

Fundraising Planning : Preparing For A Busy Year By Planning Ahead

by James (Kim) Gilliam, Senior Associate

TREC - Fundraising Planning Recommendations



Our thanks to Wilburforce Foundation
for its generous support of this study.



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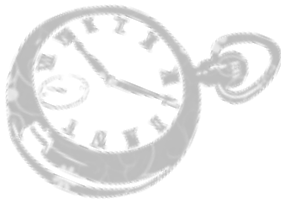
Fundraising Planning Now!

Failing to prepare is like preparing to fail.
~ Ben Franklin

Yogi Berra, the oft' quoted catcher for the New York Yankees said it best—"If you don't know where you're going, chances are you'll end up somewhere else." In the chaos of today's economic realities, careful fundraising planning is our single best defense against ending up where we don't want to be.

It is never too early to begin planning for your busy year, ensuring that you are investing your limited time in the fundraising activities that will have the greatest impact.

Pay careful attention to mid-year re-planning and re-calibration.



Ask yourself -

What have we learned about our fundraising results so far this year which need to be factored into our plan for the year?

Where do we need to be making mid-stream adjustments?

The following chart demonstrates the various planning cycles that occur throughout the year.

Cycle of Fundraising Planning Chart



Annual Statement of Development Objectives

Key points to consider are revenues generated from each fundraising activity, and how much time will be necessary to complete each objective.

*~Kim Gilliam,
TREC Senior Associate*

Time Allocation Sample:
Executive Director: 47%,
Development Director: 100%,
Program Staffers Total: 25%.

Total Revenues Projected: \$155,600
Total Expenses Projected: \$151,500

Projected Year-End Surplus: \$4,100

The fundraising planning process begins with a broad road map for the year that lays out exactly where you must end up. Key points to consider are revenues generated from each fundraising activity; and how much time will be necessary to accomplish each objective.

Here is a sample Statement of Development Objectives.

Note that objectives differ from one organization to the next and one year to the next (e.g. if your development office is not responsible for communications, drop the Communications Objective.)

Objective 1 - Set Annual Foundation Objective - Raise a total of \$110,000 from foundations; \$100,000 from four existing funders and \$10,000 from one new foundation. Time allocation: Executive Director 15%; Development Director 20%; Program Staff 20%.

Objective 2 - Set Annual Major Donor Objective - Raise \$27,000 from twelve major donors; \$25,000 from ten existing major donors and \$2,000 from four new major donors. Make a total of twenty-five face-to-face calls for the year. Time Allocation: Executive Director 10% and eighteen visits; Development Director 25% and seven visits; Program Staff 5%.

Objective 3 - Set Annual Membership Objective - Raise \$12,600 in membership/small donor gifts (under \$100). Renew 80% of current members (200 x 80% = 160) by a renewal program (\$3,200); secure 50 new members through direct mail and email acquisition (\$1,000); and mail spring and fall special appeal (\$8,400). End year with 210 active members/small donors. Time allocation: Executive Director 2%; Development Director 25%.

Objective 4 - Set Annual Event Objective - Raise \$6,000 from special events. Host two house parties (\$2,000); and Fall Gala and Silent Auction (\$4,000). Time allocation: Executive Director 10%; Development Director 20%.

Objective 5 - Set Annual Communication Objective - Produce two newsletters this year (spring and winter). Send frequent e-alerts, personalized emails. Time allocation: Executive Director 5%; Development Director 5%.

Objective 6 - Set Annual Planning Objective - Commit time necessary for administrative functions (staff meetings, etc.) and for planning, including developing annual fundraising plan and six month review and recalculation of the plan. Time allocation: Executive Director 5%; Development Director 5%.

Summary

Countless participants in TREC's 2010 fundraising survey cited the importance of planning. One group stated that current economic conditions:

Forced us to re-evaluate programs/projects and implement changes in order to be more effective and sustainable.

Many TREC groups are applying the lesson of better focus to their fundraising planning as well. One group mentioned a scaling down of events to ramp up their major gift efforts. An executive director even admitted that:

I know I didn't pay enough attention to fundraising.

We have SO many unexplored possibilities that would not take all that much work at all and due to time constraints and poor prioritizing, I haven't cultivated any of these possibilities. Disappointing.

Disappointing indeed. Which brings me to the final point on fundraising planning. Even if we know where we intend to go, intention alone will not get us there. As Peter Drucker observes in his treatise on planning:

Plans are only good intentions unless they immediately degenerate into hard work.

Remember that intention alone will not help to raise more money. Please get to work - now!



Author and Editor Info

Author



James (Kim) Gilliam, Senior Associate, has been involved in the creation and direction of dynamic fundraising efforts for more than two decades. After several years of working as a VISTA volunteer in various community organizing roles in North Dakota, from 1988-2002 he was the Chief Development Officer for the Southern Environmental Law Center, based in Charlottesville, Virginia. During his fourteen year tenure the organization grew from a \$500,000 to a \$5 million annual budget. He was primarily responsible for building a nationally recognized individual major gifts program that grew to generate fifty percent of the organization's annual budget. He also spearheaded the organization's successful \$15.5 million Campaign for the Environmental Future of the South from 1997-2000.

Since 2003, he has managed a full time consulting practice working with a national client base in developing fundraising plans and major gift and capital campaign efforts, as well as doing extensive training in environmental fundraising throughout the country. In addition to his training and coaching role with TREC, he also serves as a lead fundraising consultant to grantees of the French American Charitable Trust in San Francisco, a foundation supporting organizations working on root causes of poverty and inequity.

If you are a current Wilburforce grantee and would like more help on this topic, please contact Kim Gilliam at kim@trec.org.

Editor



Dyan Oldenburg, (dro@trec.org) founded Training Resources for the Environmental Community (TREC) in 1997.

As executive director, she assists in developing and directing TREC's programs and provides services to TREC clients. She has worked on numerous legislative, electoral and issue campaigns since 1979. Dyan ably assists environmental nonprofits in growing their leaders, boards and organizations. She is dedicated to helping groups meet their missions and manage change.

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