Interior*	283,750
Garden, Fence, Sidewalk	15,000
	$380,000
Church and Bell Tower	
Exterior	$188,750
Interior*	171.250
	$360,000
Rectory	
Exterior	$ 53,750
Interior*	56,250
	$110,000
Cloister Hall and Small Chapel	
	$25,000
Phase 1 Total	**$875,000**

Phase 2

Stained Glass	$150,000
Campaign Expenses **	100,000
Phase II Total	**$250,000**
Grand Total	**$1,125,000**

Step 2 Developing Consensus

If resources were unlimited, consensus would probably not be such a difficult issue. Unfortunately, this is not the case for most congregations, and hard decisions must be made about fundraising and the goals of the repair and restoration program itself.

There is a temptation to make these decisions in small groups, usually at the level of the Trustees, Vestry or Parish Council of the institution. This mode of decision-making ignores one key fact: eventually, each member of the congregation (and members of the community as well, if you conduct a community campaign) will ratify or reject these decisions, voting with a most powerful ballot: his or her pocketbook!

Keep in mind that most people are likely to support the plans developed by their leaders if they have been kept apprised of the problems and are aware of the time and effort spent exploring alternatives. Therefore, it makes sense to bring the congregation along.

Potential donors are most likely to support a plan if they feel they have had a voice in shaping it. Obviously, it is not possible to involve every member in every decision, but it is possible to keep the congregation informed and invite their participation at critical junctures along the way. Keep in mind that most people are likely to support the plans developed by their leaders if they have been kept apprised of the problems and are aware of the time and effort spent exploring alternatives. Therefore, it makes sense to bring the congregation along.

Critical points for building consensus include:

Sharing the problem (e.g., a leaking roof, inadequate heating, falling masonry)

- Deciding to conduct a Conditions Survey
- Deciding to develop a restoration plan
- Deciding to explore a fundraising campaign
- Approving a preliminary restoration plan
- Approving a preliminary fundraising plan

Once a preliminary restoration plan is developed, it is essential for it to be presented to the entire membership for discussion, modification, and ratification.

The following are suggestions for building consensus:

Use every means available to communicate with your membership.

1. Make use of small groups.
2. Heterogeneous groups are best.
3. Make sure presenters are knowledgeable about the needs and all the alternatives that were considered.
4. Take advantage of visual aids.
5. Use hard hat tours to demonstrate the need for action.

Partners for Sacred Places helped Wabash Presbyterian Church in Wabash, IN conduct a successful capital campaign by communicating its value and importance to the greater community. Photo: David Frederick

Step 3 Do We Need Help In Developing Our Fundraising Plan?

Before beginning the process of developing a preliminary fundraising plan, one vital question must be answered: Do we need help in developing our plan?

Many congregations have found it helpful to hire a fundraising consultant to assist in developing—and sometimes implementing—their fundraising plan. On the other hand, other congregations have decided to go it alone or have used a consultant for selected parts of the planning work, some with great success.

Every campaign must have a dedicated cadre of at least three to five influential volunteers willing to meet regularly, give generously and inspire others

It must be emphasized that hiring a consultant does not make up for poor leadership within an institution. Every campaign must have a dedicated cadre of at least three to five influential volunteers willing to meet regularly, give generously and inspire others over the long months of the campaign.

To carry out a successful campaign you will need access to a wide range of skills. The following checklist can help you assess your in-house capabilities.

Do you have access to the following areas of expertise?

- Legal Expertise: Ability to devise language for pledge cards and other documents.
- Writing Ability: Skill to compose brochures, letters of request, press releases, etc.
- Fundraising Experience: Not just for gift solicitations, but also for the organization and record-keeping systems of a campaign.
- Photographic and Graphic Design Skills: Ability to design letterhead, brochures, invitations, etc.
- Research Skills: Ability to research individuals, foundations, corporations, government sources and genealogical records.
- Public Relations Expertise: Ability to place stories and attract other favorable publicity in both print and broadcast media.
- Experience in training volunteers and in group dynamics.
- Computer Expertise: Experience to help choose hardware and software if you do not plan to use a manual gift-tracking system (see page12 for more discussion of this issue).

What can a professional fundraising consultant do for us?

Some congregations retain a consultant to oversee the campaign from beginning to end. Others retain a consultant to assist in developing the fundraising plan, but reserve the right to implement it themselves. Still other institutions develop and implement their own plans, but purchase the services of a consultant for specific tasks. Tasks for which help is frequently sought include:

- **The Feasibility Study**
- **Development of the Case Statement**
- **Development of Solicitation Materials (such as brochures)**
- **Volunteer Training**
- **Grant-writing**

A word about costs

Fundraising fees vary widely depending upon the experience and size of the consulting firm and the scope of the services provided. Rates range from $500 to $2,500 per day, and a feasibility study can run from $7,500 to $30,000 depending upon the scope of the work.

