

A Simple Guide to Fund Raising

by Preston M. "Sandy" Fleet

A step-by-step guide for individuals and organizations to raise funds for various projects, covering every skill of fund raising from the tin cup or collection plate approach to the most sophisticated full-scale fund raising campaign.

Anyone can be a fund raiser. Most people are fearful of asking others for money, yet there always seems to be a need for additional money for one thing or another, whether it be a large program or small. Every day it is necessary to concern ourselves with financial matters of one sort or another, either on a personal level or for others we are involved with in various organizations. This guide is designed in simplified form to help you toward maximum results, with minimum time and effort on your part, so . . . here are some general guidelines to make it easier for you to set up and carry out a successful fund raising project.

STEP ONE — ESTABLISH GOALS. You start by saying to yourself, "I can and will raise X number of dollars in XX amount of time." People dread opening their mouths because they think they have nothing to say, or maybe they will be criticized by someone else; mainly this is because they seldom have a plan. If you have something to say, and a way to say it, all that is left is your willingness to act and a little effort on your part — voila, it works!

STEP TWO — HAVE SOMETHING TO SELL. A tangible product (result) that others can see, touch, hear, taste, or smell is more easily explained than just a good idea. Get as much information as you can, so that you will know as much as possible about the item itself.

STEP THREE — WRITE YOURSELF A TELEGRAM (a piece of

paper on which every word counts). Present the facts in as simple a fashion as is possible in the shortest period of time. Explain the differences between your project and any others. What are its merits; why is it good, better or best? Write down all material, then refine the information as if you were writing a telegram. Now explain the need (usability) of the product (project). How will it be used to benefit you, me, and/or the organization? It is necessary for you to accomplish this before any contact with others. You could put this information on index cards if you need to refer to something during any discussion. This material now becomes the basis for your presentation.

STEP FOUR — APPROACH THE PROSPECTIVE DONOR. Telephone, telegraph, teletype, television, letters, brochures, speeches and radio are all examples of *secondary contact* methods (where a tool is placed between you and the donor), usable and useful at least for making the initial contact; I am sure you can think of



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others. You are able to reach the largest possible audience this way, but successful fund raisers seldom are successful (handed a check or cash or "something") on the first try. More than likely it will take a minimum of three, yes, three contacts! The first is getting to know you and your program; the second is an enhancement of the first; the third will likely be it! Most often one or more *personal contacts* are necessary to complete the "sale," so above all do not become discouraged. The key here is personal contact, one to one, head to head. This forces you to be selective in your approach (some call this targeting) and also forces the "prospect" to evaluate your project more carefully. Another important point to be made here: by all means stick to your subject! It is okay to talk about the weather when you first get together, but don't procrastinate; go right to your subject, make your point, keep it simple, and end by asking point blank what it is that you came for. A busy person respects this and will often tell you, "Time is money." After all, no one wants his time wasted, including you! Next time — don't oversell!

Now, when does a "no" not mean no? *Do not be afraid of a "no."* In the first place, a "no" is better than nothing! It is when I am ignored that I feel hurt, so "no" is a positive answer! Many times, this gives you something to work with. People use this answer when they really mean, "I am not able to at this time." So most of the time it is all right to try again. Under normal circumstances, a person will give you one or more reasons why he or she cannot do what you ask — sometimes genuine, sometimes not. Do pursue reasons, if you believe it possible to counter their objections, or see the ability to change an objection in the future; but do not be argumentative or make an enemy by attacking him or her on a personal level.

Watch for the sign that you have won your deal. It may be a nod, a wink, or a hearty "yes," or a signature on a contract, or a handshake and a signed check, or possibly an IOU — a pledge to pay at a future date and time. After your prospect has agreed to your proposal, all you have left to do is decide the method by which it will be carried out.

THAT IS ALL THERE IS TO IT!

