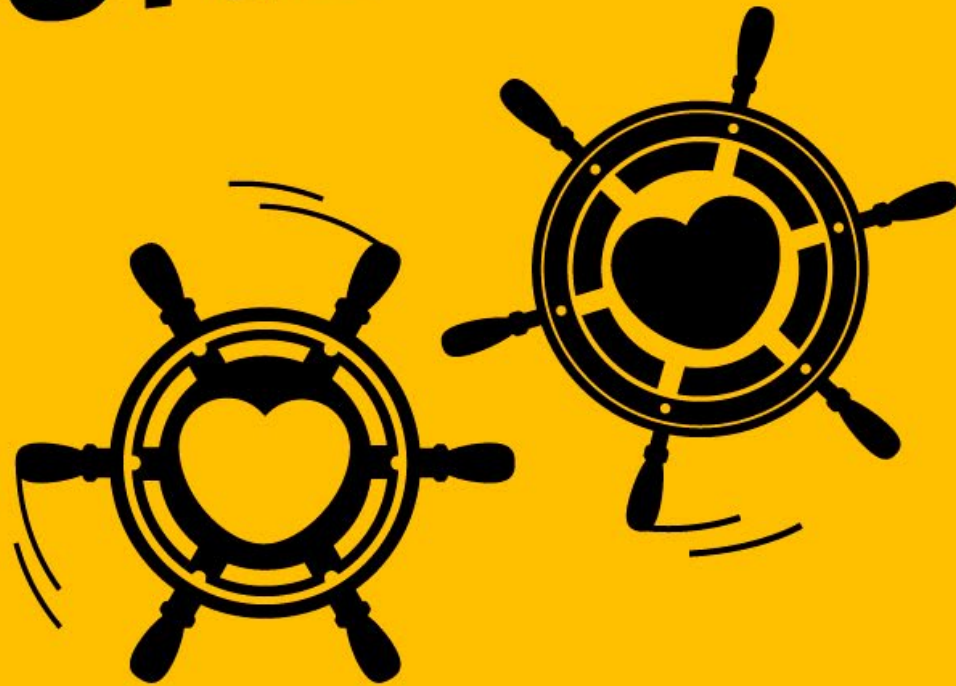


PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF FUNDRAISING



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PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF FUNDRAISING

How to plan and implement a successful fundraising campaign?

As a nonprofit organization, you can collect donations in many ways, but whatever campaign you start, you need to think about the same aspects when planning your fundraising. We'll look at them below.

Purpose of the fundraising

Defining the fundraising goal should be the initial step and "trigger" of campaign planning. Think about which of your activities and goals need funding and which of these can be supported most financially effectively and as quickly as possible. It is important to note that fundraising can never be an end in itself. On the one hand, 'just because' fundraising is not effective at all as it does not motivate donors, and on the other hand it is not transparent so it can put your organisation in a bad light.

Another important aspect is whether you want to collect one-time donations for a specific purpose or ask for regular donations that support the organization's broader goals and activities over the long term.

Target amount

Then you need to determine the target amount you want to raise. Consider your previous fundraising experience and achievements to set a realistic target. You may need hundreds of thousands of leva in donations for something, but if your previous fundraising has only reached a few thousand leva, you are better off targeting an amount of a similar scale and realistically identifying what you can achieve with that amount within the given target.

Target group

The more accurately you know from whom you can ask for donations, the more successful the collection will be. Who are your current supporters and who else might be interested in your work and cause? Where can you reach them? Are there supporters in your environment for whom the goal and theme of a fundraising campaign are particularly important?

The better you know the people close to the organization, the more effectively you can divide them into different target groups and communicate with them in a more targeted, almost personalized way, asking for donations from them. Online tools like Facebook and Google Analytics provide an excellent way to get to know potential donors.

Budget

Every fundraising campaign comes with costs - if nothing else, at least the salaries of the staff involved in organising the campaign. In most cases we have communication costs and costs associated with the fundraising platform, for example a bank transaction fee or a fee for the service provided by the platform. Think about how much you can spend on the campaign and how much you think it is worth compared to the goal you have set.

Some fundraising campaigns may support longer-term goals, with spending exceeding the original target amount. In this case, you may choose to view the campaign as an investment and anticipate higher costs for longer-term returns and goals.

Method and tools

You can choose from a variety of fundraising methods depending on what your campaign goals are, what is best for your organization, what your strengths are, what opportunities you have, what you already have experience in, and what has or has not worked in the past.