Although major institutions with well-oiled fund raising machines may spend as little as 5% to 7% of their total campaign proceeds on fund raising, most congregations should expect to spend in the neighborhood of 10% to 15%, including the cost of the consultant, staff and materials. John Marshall, President of The Kresge Foundation, says, "An expenditure of less than 10% is probably not enough. Outreach to new constituencies (for example, community campaigns that may use direct mail or telemarketing) adds to costs, and expenditures in the 10% to 15% range are acceptable. Fund raising expenditures above 20% arouse our professional curiosity."

Don't forget to include the cost of fundraising in your overall project budget.

However, if you can arrange for the cost of fundraising to be covered from reserve funds or through the advance gift of an early donor, you can omit this cost from the project budget and assure donors that every cent given to the campaign will be applied directly to building repair and restoration.

Step 4 Developing a Preliminary Fundraising Plan

If you choose to hire a consultant, he or she will have his own methods of developing and testing a fundraising plan. If you decide to develop the plan yourself, the creation of our documents will focus the planning process and provide "end products" to which the congregation and outside prospects can react. The four documents are:

- **A Preliminary Case Statement**
- **A Preliminary "Pyramid of Gifts"**
- **A Preliminary List of Potential Funding Sources**
- **A Feasibility Questionnaire**

The first three documents will be discussed in this section. The Feasibility Questionnaire will be covered in the next chapter.

Writing the Case Statement

A Case Statement is a one- to twelve-page document that outlines an institution's case for support. In a succinct and compelling way, it describes all the reasons a congregational member or a potential donor in the community such as an individual, foundation, corporation or governmental entity might be willing to contribute to your campaign.

Creating the Case Statement is one of the most difficult, but rewarding, experiences in a fundraising campaign. It calls for looking at your institution and its building in new ways, discovering hidden historical associations with people and events, and imaginatively answering the question, "Who would care if this institution—or its building—ceased to exist?"

Creating a "Pyramid of Gifts"

The "Pyramid of Gifts" is the most important planning and solicitation document of the entire campaign because it illustrates in precise terms the size and number of gifts that will be needed to reach the campaign's goal.

For many years, the "Pyramid of Gifts" was constructed according to a rough "Rule of Thirds." This rule dictated that the lead gift in a campaign must equal 10% of the total to be raised, with approximately one-third of the total coming from the top ten gifts; the second third from the next 100 gifts; and the balance from all other gifts. This rule assumed a fairly large prospect pool, with prospective donors available at every level of the pyramid. The two pyramids below illustrate the traditional "Rule of Thirds" for campaigns of different sizes.

The traditional "Rule of Thirds" remains the industry standard, but in recent years, the "Rule of the Specific Situation" has been added. This new rule takes into account the specifics of each situation, lending particular weight to the giving potential of prospects at the higher levels of the pyramid. This rule is particularly helpful for organizations with a small prospect pool or a scarcity of donors in the middle ranges. The following example illustrates how the "Rule of the Specific Situation" works.

Identifying Potential Donors

Your Preliminary List of Potential Sources should include the major sources you have reason to believe could be interested in your campaign. These might include individuals (including key individuals from the congregation, the community, and descendants of founders and former members if they are in a position to play a major role); preservation organizations; professional and civic organizations; foundations; corporations; small businesses; and government sources.

Where do we find the names of potential sources in each category that should go on our list?

For Individuals in both the Congregation and the Greater Community:

Congregational giving records for the past five years
Annual reports, benefit journals and programs of other organizations in your community
Local newspapers (especially the Business and Society pages)

For Foundations:
- The Foundation Directory
- Local or State Foundation Directories

For Corporations and Small Businesses:
- Chamber of Commerce Lists

For Civic and Preservation Organizations:
- Chamber of Commerce
- State Historic Preservation Office (Every state has one

For Government Sources:
- Offices of Elected Officials

How is the Preliminary List of Potential Funding Sources used?

The preliminary list is used to focus the thinking of those who are shaping the campaign and to provide a blueprint for informed discussion in the Feasibility Study. It is important to test the likelihood of support from these sources and to begin assessing "who knows whom." This can be done by transferring the names of all sources you have researched except individuals from your List of Potential Funding Sources to a "Contact Memo" which can be reviewed with key members of the parish, volunteers in the campaign and participants in the Feasibility Study.

