

Fundraising Tips and Tools

In this list, there are 10 Tips and 8 Tools to keep in mind for successful ways to raise funds.

- Tip #1:** Fundraising doesn't have to be complicated but it requires a well thought out process.
- Tip #2:** Start fundraising early. Set a firm schedule for each activity and each phase of each activity. Keep an up to date journal of your fundraising activities.
- Tip #3:** You will be more effective in your fundraising and reach your goal if you treat potential donors professionally and with respect.
- Tip #4:** Giving is ultimately a business decision, a simple question of economics. When you approach a person to support your cause, you are asking them two questions:
1) "Do they believe in your cause?" and
2) "Will they give a donation?"
Only those who answer **YES** to the first question will consider the second, and at that stage, they must choose to give or not to give. Their answer will be based upon their capacity to give - how much money they can afford to give to charity.
- Tip #5:** If other SWB participants live in your area, you could work together to plan fund-raising events. This allows you to concentrate on tasks where you are most suited and reduces competition for limited sources of funding. If you decide to fundraise with another participant, it is important to set out how funds collected will be divided beforehand.
- Tip #6:** When you have received a donation, your chances of receiving a subsequent one are much higher if you show appropriate recognition. Saying thank you in person, by email or letter is the first step in proper stewardship. Later, send a note to let them know how successful your campaign was and how their donation made a difference. This keeps donors engaged and makes them feel good about giving you their support.
- Tip #7:** Value volunteers – if others help you in your fundraising activities, place the same value on their time as you place on your own. People will be more willing to help out if feel their time and efforts are used effectively and are valued.
- Tip #8:** Be clear in your requests: state the amount you need to fundraise and ask potential donors to contribute what they can.
- Tip #9:** Rejection: When you are turned down, - it's not about you.
When you ask a person to give, you are asking them to make a choice. With so many options for charitable dollars, trying to decide which worthwhile project to support can be difficult. People often regret not being in a position to support you financially, so thank them and keep them on the list for next year.
- Tip #10:** If you don't ask, you don't get.

So...where do you start?

TOOL #1 - THE PLAN

Begin by drafting an action plan describing why you need to raise money and how the money will be used. This plan should answer the following questions:

1. **What** are your goals and objectives?
2. **What** do you need to do?
3. **Why** do you need to do it?
4. **How** are you going to do it?
5. **Who** is involved?
6. **How** much time will it take?
7. **What** is the time frame that?

From the master outline, develop an operational plan and follow these simple steps:

Tool #2 - THE GOAL: Revenue – Expenses = Goal

The financial goal for any campaign is calculated by determining what you need and calculating the related costs. It should evaluate what you can reasonably expect from your list of known supporters. Calculate revenue from all sources, deduct expenses, and the difference is your goal. Taking that number, develop strategies to achieve that goal.

Tool #3 - RESEARCH:

1. Develop a list of all the people you know. Include contact information, (phone, email etc) and identify how they may help.
2. List your strongest supporters - individuals, corporations, foundations, service clubs, etc.
3. Check off all those who you think will be sympathetic to what you do and determine what common interests mesh their objectives with yours. Use this to appeal to their generosity. Many have specific criteria

Tool # 4 - APPROACH STRATEGIES

There are two basic strategies: **Person-to-person** or by **mail**.

- 1) **Personal Solicitation:** There is a greater chance of success in using this strategy. It is much more difficult for a prospective donor to say "no" to a person.
- 2) **Direct Mail:** If sending a written request to organizations, it is important to obtain the name of the appropriate individual to contact regarding obtaining funds. The best way to approach an organization is to first draft a letter explaining your project (goal, objective, activities, funding) and then personalize it to make it relevant and appealing to the person/organization you are writing to.
 - a. Make your request clear and precise
 - b. Discuss your motivation for a cross-cultural program and your contribution to the project
 - c. Explain how you plan to achieve your personal and financial goals (specify amount)
 - d. Demonstrate to the person/organization that they are not funding your overseas stay as tourism, but as an experience in international cooperation and a cross-cultural exchange
 - e. Offer to provide an oral or written presentation on your experience upon your return
 - f. Be enthusiastic
 - g. After your letter, follow up with a phone call and try to obtain a meeting

Tool #5 - THE APPEAL

The more personal the appeal, the more likely you are to be successful.

Whether you meet people face to face or send them a letter, you need to tell them a **compelling story** – a great fundraiser is a storyteller who is both **passionate** and **knowledgeable**. At the heart of the

story is an in depth understanding of the subject – the issues, the program, the cause, the benefits, the problems, the gaps and the solutions – and it is conveyed in a convincing way – one that educates, motivates and raises the expectations of the donor.

Write to your audience. Your story should capture attention and pique the donor's interest. However, be concise and save some details for future discussion.

Tool #6 - CONNECTIONS

If people give to people, it's all about **relationships**. If you have contacts who are in close relation with your prospective donor, they could be useful in putting you in contact and promoting your cause.

Tool # 7 - THE ASKING

If you have succeeded in getting an appointment, it's time to ask for a donation. In the preliminary discussion, highlight the major points, and then listen. Give them a chance to talk. Speak with confidence and answer their questions. Don't be afraid to ask for a specific amount.

