

Good Advice...Fundraising: Starting from Scratch

On occasion, passionate people who are looking to advance their cause call me for help. Most of the time, they are looking to "raise funds fast". Knowing that fundraising is a process, is based on relationships, and depends on annual giving cycles by funders, I give them this simple checklist to get them started.



1. Create a volunteer board, committee, or advisory group of like-minded individuals who are equally committed to your mission. You don't want to do this alone.
2. Determine how everyone's relationships can open doors to prospective funders. Visit the Funding Information Center (www.fic-ftw.org) to research and learn more. Start a prospect list and develop it. Create a mission statement and case for support that differentiates you from other community initiatives and nonprofits.
3. Create simple collateral that supports your mission statement and case for support. You don't need expensive materials. Good desk top publishing for print and electronic means will do the trick.
4. Develop a general template for proposal requests, keeping in mind that every one submitted will have to be personalized to be effective.
5. Continually prospect, cultivate and ask donors for support needed. Assign the "asks" by relationships.
6. Retain donors and attract donors by communicating the results of their contributions. Tell the story of the difference your program is making.
7. Repeat. Continue the process.

Is there more to fundraising than this? Sure. But for those starting from scratch, it's a good start.

Here's to laying the foundation,

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"Good Advice", a regular series of tips and tools to help you advance your cause, will land in your inbox about every three weeks. We hope it's helpful and we invite you to pass it along to others.

Celebrating 15 years of service to distinguished nonprofit executives and community leaders of North Texas

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**How did it feel to be ready to make the first "ask" for your organization?
What were the results?**

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