Step 5 Testing The Preliminary Plans is a Fundamental Key for Success—The Feasibility Study

No campaign should be launched without first testing the waters. It is vitally important to know your institution's image among its own membership as well as in the community, the depth of public knowledge about your needs, and the degree of support that can be expected from various constituencies before announcing a goal and embarking on a campaign. If you are considering the use of a professional fundraising consultant, the feasibility study is a place where his expertise and diplomacy may be particularly helpful.

The Feasibility Study

A consultant can be especially helpful in conducting the study because those who are surveyed are more likely to be candid with an unbiased third party. It can be pretty difficult for a participant who is being interviewed as part of the feasibility study to tell the minister, rabbi or chairperson of the Board that he is all wet and that support will not be forthcoming!

A well-conceived and conducted feasibility study will have many benefits:

1. It will reveal the institution's image among members of the congregation and in the community-at-large
2. It will assess congregational and community support for the project at hand;
3. It will help to refine the campaign message by revealing which arguments win support and which fall on deaf ears;
4. It will offer an opportunity to educate potential donors about the importance of the project and the scope of the task at hand;
5. It will assist in identifying leadership both within the congregation and the greater community for the campaign;
6. It will provide a forum for uncovering contacts and shaping campaign strategy.

Many congregations skip the feasibility study only to have their campaign derailed by perceptions, attitudes and situations which could have been addressed had they only been known in the beginning. It is essential to test the case, the markets and the pyramid before launching a campaign.

What exactly is a feasibility study?

A feasibility study is an analysis of an institution's likelihood of meeting its fundraising goal. This analysis is based upon a series of interviews—usually 30 to 60—with individuals who are expected to be key players in the campaign or who are in a position to have special insight. Although the comments of specific individuals are kept strictly confidential, the study analyzes general perceptions, attitudes and concerns and makes specific recommendations for carrying out a successful campaign. In some instances, a feasibility study will reveal great divisiveness in the congregation or community, a poor public image on the part of the institution or an unhealthy fund raising climate due to a weak economy or too many competing campaigns. In these instances, the study will declare a campaign "not feasible," but will recommend specific steps for improving the situation so that a campaign may be mounted in the future.

Built in 1768, Old Pine Street Church in Philadelphia relies on it's campaign funding for the maintenance and upkeep of its colonial architecture.

Step 6 Finalizing Campaign Plans

The Feasibility Study has provided critical feedback about your preliminary plans. It is now time to begin finalizing those plans. If you think you have been busy so far, you haven't seen anything yet!

Because of the volume of information to be covered, this Chapter, Finalizing Campaign Plans, is divided into seven separate sections:

- Leadership, Legal Structure and Campaign Policy
- Options for Establishing a Separate Organization or Fund Raising Partnership
- The Importance of "Advance Gifts"
- Refining the Message
- Determining the Campaign Structure and Recruiting the Campaign Team
- Record Systems that Keep Campaigns on Track
- Materials that Win Friends and Influence People

Leadership, Legal Structure and Campaign Policy:

The Steering Committee

Every campaign needs a "core group" of three to five members to provide regular oversight. This committee (called a Campaign Cabinet or a Campaign Steering Committee) may consist of the same individuals who composed the original Fundraising Planning Committee and were involved in the early decision-making about consultants, the case statement and the feasibility study. More likely, however, the feasibility study has revealed one or two new leaders and the composition of the ongoing Campaign Steering Committee will change a bit.

Partners for Sacred Places had been working with St. Paul's for several years on different projects, and in 2020 was retained to serve as the church's capital campaign consultants.

Generally, the Campaign Steering Committee will consist of:

- The campaign chairperson;
- The rabbi, priest or pastor;
- One or two chairpersons of sub-committees;
- The paid campaign director or campaign counsel.

The purpose of the Campaign Steering Committee is to:

- Determine campaign structure;
- Set policy;
- Authorize expenditures;
- Make staffing decisions;
- Solicit "Advanced Gifts;"
- Recruit Campaign Committee members;
- Approve campaign materials;
- Oversee volunteers;
- Evaluate campaign results and revise strategies as needed.

Determining Legal Structure

One of the earliest decisions to be made by the Campaign Steering Committee concerns legal and financial structure.

There are three options available to you:

1. Simply solicit contributions as an existing religious institution, with the understanding that some foundations, corporations and individuals will not consider support to religious organization
2. Establish a separate charitable or non-profit organization to solicit funds for the restoration effort on behalf of the religious institution;
3. Establish a partnership with an existing, secular organization which can accept donations on your behalf.