If enough contacts are made with the proper presentation, a certain percentage will always result in success. This is a good reason to split up a list of potential prospects among a group of fund raisers, each individual taking a handful of names to contact, particularly some he or she may already know or be acquainted with. "Divide and conquer" and make sure that everyone is thoroughly briefed and that someone is assigned the task of coordinating the efforts of the others. This kind of follow-up is necessary to keep each person informed and remind them of the job to be done, as well as a progress report for the others. (In organizations, a paid staff member can oversee a group or board of volunteers.) Surprisingly enough, it makes little difference the size or the amount asked for, the method or procedure to follow is the same. What is important is some prior knowledge of the donor's capacity to give. This means that it is necessary for you to do a little research on your subject ahead of time. Once your donor knows your program, he or she will sometimes volunteer an amount they could contribute, without further prompting on your part. You can use guidelines; for instance, suggesting a specific donation according to membership classifications, i.e., life member or donor categories (patron, sponsor, contributor).

There are a number of other techniques, or tricks of the trade that you should be aware of and use for the appropriate situation. They are known as PROMPTS or INCENTIVES: PREMIUMS, DISCOUNTS MATCHING FUNDS, i.e., giveaway (pen, car, TV set, free membership — "Bring in ten new members, get your membership free!"), ticket for special privileges (percentage off of regular prices), a specific donation which can then be matched X number of times by X number of other sources. This last method works exceptionally well when you have an individual or group

committing in advance a specific amount of money — (1) we will contribute any amount up to X amount provided you do the same or get someone else to do the same on a two-for-one basis; (2) where the total amount required is known in advance and someone agrees to commit a percentage of it if one or more others do the same.

A NOTE ON THE HIRING OF PROFESSIONAL FUND RAISERS.

There is an assumption made by many people that a professional fund raiser can be hired to come in to an organization and raise any necessary funds for the project(s) if worthwhile, and that a percentage of the amount raised would be paid to the fund raiser for services rendered. It is assumed that the responsibility for acquiring the necessary funds is then the entire responsibility of the fund raiser, and therefore this alleviates the obligation of the individual members, directors, etc., from participation in the fund raising activities. BUT, NOTHING COULD BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH! Unscrupulous individuals often prey on the unsuspecting group, by taking advantage of this lack of knowledge of funding principles and unwillingness of members to participate in fund raising activities. Therefore BEWARE of this kind of approach! It can lead to embezzlement or other serious crime, and deprive the project of its funds; exactly the opposite effect of what is really desired.

A legitimate professional fund raiser will advise that the techniques outlined in this guide be used, utilizing his or her services to act as paid coordinator (for a percentage), and possibly making some special individuals contacts as well. I maintain that knowing and using this guide will give you the complete capability of the professional, so that all funds raised can be utilized to best advantage by your project.

GOOD LUCK! Now that you know how simple it is, you are on the road to aiding and assisting your favorite organization(s) — ATOS, *please* — in its needs for the future.

Chapters or individuals wishing reprints of this guide may obtain them by writing to Preston M. "Sandy" Fleet, 12434 Cloudesly Drive, San Diego, California 92128. □

For The Records



Manufacturers, distributors or individuals sponsoring or merchandising theatre pipe organ records are encouraged to send pressings to the Record Reviewer, Box 3564, Granada Hills, California 91344. Be sure to include purchasing information (post-paid price, ordering address,) if applicable, and a black and white photo of the artist which need not be returned.

AN EVENING AT THE PARAMOUNT. Donna Parker and Bill Vlasak playing the Wurlitzer organ in the Paramount Music Palace. \$8.75 postpaid from the Paramount Music Palace, 7560 Old Trails Road, Indianapolis, Indiana 46219.

This is the second album starring this talented pair and we like the playing even more than their initial effort. If there are two nightly-performing artists who exude "class" (and we soft-pedal the snobbery often linked to that word), Donna and Bill represent it. But first we have some questions: (a) What is the Paramount Music Palace — a theatre maybe? (b) Where is the Palace located? (c) How many ranks does the organ boast? These are all questions the average record buyer wants answered. Yet the jacket provides no answers. Is this a case of misleading merchandising? If so, we are certain it is unintentional, because all the answers are given in the previous album's jacket notes; (a) a pizzeria, (b) Indianapolis, (c) 42 ranks. It's simply a sin of omission.

That matter settled we can knuckle