



Strategies for Success

Smart fundraising ideas from Hartsook

Build the House



A successful nonprofit organization will have a successful fundraising program. These go hand in hand. Like building a solid house, a comprehensive fundraising program must be constructed wisely, one step at a time:

The first floor

The ground floor of a well-built fundraising program provides the base upon which everything else is built. The solid base includes a supportive board of directors, an involved development committee, development staff, and a committed CEO or Executive Director, who is behind the development director and the development staff 100 percent.

The second floor

The next floor is the heart of the program: a reliable donor management system that produces reliable data that will contribute to a solid fundraising effort. Building on this is the all-important annual fund campaign and other specialized mailings that occur throughout the year. In addition, the organization's capability to identify major gifts and compare statistical data that allows for ROI and attrition monitoring depend on a quality tracking system.

The third floor

The top floor is where the large-dollar giving takes place. This is the major gifts department; the planned gifts department; and the capital or special campaigns department. The dollars generated from these efforts fund the organization's vision and provide for its success into the future through endowed monies. This is the specialized area that must rely on the first and second floors for information and direction.

Build the fundraising house carefully, and you will have a successful program. Maintain the house well, and you will have an even better organization. Once the house is complete, there are additional enhancements to be made: campaign reports, marketing materials, a case for support and everything else necessary to add a personal touch to a solidly built fundraising structure.

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