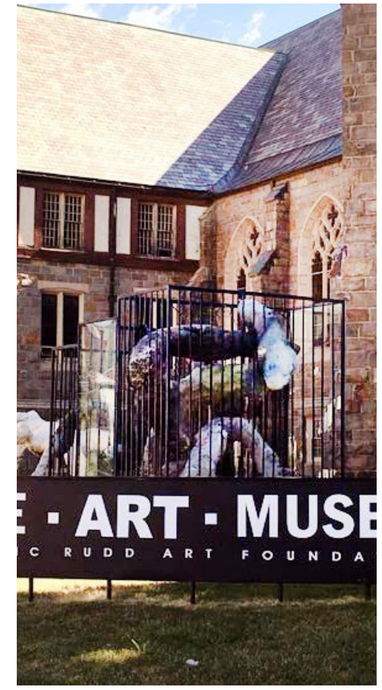
Setting Campaign Policy

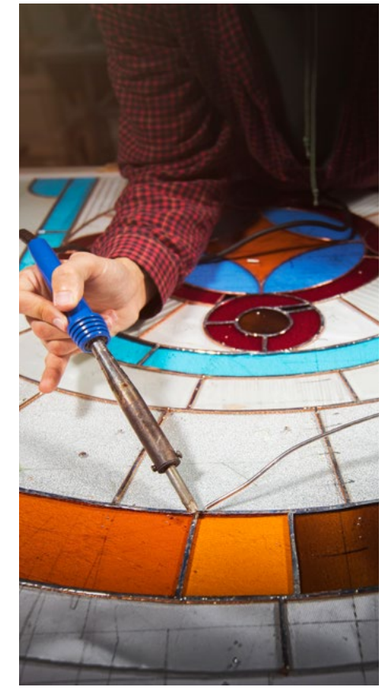
To the degree possible, campaign policy should be established before the campaign begins and not as sensitive issues arise during the course of a campaign.

Issues to be determined include:

- Length of the pledge period. Most campaigns permit pledges to be paid over a three- to five-year period.
- Will gifts of stock be held, sold or evaluated on a case-by-case basis? Who will make these decisions?
- Will the campaign accept gifts of real estate, art and other "real property"? How will these be liquidated?
- Will the campaign accept "planned gifts" such as trusts, annuities and pooled income funds? How will such gifts be managed?
- Will the campaign count bequests, insurance policies and other deferred gifts in the campaign total? Will they be counted at full or partial value? (Many institutions have been criticized for counting deferred gifts at full value.)
- How will funds raised as a part of the campaign be invested until needed? Who will make investment decisions? What policies will govern investments?
- What safeguards will be put into place to ensure that funds contributed for the restoration effort are not co-mingled with funds for other institutional purposes?
- How will gifts be recognized? Will there be a campaign plaque? If there is a plaque, what will be the minimum gift necessary for a donor's name to be included? Will names be listed by gift level? Will restored spaces be named after major donors? At what gift level? Will there be other commemorative opportunities?

There is no one "right" answer to any of these questions. Campaign policy must reflect the needs, capabilities and attitudes of your particular institution. It is important to consult with congregational leaders, legal and financial counsel, and others with relevant expertise to make the best decision for your situation.





Funding can be used in many ways. Setting a policy before the campaign begins can help keep the program on track.

Determining the Campaign Structure and Recruiting the Campaign Team

Heretofore, three committees have had a hand in shaping the campaign:

1. The Building Committee (also known as the Restoration Committee,) worked with the architects and engineers to assess repair needs and develop a cohesive and cost-effective restoration plan for the building;
2. The Fundraising Planning Committee made early decisions about campaign staffing (including whether or not to hire a consultant) and oversaw the execution of the feasibility study;
3. The Campaign Steering Committee began the task of overseeing every aspect of the fund raising campaign, including the solicitation of "Advance Gifts" and the refinement of the campaign message.

Now it is time to begin assembling a full-scale Campaign Committee supported by subcommittees. Campaign Committees have many different structures, and every institution should feel free to create a structure that meets its own particular needs. Information gleaned in the feasibility study will be essential in determining the best structure. For example, will the campaign be limited to the institution's own membership?

Campaign Committees have many different structures, and every institution should feel free to create a structure that meets its own particular needs.

Did the feasibility study reveal markets among "outside" individuals, foundations, corporations and government sources? Be creative in developing a structure that meets your needs, but remember, volunteers are usually in short supply.

Record Systems that Keep Campaigns on Track

Every campaign — no matter how small or large — requires a system to keep track of prospects, solicitors and donors. Early on, the Campaign Steering Committee must make a basic decision about systems: To Computerize or Not To Computerize.

