

TOP 10 TIPS for Community Fundraising FCA Student Clubs should consider

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Fundraising is the gentle art of teaching the joy of giving. – Henry Rosso

COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING in an FCA CLUB Fundraising for any organization or group is never easy – never has been. But if you think about it a little broader... it can actually be FUN and accomplish much more than you had ever anticipated. Perhaps one of the important things to consider is don't do it alone – it's a lot of work to accomplish all of your goals – but bringing others into your conversation can stimulate lots of really interesting and creative ideas that can truly launch some unbelievable activities to reach your goals... BUT also engage a wider community in your advocacy and efforts. And don't panic if you've never considered yourself a "fund raiser"! Work in this area can truly provide you with tremendous **Professional Development** and skills in **Public Awareness** and **Community Service** within your school and local community. REMEMBER: "If *at first you don't succeed...*" there will ALWAYS be opportunities to try it again in a different way! The following listing provides some concrete tips as you tackle this very important work in your *Future Child Advocates* student organization.

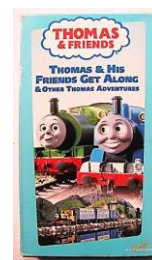
1. Do Your Homework!

Professional Development. Like anything, when it comes to making a successful connection with others always try to learn as much as you can about the individual or audience in advance...*Who exactly will you be meeting with...talking with...their role/position? Will the tone be casual or professional? Types of folks who might participate in a fundraiser... What causes are important to them or have they supported?* In advance think about what will **they** get out of it? How will **they** benefit and/or get recognition? Always make it about **them!** "Put yourself in **their** shoes." This kind of preparation will be very worthwhile in the end!



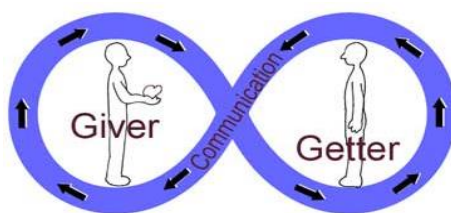
2. All About Relationships...Relationships...Relationships!

Professional Development and Community Service. Fundraising is all about relationships. Take a *genuine* interest in others before you ask them to do or give you something. *People* are more important than their gifts! As a general rule, the more personal your solicitation is, the more effective it will be. Examples: Making an *ask* in person is better than making one over the phone; Making an *ask* over the phone is better than making one through direct mail; Making an *ask* through direct mail is normally more effective than making an *ask* through e-mail... and so on. Stay in touch...send hand written thank you notes, invite them to events, include them in information sharing, etc. Staying in touch is more important/valuable than making the initial connection. Giving value to your relationship...*What's in it for them?* Step out of Your Comfort Zone to Build Better Relationships.



3. Great Communication Required – Clarity of Your Message

Professional Development and Public Awareness. Great communication is the basis of great fundraising. What you say...and how you say it...matters! Your message must be clear!!! Perception is reality. Make sure the perception of others is what you want it to be. Determine best approach(es) for each ...texting, emails, calls, in person. letter writing, etc. Remember to also use technology to communicate – just don't make it your ONLY SOURCE of communication. Have a FaceBook page, but work at getting as many of your current supporters, donors, contacts to like your page. Incorporate your club's web link on your FB page. Include social media pages/links even on your email signature line or blog sites. Bring everyone together so that every time you communicate in your various "circles", your passions/advocacy comes with you. Clarity of messaging always seems to need work especially when we get involved in community or advocacy work. But pulling it all together can cultivate even more donors, bigger gifts, and better donor relationships. Lots of communication tools out there. Check them out to communicate with various audiences?



4. The "Future" is in the Follow-Up

Professional Development. The greatest plans and ideas will stop short...and go nowhere without effective and continuous follow up. It is not easy to do given all of our busy schedules... **But without it...!!** Follow up with prospective donors several times and in different ways. Some ideas...*Reach out to event attendees after the event. Consider holding a thank-you event for your sponsors, auction item donors, other volunteers.* Ask questions like: *What did you think about our organization? Do you have any other questions? Do you have any suggestions on how we could be doing things better?* Track Attendees for Future Fundraising Events. Get the person engaged and involved. Ask... *Would you be interested in getting more involved with our organization?* Even at this point, don't ask for money. Ask the person to volunteer, to serve on a committee, to come in and share their ideas with your group at an upcoming meeting. Get them on "your bus", before you make your *ask!* Then, after a few more contacts, make an *ask* (or, for current donors, make a *larger ask*). By that point, your prospect will be part of your team, and will not only expect an *ask*, but will be grateful for the chance to help "our" organization. Bottomline: those thank you notes for attending, volunteering, making a referral, advice, support and of course, giving...really will do the trick!.



