

Working with Nonprofit Organizations in Community Settings: Fundraising Strategies for your Organization¹

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Introduction

This article is part of a series, *Working with Nonprofit Organizations in Community Settings*, designed to provide basic information on governance, planning, and operational details for community-based nonprofit organizations. Information provided in this series will help the Board of Directors, leaders, staff, and volunteers of nonprofit organizations that provide a variety of services to local communities.

Special Relationships

What special relationships do you plan to develop or cultivate in preparation for your fundraising effort? List who they are and what their relationship is to your organization. These could be with individuals and/or organizations. Remember that "money is not given; *it has to be raised*" (Greenfield, 2001, p. 397). Cultivating these relationships will take time, but doing so is an integral part of fundraising.

Financial Goals

List each of your financial goals and the cost to reach each one. You may wish to designate separate goals for different aspects of the nonprofit organization.

Case for Support

The organization will need to build a case for support. The case for support "is both an intellectual conviction and an actual document to be shared with the public" (Greenfield, 2001, p. 398). In other words, it contains the reasons why the organization's current and future stakeholders should contribute to the organization financially. The case for support typically includes statements on some or all of the following:

- Description of the organization
- Purpose and mission
- Services/programs provided
- Target population served
- Philosophy/values
- Geographic area covered
- Social problem addressed

- Strengths that qualify the organization to address the problem
- Challenges facing the organization
- A plan to address these challenges
- Estimated costs and time for these costs
- Benefits to clients, community, and society

You have already addressed many of these if you have been working through [this guide](#) to building the nonprofit organization. Now you can add that information into your case for support. If you have not yet formulated most of these statements, begin to think about them now in this context as well as in the broader framework of the organization.

Identifying Strategies

Each nonprofit organization will choose the best combination of fundraising strategies based on its foreseeable resources. Most nonprofits utilize a combination of the three major types of giving: annual, major, and estate. Annual giving includes giving campaigns, membership drives, and direct mailings; major includes endowments and major gifts from individuals/businesses; estate includes planned gifts (Greenfield, 2001, p. 394).

The organization can choose from one or more of the following possible strategies:

- *Member solicitation*: Money from membership fees
- *Contributions beyond dues*: Direct contributions
- *Special appeals*: For specific purposes
- *Acquisition mailings*: From people other than members
- *Special events*: Specific to organization or issue
- *Capital campaigns*: For larger donations
- *Planned Giving*: Can be introduced anytime
- *Income from program and/or services*: Many nonprofits utilize this
- *Other—identify*: Up to you—this is a good time to utilize the creativity and expertise of board members, staff, and volunteers!

Other ways donors can contribute can be through gifts of equity:

- Bonds and securities
- Property
- Royalties, copyrights, and trademark rights
- Insurance policies naming the organization as beneficiary (Greenfield, 2001, p 412)

Identifying Potential Donors

Keep in mind that fundraising is about making and keeping relationships with donors, not just about raising funds. If you can cultivate long-term relationships, you will have a more beneficial donor relationship for both the organization and the donor. Consider what groups might be most appropriate for your organization to approach:

1. Individual donors
2. Corporations

3. Foundations
4. Government agencies/contracts
5. Trade and professional associations
6. Other—*identify*

Reference

Greenfield, J.M. (2001). Fund-Raising Management. In T.D. Connors (ed.), *The Nonprofit Handbook: Management* (pp. 386–431). New York: John Wiley.

Acknowledgments

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¹ This document is FCS9252, one of a series of the Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, UF/IFAS Extension. Original publication date July 2009. Revised June 2012, June 2015, and July 2025. Visit the Ask IFAS website at <https://ask.ifas.ufl.edu/> for the currently supported version of this publication.

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