Choosing the right software

There are literally hundreds of fundraising software packages on the market today, many specializing in the needs of churches and synagogues. To select the right software package, you will want to answer the following questions:

- What are all of my church's or synagogue's information needs, and how are they currently being met? Do we need a software package which will maintain records on members, do payroll for employees, create monthly financial reports and reports to the judicatory body? There are software packages on the market which can handle many or all of these needs
- What are comparable congregations using for their information needs? Contact the business managers or parish administrators of other congregations of a similar size, denomination and budget to yours. Ask them if they are pleased with their choice overall, what pitfalls did they encounter in implementing the software package, and if they are pleased with the level of service from the manufacturer.
- What is my budget for purchasing software and hardware? Costs for software can range from a few hundred dollars for a basic database program which you would need to tailor to your own requirements, to several thousand dollars for a package with all the "bells and whistles."

Finding and recruiting the right team is crucial to any capital campaign. Look for members who may have experience in dealing with architects, businesses, software, etc.

Step 7 Implementing The Plans

With materials printed and systems in place, it is finally time to begin implementing the plans that have been so laboriously developed. By its very name, "Campaign" suggests a methodical, military approach to achieving carefully defined objectives. To carry the analogy further, it is impossible to advance on all fronts at once. For this reason, campaigns typically proceed from the inside out, beginning with the solicitation of those with the greatest reason to give and proceeding outward to constituencies that require a longer cultivation process.

By its very name, "Campaign" suggests a methodical, military approach to achieving carefully defined objectives. To carry the analogy further, it is impossible to advance on all fronts at once.

In addition to moving from the inside out, successful campaigns proceed from larger gifts to smaller gifts within every ring in the circle. Early gifts inevitably "set the pace," and great care must be taken to ensure that initial donors set an appropriately high standard for others to follow. This is achieved by the use of gift categories or "divisions." Divisions are established for every segment of the Campaign (for example, the Membership Campaign, Community Campaign, Corporate Campaign, etc.). Common names for divisions include:

- Pace-Setting Gifts
- Leadership Gifts
- Major Gifts
- Special Gifts

The Solicitation Process

- **Community-at-Large (including residents of your city or town-at-large)**
- **Neighbors, Individuals, Foundations, Corporations and Small Businesses, with no special connection to the institution**
- **Individuals, Foundations, Corporations, Preservation Organizations and Historical Societies, with a stated interest in project or ties to the institution**
- **Former Members**
- **Membership**
- **Board, Trustees**
- **"Advanced Gifts"**

Begin the solicitation process by with those who have the greatest reason to give. Then proceed outward to constituencies that require longer-term cultivation.

The Research and Rating of Prospective Donors

To identify and research campaign prospects, logical places to start include:

Current Members

Begin with your institution's own mailing list, annual giving records for the past five years and records of previous campaigns.

Former Members and Founding Families

Researching former members and founding families can be great fun and it frequently turns up surprising information. Start with old membership lists, previous giving records, and baptismal, wedding and funeral records. Check the names on stained glass windows, pews and commemorative plaques and undertake some genealogical research at the public library or local historical society to identify the descendants of those who have been memorialized.

Neighbors

Use the Reverse Telephone Directory which lists names and telephone numbers by address to find out who your neighbors are. If your institution is located in a business area, research corporations, law firms and small businesses located within walking distance. (Chances are that employees use and enjoy your building and grounds before and after work, and during the lunch hour.) If your institution is located in a residential area, research neighbors in a two or three block radius.

Other Individuals

Individuals connected with groups that use or have used your facilities have a vested interest in your building. Don't forget to research board members, staff, volunteers and donors associated with organizations that may be tenants of your building.

Corporations

Your local Chamber of Commerce or Office of Economic Development is the best place to begin researching the corporations, companies and other businesses in your area. Most chambers of commerce publish a list of major employers, annotated with such helpful information as the name and address of the president, volume of sales and profits, number of employees, etc.

Foundations

Foundations provide less than 8% of the total gifts received by American charities each year, but some campaigns for the restoration of religious buildings have benefited from foundation support. The number and asset size of foundations have increased tremendously in recent years, due to favorable tax treatment of contributions of appreciated securities to private foundations and a booming stock market. Foundations are required by law to contribute 5% of their total assets each year.

Photos: Caleb Oquendo, Ivan Samkov, Andrea Piacquadio, Laura Tancredi, Pixabay, Christina Morillo

Ratings

Several weeks before active solicitations are to begin, a small, select group of three to five individuals must gather to "rate" or "evaluate" the prospects that will be solicited. The purpose of the rating process is to determine an "asking figure" that can be suggested to a prospect. Asking figures correspond to levels on the "Pyramid of Gifts" and represent what a prospect could do if properly motivated, not what the Committee thinks he or she will do.

