



Tool Box

Tool Box is a quick-read strategic resource of Triangle2 Resource Development Group. Find more fund development resources at www.donorbydesign.com.

Tough Issues - Plain Talk Answers

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Fundraising in an Uncertain Economy

Over the last few months every board meeting, donor interview or phone conversation I've had has included questions about the how the uncertain economy might affect fundraising. Let's consider the following questions ...

What Can We Control?

We first must understand interest and capacity. There is a simple formula that holds true in almost all situations: the point where a donor's interest and capacity intersect represents their gift to your organization.

Let me explain further: we really can't affect what an individual is worth. (Perhaps aside from purchasing a lottery ticket in their name - not a strategy I recommend!) A local philanthropist may have substantial resources but, if he/she is not interested in your organization, your odds of receiving a gift are not good.

Our job as development professionals is not one of fund raising but rather interest raising.

Regardless of a robust or uncertain economy, we can control our interest raising efforts with our donors and prospects.

Who are Your Best Friends? Identifying Your Top 20.

Carefully review your donors and prospects and develop a personal *Top 20* list. Work hard during this uncertain time to build their interest. Show them your "product" (the service you provide to the community) and make your case for support come alive.

Listen and ask questions. Laced in their answers is the strategy how to ultimately solicit them for a gift.

- Questions reveal needs
- Questions explore problems
- Questions reveal values
- Questions reveal motivational triggers
- Questions reveal strategic information
- Questions direct the discussion

"Love them through the tough times and your organization will be well positioned as the economy improves."

"Where a donor's interest and capacity intersect represents their true giving potential."

What's Your Story? Sharpening Your Case.

Use this time of uncertainty to clarify your organizational case for support. Explain why you do what you do. Do it clearly. Do it through multiple communication channels.

Can You Ever Say Thank You Enough? Recognition.

Take special effort to say thank you in creative ways which lift you up above the rest of the not-for-profits in your community. Perhaps it is involving your youth participants to personally say thank you. Perhaps a well placed note on a **Valentines Day Card** or **Thanks-for-Giving Card**. Regardless of how you choose to recognize your donors, always do it in a way that is personal and meaningful to them. Remember: don't love them and leave them! Love them through the tough times and your organization will be well positioned as the economy improves.

Questions or Comments?

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