What follows is a negotiation and a successful negotiation always ends in a win-win contract. You want their cheque, but you want to leave the conversation with a donor who is pleased to know that his/her contribution will make a difference, and who trusts you to utilize the funds according to the terms you agreed upon.

Give donors time to think about your proposal, but leave with a plan – a date and time to follow up for a decision.

Tool# 8 - RECOGNITION

Thank your donors, and recognize them for their support. It costs very little to say thank you. Some donors wish to remain anonymous; others allow their name to appear on a donor list. Sending thank you letters is always appreciated, and some donors may enjoy seeing photos from your placement or receiving a link to your online blog. All donors are different, but all need to be thanked - find the most appropriate way to thank your donors.

Understanding Why People Give

Compelling reason

- Empathize with the cause,
- Understand the benefits,
- Know that it will bring positive results.

Confidence in the organization

- Recognize the organization and believe in its mission
- Trust that their money will be appropriately and well spent

Capacity

- Ability to give – at whatever level they feel comfortable

The Asker

- Trusted, credible, the closest connection, committed to the cause

Recognition

- People derive a sense of pride, self- satisfaction in giving, especially giving back to their community
- Name on donor or sponsorship list.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Special events can be time consuming, labour-intensive and not as cost effective as personal solicitations when a value is placed on volunteer time. However, they do serve as a useful tool to build awareness and if planned correctly, can be very successful.

How can we improve your rate of return?

If you are going to hold an event such as a pub night or dinner, make it a good one and make it the best event of the term. Doing one event very well may help you reach your goal.

You may be holding an event and the proceeds go to a worthy cause, but holding a special event is a business decision - for you, the pub/restaurant and other potential partners. It's important for you to separate the worthy cause from the practical issues of negotiating the best deal.

Pubs are in the business to make a profit - and for these events, so are you. It's a two way street. Let's make sure we are on equal footing.

Make your checklist, using the tools listed above:

- 1) Make a plan
- 2) Set a goal
- 3) Develop your strategies
- 4) Delegate specific tasks to volunteers
- 5) Set a deadline
- 6) Start negotiating...
 - a) Make an appointment with the pub owner – the decision maker.
 - b) Ask questions. Find out what their triggers are that will get them to give you a fair price on each component of your event – cost of beer, shooters, food, etc.
 - c) Let them know what your terms are – for instance, choose a Friday or Saturday night – the more popular social nights. Assume responsibility for delivering a capacity crowd.
 - d) Thank them for their first offer
 - e) Get competitive bids from other pubs. You have an advantage – you are consumers, shop for the best deal.
 - f) Look for local sponsors – which companies or service clubs would benefit from exposure to your market.
 - g) Have a draw with donated prizes.

Your plan is key to your success. Make sure that you follow it, advertise widely, get on the phone, email your friends and groups of interest – promote, promote, promote!

Your promotion provides lots of opportunity to let people know about your cause. Connect people with what motivated this event – tell your compelling story informing them of the issues that need attention – their attention.

Aftermath

The party is over, but there is more work for you to do.

Follow up – thank your sponsors, thank your volunteers, recognize people for their contributions, acknowledge their time and effort - and you will have a happy and committed group of donors and volunteers.

In your post mortem on the event, do an evaluation of your plan and make recommendations for future events. Create a database with names and contacts, results and recommendations.

Handling 'NO':

Why do you hold special events rather than approach people face to face?

The answer, to a large extent, is **FEAR** - the fear of being rejected. Nobody likes to be turned down. There are compelling reasons for a donor to say 'no'. When that happens, talk to the donor, and ask why. They will provide you with additional information that you will use in future requests.

Look at a "NO" as an opportunity to take feedback and improve your strategy.

Fundraising – Ideas from past participants

This section has some examples drawn from past-participants success in raising funds through their community.

- Market donations in a way that lets donors sponsor a specific part of your trip. For example: if the living costs and accommodation for Botswana is approximately 24\$ a day, if people donate 10\$, they are supporting you for 10 hours. The same method could be used for miles you have to travel or meals in a day.
- You can use your air miles or get people to donate air miles to cover your flight.
- Contact local organisations: Lions Clubs, Rotary Clubs, local businesses, local newspapers, church groups etc. Offer to give a presentation after your trip in return for a donation.
- Organize events such as bottle drives, raffles, silent auctions, bake sales or car washes.
- Throw a party: organize a party, concert or dinner and sell tickets.
- Contact your local MP or MPP; many have funds to help their constituents with charitable endeavours.

Your University or College is probably your best source for fundraising; here are some places to look:

- Most academic institutions have international offices and many provide bursaries and awards to help fund students' overseas placements. These offices may also offer useful non-financial support.
- If you are doing a co-op or practicum placement, many universities have bursaries and awards specifically for these programs.
- The financial aid office can provide you with information on bursaries and awards offered externally and by your institution. Links to financial aid websites for many Universities and Colleges can be found at the end of this package.
- Contact your faculty and department to see if they can provide funding.
- Contact your student union and relevant student groups. They may offer funding or help in organizing events.
- Contact the Dean of your faculty or President of your University or College.

N.B. – You are fundraising to cover your personal expenses and not raising money for SWB or WUSC. Because of this we are not able to provide tax receipts for donations collected.

Do you have other ideas or success stories on raising funds? Please share them with all of us! Send them to swb@wusc.ca.