Membership on the Rating Committee is drawn from two sources:

1. Knowledgeable professionals — such as trust and estate attorneys, bankers, accountants and stockbrokers with special insight into the financial situations of large numbers of people. Professionals will not, of course, divulge confidential information, but can often provide guidance about whether an asking figure is too high or too low;
2. Peers of those being rated.

A qualified prospect is one who has both the capability to give and a reason for doing so.

Implementing the Membership Campaign

As stated earlier, successful campaigning is 70% planning and preparation and less than 30% solicitation. If the preparatory steps described in previous chapters have been well-conceived and executed, the "public appeal" (what most people think of as "the campaign") should move smoothly and rapidly.

It is critically important that this effort not be confused with other activities or appeals for funds. For this reason, most institutions find it advantageous to conduct their capital campaign about six months after the annual giving campaign. This permits donors to determine their annual "stewardship" gift in October or November before being asked to consider a second, longer-term commitment for the capital campaign in March or April. If you are planning a community campaign, it will be important not to conflict with the annual United Way drive which, in most areas, occurs in the fall.

Large donors (those individuals, foundations and corporations you hope will play a major role in the campaign) should be alerted to your plans three to six months before the campaign begins so that they may plan a major gift in their budgets.

Training Your Volunteers

You owe it to your volunteers to ensure that they are adequately trained and comfortable with the tasks they are being asked to perform.

Most people, when asked to work in a campaign, say that they "hate asking for money." Yet these same individuals usually delight in suggesting an activity they think a friend will enjoy or in recommending an investment they believe will reap rich dividends. Solicitors need help in thinking of the campaign as a rich and exciting opportunity to serve God, preserve beauty and enrich the life of the community. Good training can achieve this.

Tips for Successful Solicitations

- SEE YOUR CONTACT PERSONALLY. A personal visit is more likely to result in a contribution.
- ACKNOWLEDGE THE VALUE OF YOUR PROSPECT'S TIME. KEEP YOUR PRESENTATION SUCCINCT.
- LISTEN! A good solicitation is one in which the prospect talks at least half the time.
- BE SPECIFIC, LET YOUR PROSPECT KNOW WHAT YOU WANT HIM TO DO.

For example:

"Our goal is $150,000. To reach this goal we must have a lead gift of $30,000. Would you consider playing this major role for us?"

If the answer is "no," go to the next largest possibility. "We also need a gift of $20,000. Would you consider a gift of this size?"

If the answer is still "no," continue down the pyramid.

"We also need gifts of $15,000. Would you consider making one of them?"

- Don't be afraid to say "I don't know" in response to a question. Offer to check the facts and get back to the prospect.
- Give the donor time to consider his gift, but make the next step clear, such as:
  - a) "I'll call you tomorrow with the answers to your questions," or
  - b) "I'll come back tomorrow to meet with you and your wife together", or
  - c) "I'll call you on Friday to see if you have made a decision and make arrangements to come by with a pledge card."

The "Kick Off"

A Word About "Planned Giving"

Planned giving can include bequests, the donation of life insurance benefits and the contribution of other valuable assets as a part of an individual's long-term financial strategy. It is a complex field and no volunteer is expected to be an expert. It is helpful, however, if solicitors are briefed on some of the simpler forms of planned giving and the advantages such gifts can have for both the institution and the donor.

The "Kick Off"

The purpose of a "Kick-Off' is to build enthusiasm and inspire solicitors and prospective donors to action. Even if the campaign leadership elects to implement a "staggered" campaign, there should be a single congregational "Kick-Off' to which all members are invited. This event should be planned far enough in advance to be an impressive and inspiring affair and should occur only when "Advance Gifts" have been secured, materials printed and solicitors recruited and trained.

Every "Kick-Off' should include:

- A brief description of the campaign including what it will achieve and how it will operate. Be sure to tell members when they can expect to be solicited.
- A request not to make a gift until solicited.
- Brief remarks from one, two or three members of the congregation about why they are supporting the campaign. It can be very effective to use members of widely varying circumstances: a high-powered corporate executive, a "young married," and a widow living on a fixed income, for example. Such diversity illustrates that there is room in the campaign for everyone and prompts members to think seriously about their own gift.
- A stirring "we can do it" finale led by the Campaign Chairperson, pastor, priest or rabbi, or some other inspirational speaker.
- The unveiling of a "Results Indicator" which will chart the progress of the campaign throughout its duration. In the past, these indicators have consisted primarily of thermometers, but perhaps you can create a design based on an architectural feature of your building such as a tower or steeple. At the time of unveiling, the indicator should reflect "Advance Gifts" and the gifts and pledges of the Campaign Leadership, Division Chairperson, Captains and Visitors. The more support you can demonstrate, the better. Some campaigns do not "Kick-Off' until 50% of the goal has been raised.

