

Basic Principles of Fundraising

Remember that fundraising is simply getting people to be supportive of your organization or project. You do that through personal contact and by educating and involving them. The following are truths you should incorporate into whatever fundraising you do:

Never Ask a Stranger for Money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ People give to people and because of people. ➤ People who don't know you or your organization probably will not give money.
Get To Know the Donor Before Asking for Money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Get to know potential donors through special events, receptions, openings, opportunities to meet guest artists, advisory committees, memberships, etc. Find ways to get them personally invested in your work. ➤ Ask for a gift only after you have had a chance to inform and educate a prospective donor.
Think about the Needs of the Donor What do they get for giving you money?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Your need for money will not motivate a potential donor to give; your goal of serving community needs will. ➤ Find out what interests the donor has and think through how the donor will benefit by giving. For example: A corporation may want visibility for the company or benefits for their employees, while an individual who is new to the community may want opportunities to meet people.
Personalize Your Fundraising Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ People give more and are more likely to give when asked in person. ➤ People give more the more personalized the approach. Personal calls raise more than phone calls. Phone calls raise more money than letters. Personalized letters and handwritten notes raise more money than form letters. ➤ In today's culture, some granting agencies require organizations to file funding applications electronically. If appropriate, it is still a good idea to work on building a personal relationship with the program officer.
Raise Money From the Inside Out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Start raising money by asking board members to give first. ➤ Ask any fundraising volunteers to give before they ask others to give.
Make the Case Larger Than The Organization	<p>Show potential donors that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ They will benefit through involvement, special privileges of membership or by "being part of a family". ➤ Their children will benefit through educational opportunities or children's programming. ➤ The community will benefit through economic development, community pride and enhanced quality of life. ➤ The gift is an investment in the future for all of the above reasons.