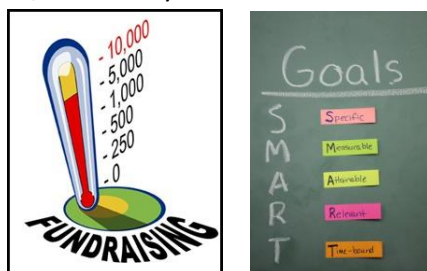
5. Creating a Fundraising Committee *Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does.* -William James

Public Awareness and Professional Development. Organize a workable group of dedicated, passionate and creative people...particularly those who will be willing to engage their personal networks and "circle" of friends, family, associates. (Most people have a bigger "circle" than they are even aware!) Make sure about what your fundraising/event committee is focusing on and is there a clear calendar of events that might require fundraising initiatives. Also have a clear understanding of financial parameters... *What is the budget for expenses? What is the expectation of fundraising financial goals? Who will be responsible for monitoring this?* Identify leadership. Seek out committee members and community members who will take ownership of some of the fundraising for the events and may even be creative/"out of the box" thinkers, too. Lots of ideas out there to consider - sponsorships, promotional items, wristband development. Make sure you have in place some tools that can be used, e.g. blogs, Twitter and/or FaceBook pages, etc. Meet regularly to keep momentum and enthusiasm and to stay on task. Ongoing communication, accountability and celebrating of the achievement of your action items are critical!



6. Setting "Do-able" Goals *If you can't feed a hundred people, then feed just one.* -Mother Teresa

Public Awareness and Community Service. Set challenging, but attainable goals. Reach for the stars...you may not get that high...but slightly under that is great! Remember to keep goals within reason. *What do you expect in terms of money raised....people involved.... programs developed.... impact on the children, etc.?* Identify partners who can help with accountability and document achievement of your action items. Important that you start as early as possible...the sooner you start to raise funds, the more you will raise. Ask....ask....ask...and then ask again!



7. Fundraising is About Raising funds...Keep the Focus!

Public Awareness and Professional Development. Spend most of your time focused on bringing in money. BUT remember to take a hard look at costs and possible in-kind donations so that you can keep more of the actual money that the event/initiative raises. What goes into planning an event is important, but the main focus of Community Fundraising is on raising funds!!!! *How you do that is more important than the flowers on the table...the highest caliber of the band, the colors of the lights, the high quality of the invitations, etc. etc.etc.* Get others on your team to help with that. Use the 80-20 rule....Focus 80% of your time on the 20% of the activities that will raise the majority of funds. Again, stay on budget...keep records...stay accountable!



8. Training and Tools

Public Awareness and Professional Development. Different approaches for communicating will direct your tools! - emails, crowd funding, personal face-to-face, telephone calls, webinars, social media, etc. Make supporting materials available for everyone who needs them...event info, brochures, rack cards, business cards, sponsor letter, tickets, info on auction items, etc., etc. Provide training tips...sample scripts and practice/role play the "pitch". Practice the "ask".



9. Hold "Non-Ask" Events

Public Awareness and Community Service. These *non-ask* events could be simply open houses at your college/university or meeting location. Get your Faculty Advisor to perhaps host a meeting in their office or conference area to provide an opportunity for people to learn about your mission, meet your leadership and perhaps hear from someone you have helped or supported in the past. If appropriate, put out snacks and beverages. Limit the events to 60-90 minutes in length; make them free to attend. Ask Committee members to each bring 2 or 3 people to the function who they think might be good prospects for your fundraising event. A *non-ask* event is an event, held by your organization/club, that targets donors and prospects, but does not include any fundraising *ask* or cost of admission for attendees. The goal of a *non-ask* event is to move donors closer to your organization (*and, eventually, toward even larger gifts and involvement*) ... or to move prospects toward making their first gift. *Non-ask* events are an opportunity to make volunteers and prospective donors feel like part of your team. Try to have 2-4 of these type of *non-ask* events each year...so there is always one just "around the corner."



10. Develop Creative, Non-Event Approaches

Public Awareness and Advocacy. There are so many possibilities for creative, non-events...only limited by your imagination! Some examples: *Amazon Smile, Ebates (i.e. cash back shopping), partnering with a business* (e.g. Open House at a restaurant, book store, program for children, museum, Barnes & Noble's, Panera's); *dance-a-thon; Food, Coat, Book Donation Campaign*. Create a contest...enter a contest with potential members/donors (e.g. Media blitz event like the *Ice bucket Challenge* for ALS). Consider selling promotional items- t-shirts, hats, totes, first aid kits, bracelets in different locations or put together a collection of favorite recipes vote ONE to make at next event!!



“We can all make a difference in the lives of others in need, because it is the most simple of gestures that make the most significant of differences.”

— Miya Yamanouchi

“Donor loyalty is not about the donor being loyal to you - it is you being loyal to the donor.”

– Harvey McKinnon

“Personality can open doors, but only character can keep them open.”

- Elmer G Letterman