Solicitors begin scheduling meetings with their prospects immediately following this event.

During the "Kick Off", be sure to include remarks from members of the congregation about why they are supporting the campaign.

Step 8 Implementing the Community Campaign

Every congregation has some potential support outside the congregation. Once "the family" is firmly on board, it is time to seriously consider turning to the larger community for support. The first step in organizing a Community Campaign is the identification and recruitment of a Community Chairperson.

Community Campaign Leadership

The Community Chairperson should be:

- Highly respected within the community;
- Well-connected socially and professionally;
- Not a member of the congregation, if at all possible. In fact, a Chairperson of a different faith or denomination is preferable for demonstrating broad-based support;
- An individual of personal or corporate means, able and willing to "give and to get" funds from other sources.

In seeking a Community Chairperson, focus your search on those with a reason to take on such a responsibility. Possibilities include:

- Individuals with family ties to the institution;
- Individuals who live or work in close proximity to the institution;
- Individuals with a known commitment to historic preservation;
- Individuals with a commitment to one of the services or tenants housed in the building;
- Long-time vendors to the institution;
- The business partner of a current member or head of a member's company.

The Community Chairperson must be willing to:

- Make a pace-setting gift;
- Recruit non-members to membership on the Community Campaign Committee;
- Participate in the most significant five to ten solicitation calls in the community campaign;
- Participate in campaign events;
- Serve as an active spokesperson for the campaign in the community.

Finding support outside the congregation: Members of Pleasant Hope Baptist Church in Baltimore, Maryland, visit Browntown Farms in Warfield, Virginia. Photo courtesy of The Black Church Food Security Network

Prospective donors within the community may include:

- **Individuals**
- **Foundations**
- **Corporations**
- **Small Businesses**
- **Government Sources**
- **Preservation, Civic and Fraternal Organizations**

A well-conceived and executed Feasibility Study (See Chapter 5) will have indicated which categories are potential.

Individuals

Individuals represent the largest market in any campaign. According to Giving USA, individuals are responsible for more than 85% of all philanthropy in the United States today. Clearly, it will not be practical to solicit every individual in the community, so you will need to choose your prospects with care.

- Begin with those with the greatest reasons to give:
- "Outside" individuals with family ties to your institution;
- Alumni of school(s) associated with your institution;
- "Outside" individuals who use your building (such as wedding parties, etc.);
- Individuals associated with organizations that use your building. These might include parents of students involved in the institution's nursery school; board members or donors to the theater or literacy center that rents a portion of the building; and participants in Weight Watchers, AA or other groups that meet in your facility;
- Individuals who have visited your facility (keep a guest book, and ask visitors to complete a visitor's card);
- Individuals with a stated interest in preservation;
- Neighbors living or working in close proximity to the institution;
- Members of a previous congregation if the building has changed hands. In some instances, religious buildings have been sold by one group to another. Don't overlook the interest of members of the earlier congregation who may be willing to help restore a building that once was very important in their lives.

Foundations

There are three kinds of foundations which will be covered in this section. (A fourth, "Company-sponsored foundations" is discussed under "Corporations.")

"Family" foundations represent the philanthropy of an individual or family and are usually managed by the individual or family members themselves with the advice of an attorney, trust officer or accountant.

Professionally-managed foundations employ paid staff members or "program officers" to screen requests and make recommendations to the Board of Trustees.

Community foundations manage the assets and distribute the income of many different funds, some of which are "advised" (where the donor of a particular fund is permitted to make recommendations about the kinds of grants awarded) and some of which are not (where the donor has no say in how funds are distributed.)

Generally, family foundations are the least bound by rules and guidelines and have the greatest flexibility in distributing funds, but their grants tend to be the smallest. (Keep in mind, however, that there are some notable exceptions to this rule.) Professionally-managed foundations, on the other hand, are sometimes capable of quite significant contributions, but usually operate within firm guidelines established by the Board.

The interests and guidelines of community foundations vary from community to community. It is essential to know the interests, limitations and giving potential of each source before plotting your course. At all costs, avoid a "shotgun" approach in which a basic request is mailed to every foundation on your list.