Do you have many followers on Facebook and are your followers active? If yes, collect online donations! To do this, you will certainly need a payment interface that accepts card donations, which is provided by various Card Payment Interface providers. If you often organize popular events and they are attended by many people, try collecting funds during the event! Do you have many dedicated supporters and volunteers who would love to do something for you? Try a community fundraiser!

You'll also need a proper online collection interface. It can be installed on your own website, but this is quite expensive, so it's easier to use the DMS platform or various other donation collection platforms like 4fund.com, Jotform, etc.

Communications

Active and intensive communication is essential for successful fundraising. Remember that donations will not come by themselves, but as a result of the work of the organization. Don't be afraid to reach out to potential supporters often and through different channels and platforms. One call to donate won't get everyone to take action. In order for them to actually start donating, you need to reach out to them more than once. If they come across your request multiple times, it will become clear to them that you need their help. Also, on social media we only organically reach a fraction of our followers, so we definitely need to support the campaign with ads there if we can afford it.

Besides regularity, creativity and reach of communication messages and materials are the keys to success.

Take stock of what channels and platforms you can communicate on, where you can reach potential supporters most easily, and which ones are most relevant for a given campaign. Social media is usually an indispensable communications tool for fundraising campaigns, but don't forget about your newsletter, as this is where you reach your closest supporters in the most direct way, and newsletter subscribers usually have a stronger connection to your organization than Facebook followers. Your website or DMN can provide a platform for online donations, but you should direct potential donors to these platforms.

When crafting communications materials, aim for concise, understandable, engaging messages and strong visuals.

Campaign communication includes thanking donors at the end of the collection and, if they have consented to the use of their data, initiating and building further relationships and communication with them. This also includes informing your donors about the realisation of the campaign goal and the use of donations after a successful campaign.

Planning, capacity, responsibility

As you plan, create a detailed timeline, with key deadlines and task schedules. If several people are working on the campaign, it is especially important that everyone understands who has what duties and responsibilities. Of course, in this case as well, it is necessary to designate a responsible person who is accountable for the campaign as a whole and understands and coordinates the processes.

Consider how much time and capacity the campaign is expected to require from the staff involved and how you can effectively fit this in with their other tasks and duties.

Part of planning is to set and stick to a budget. To do this, you need to see what resources and tools you will use in the campaign and in what quantity/intensity. For a particularly high-capacity campaign, consider budgeting for salaries/wages.

Evaluation

At the end of the campaign, whether you consider it a success or not, be sure to pay attention to evaluation: what were the positive and negative impressions, what would you keep and what would you do differently next time?

In order to run a successful fundraising campaign, you don't necessarily need to have a separate fundraising department within the organisation, or even a separate person in that position. It can be done as a team effort integrated with the organization's other activities, but it's important that the right people inside and outside your organization are prepared and able to support the process.

The board of trustees, board of directors, or board of supervisors ensures that the legal provisions and the organization's own rules are followed: they check to see if there are any restrictions on the organization that may affect fundraising (e.g., some organizations do not accept corporate donations). They can also help you determine what ethical and professional guidelines should be followed during fundraising activities.

Management is responsible for setting strategic goals, based on which annual plans and budgets are formed, and within these, the amount of donation proceeds can be planned. It is the responsibility of those involved in **finance and administration** to track and properly account for incoming donations, they ensure compliance with the law so that fundraising and related activities and paperwork are regular and all authorisations are proper, for example for fundraising in public places.

Fundraising is not an end but a means to our end, the cost of delivering new projects - so successful fundraising requires the support of those who are not directly involved in fundraising but are directly involved in the object of fundraising - the projects. Not only in setting targets, but also after fundraising, the input of colleagues working to implement the projects is needed. It is important for donors to see how you have used the donations, how and to what extent the purpose for which the money was given has been achieved, and if not, why not? These outcomes, whether quantified or presented as individual stories, are important to monitor, measure and collect with colleagues and project teams.

Communication is also essential, and to start fundraising you need someone who plans and implements a communication campaign plan, manages the organisation's communication channels and can respond to emerging challenges. This is perhaps one of the most important tasks when it comes to fundraising. The lack of this task and a person to be responsible for it may mean that you are not yet ready for successful fundraising. However, every organisation is structured differently and not every fundraising task needs to be carried out by separate staff members. Even a small organization can fundraise successfully if there is the right level of collaboration within the team!

What are we asking the donation for?

By creating a fundraising strategy, you have already determined exactly how much, how, from whom and for what you want to raise matching funds. The next big step is to write an engaging, strong and understandable message about what you want to get support for.

It's often not so easy to tell what your organisation does, especially if you want to show a potential donor why they should support you. Sometimes it feels like your wording has become too simplistic, and what you do is much more complex than what you have written, and you may struggle to find the right words and stories to describe your activities. Here are some tips on how to do just that!