Corporations

The process of soliciting a corporation is exactly the same as for a foundation:

- Research
- Identification of Contacts
- A Meeting
- Submission of a Request
- Follow-Up

There are, however, three differences in "mind-set" to consider when planning your appeal:

1. Corporations, for the most part, are guided by enlightened self-interest. In approaching corporations, it is important to emphasize what your project will mean to employees, customers and the environment in which they operate.
2. Unlike foundations, corporations are not required to reveal the extent of their philanthropy and it can be difficult to assess the potential of a corporate source. Even if a corporation maintains a company-sponsored foundation with published information about its grants, there are still "hidden" pots of money—in advertising, public relations and other budgets—which can be called into play if the leadership of a corporation really wants to be supportive of a project.
3. Raising funds from corporations can be particularly difficult for religious institutions, as many corporations expressly exclude them. Sometimes the establishment of a separate corporation or the formation of a partnership with another organization helps, but not always. In some instances, corporations have been known to make grants to non-profit tenants of a religious institution (for example, a theater group, day care center or youth tutorial program) for the restoration of that portion of the building occupied by the tenant. In other instances, corporations have made in-kind contributions of building materials, printing, computer hardware or public relations services when internal policy prohibited an outright grant.

Small Businesses

Small Businesses are usually owned by an individual, a partnership or a family, and are approached just as you would an individual or family. A face-to-face meeting is best, and it is helpful if the solicitors are small business owners themselves who can speak persuasively about why the project is important to the small business community.

In the case of an accounting firm or law practice, approach the managing partner if you know him or her and have reason to believe he or she would be supportive. If not, identify the partner most likely to be receptive (perhaps because he is a member or has an interest in preservation) and ask his help in approaching the firm.

If a written request is needed, a one-page letter accompanied by the campaign brochure will usually suffice.

Government Sources

Increasing attention has been given at the state level to funding for the restoration of architecturally and historically significant religious buildings. For information on the availability of such funds in your state, contact your State Historic Preservation Office.

Local or state funding may be available for architecturally and historically significant religious buildings.

At this writing, federal funds are not available for historic properties in active religious use. Monies at the municipal level are extremely rare. Keep in touch with elected officials about your project and ask them to apprise you if government funds at the federal, state or local level become available.

Other Organizations

Historic preservation groups, religious orders, civic clubs, labor unions — even other religious institutions — represent potential support for your campaign. Some local non-profit preservation groups may operate grant or loan programs for repair and restoration work. Ask if you may submit a proposal or make a presentation to the group. Even if the organization declines to support your effort, you will undoubtedly attract some individual support as a result of these explorations into the community. (For a case study of one church that used partnerships to great advantage.

Frequently Experienced Problems and How to Solve Them

No two campaigns are exactly alike, but conversations with campaign leaders across the country revealed several problems which seem to occur with some frequency. If your campaign hits snags in these areas, don't despair. You are not alone.

Members of All Saints Episcopal Church in Pontiac, Mich. receiving encouragement and guidance from Sarah Jones, Consulting Services Coordinator. Photo: Joshua Castaño

1. Difficulty in Recruiting Leadership With more and more institutions competing for funds, the competition for capable, efficient leaders is fiercer than ever. Those leaders who have been there offer these words of wisdom:

- Don't compromise. If you can't get top-notch leadership, postpone your campaign.
- A recently retired executive is often a good bet to provide campaign leadership.
- An individual who is not willing to serve as a Chairperson may well be willing to assist in finding a Chairperson or to serve as a Co-Chairperson. Explore the alternatives.

2. Difficulty in Moving a Campaign Off a "Plateau" At one time or another, almost every campaign reaches a plateau when it seems that the "Results Indicator" will never budge again. There are two tricks of the trade for dealing with this situation:

- Withhold announcement of one or more early gifts so that they may be announced later when the campaign seems stuck. This, of course, must be arranged in advance with the donor, but most donors are happy to agree that their gift may be announced whenever it will do the most good.
- Seek a Challenge Grant from a sympathetic individual, organization, foundation or corporation to serve as an incentive to stimulate giving

Members work in small groups during Asset Mapping at Central Congregational Church in Galesburg, Ill. Photo: Joshua Castaño

3. Difficulty in Adhering to Schedule Everyone interviewed for this Guide said, "it took longer than I ever dreamed it would." Spend time on careful prospect research and other preparations, but insist that division leaders and others make recruitment and solicitation calls within a specified amount of time. One United Way campaign distributed tiny mops and buckets to delinquent solicitors at a reporting session to encourage them to proceed with "mopping up" their calls.

Afterward

Every sacred place is the center of a unique network for parishioners, neighbors, and friends. Having worked with thousands of sacred places across the country, Partners is uniquely positioned to help faith and lay leaders leverage these networks. Built on groundbreaking research and decades of diverse experiences, Partners' expertise has helped congregations meet, and exceed, their goals—both in fundraising and community impact.

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