Formulate the reasons why donors should support you

- 1.) Interview members of your organization about what your organization does. This may sound strange, but you can get a lot of spontaneous, impactful answers this way that will make your message more colorful and impactful, and it's easier to get out of schemes or content that's too flat. Interview supporters, volunteers, or people who have already benefited from your organization's services. The more perspectives you can attract, the stronger your fundraising arguments will be.
- 2.) During interviews, look for good stories: ones that touch you emotionally. Look for content that is likely to appeal to potential donors: the need, urgency and impact should be clear.
- 3.) Use understandable yet emotional language when framing messages. The aim is to mobilise the emotions and imagination of potential supporters. To achieve this, we need to use language that evokes emotion, provides a personal connection and an inspiring vision. It may help to imagine you are writing the text for a friend, acquaintance, parent or existing supporter. That way the wording can be much more personal.
- 4.) It is very important that in addition to making clear the role of your organization in the implementation of the project or task for which you are seeking resources, you always highlight and make visible the role of the donor in the implementation, what and how they contribute and what would not happen without their support.
- 5.) When describing the impact, always highlight how you are changing the lives of the beneficiaries of the project, how they are affected by what you are doing. (For example, you buy dog kennels and vaccines for dogs, as a result of which the dogs can live in warmth and be healthy.)

Structure of the reasons for support formulated

Like any good story, the one about asking for support should take the reader on a journey: what is the problem or challenge, what solution can we find, and how can we do it together - us and the reader. A very effective and simple structure usually looks like this:

Introduction (it's good to have visuals)

Presentation of the problem/challenge

Why now? (Why is it urgent to solve this problem now?)

Why us? (Why is our organization able to solve this problem?)

The solution (How will we help solve the problem?)

The donation and the impact (What size of donation can have the maximum impact to solve the identified problem)

Summary (looking at the situation objectively and holistically, and a call to action)

Finalising the case for support

Read what you have written several times and ask other colleagues in your organization to read it as well. Is it inspiring enough? Does it spur readers to action? Does it have an emotional impact? If there are still too many dry facts and technicalities, rewrite it. If you've already achieved a version you like, test it with outsiders: what resonates, where the text isn't quite clear, what's strong, what's still weak about it. Use the feedback to finalise the text.

How to use the story formulated in this way?

Depending on the target group, you can frame the rationale for supporting your proposal in a short, pictorial form, e.g. for your website visitors, presented using a story in a one-minute Facebook video, or explained in detail, supplemented with figures, results so far, or a detailed budget for the implementation of the project.

You may want to add additional elements to the main message:

More supporting facts and data demonstrating how urgent your request is and how great the need is to continue or expand the activity.

Case studies or shorter stories to make the proposed activity stand out as more tangible and feasible.

The history of the organization that shows what you have accomplished so far and what you plan for the future.

A personal message from an important donor, prominent figure in the sector, volunteer or stakeholder you have helped.

Many people find it embarrassing to approach others with requests for financial support. Asking for money makes them feel unnatural, it can even make them feel anxious or insecure.

If you are a fundraiser, you need to pay attention to your feelings about such activity. It often takes time for negative feelings and sensations to dissipate so that fundraising can happen naturally and easily.

We'll help you achieve this with the following tips:

Asking for a donation is not a request for a favor, but an opportunity for someone to participate in a noble cause, to contribute to something meaningful and important to them.

If you view donations in this way, rather than as a request for a favor, it can both remove the inconvenience associated with asking and be much more inspiring to potential donors.

Instead of, "Sorry to bother you with this, maybe you could help!" use, "There's a fantastic initiative you can join now!" The second immediately leads to a different point of view: "If you are sympathetic to this cause and what is proposed is relevant to you, then come and join us, become a volunteer, contribute, say, £50 to help us reach our target of £5,000."

When you think about when and why you made a donation, the first thing you'll probably remember is that you gave when someone asked for something that you personally found meaningful.

Donations rarely happen by themselves. People need to be prompted and even challenged to donate, if only because they do not always take the time to think about and discover the things that are important to them and to which they would volunteer financial or other resources.

This is the job of the organizer of a fundraiser in an organization - to present the cause or request to potential donors, to get the messages out through the appropriate channels, and to make requests, showing specifically what the donation will do and what difference it will make in the community.

If this is done with fear of rejection or tension, it will not have the necessary effect as if it is passionately and convincingly shown what a unique opportunity is that potential donors can now join.

Source: www.globalphilanthropic.com