

The Path Forward

For New & Growing Non-Profit Organizations



February 2008

Tips & Suggestions from Experts

KIVA is an organization that connects individual donors with individuals who need a small amount of money—a micro-enterprise loan—to get a new business started usually in a developing nation. “The Donor Power Blog” on February 11 featured the KIVA Formula:

1. “Make sure you’re offering something donors understand and want to do
2. “Put donors in control
3. “Give donors tons of feedback
4. “Make sure you have a strong social aspect to giving.”

Gayle Roberts in “Fundraising for Nonprofits” on February 4 said: *Development is simply the building of value-based relationships between prospective donors and organizations.*

A fund-raising campaign that asks people to send a small amount of money once builds your mailing list and also triggers the giving behavior that you hope to make a habit.

Americans receive 1500 marketing messages each day.

A grant-maker told me this: *If someone I know and trust calls and personally tells me about an organization that is having great results and with which he or she is involved I am more likely to fund them than any organization that just sends me a written request. I look for credibility and one measure of credibility is the recommendations from the people I already know and respect.*

People who are employed by nonprofit organizations full time for ten years and who also make the first 120 payments on college loans borrowed on or after October 1, 2007 can have their college loans forgiven. For more information go to www.finaid.org/loans/publicservice.phtml

James Greenfield in [Evaluating and Managing the Fund Development Process](#) says that on average it costs \$0.20 to raise \$1.00 in the US.

The Maryland Association for Nonprofit Organizations says that a good goal is for a 3 to 1 fundraising efficiency ratio over a five year period.

For group travel, missionary rates, or to book your own travel online, please call me or go to www.teamlesleystravel.com

Building Relationships with Grant-makers

Some people intentionally adopt a 501c3 structure as a nonprofit organization at the start. Others fall into starting a nonprofit organization by doing good work out of a passionate heart until the work expands to the level where it becomes obvious that you have more than a hobby on your hands. Then someone tells you how to go about getting tax exempt status so that your supporters can get tax breaks for giving you money. How you got started probably indicates whether your board members have influential, affluent ties to other influential, affluent members of the community or if they are willing workers who came through the ranks of your organization. While you do understand that if you have the 501c3 IRS designation you are qualified and eligible to receive grants, you may become discouraged in the search for grants if your board does not include the peers of grant-makers who can open relational doors for you. With the economy in its current unpredictable state, becoming funded by grant-makers seems more important and more difficult than ever before. Here are some strategies for becoming favorably invited to apply for grants because of a relational connection:

- Find out which foundations are headquartered in your community. Then see if any of your board members or supporters work at companies whose executives sit on their boards. Then try to get introduced to the board member. I may be able to help you with this research
- Get to know your banker. Many banks are the trustees for foundations. If your banker becomes familiar with your mission and your successes he or she may recommend you to other bank clients who want to find good new recipients for their charitable giving
- Get to know financial advisors who manage donor advised funds. If you can “sell” your organization’s value to these people, they may mention you favorably to their clients
- Watch the business news and the community newspapers for your area. When a prominent individual is commended for charity, send a note to express your appreciation. You can mention what your organization does and insert a business card
- Subscribe to journals and join associations that attract people who are passionate about your cause, location, or service population. Then begin to dialogue with people in the same group about your organization
- Expand your board to include people with prominence, affluence, and influence using some of the same connections mentioned above
- Reach out to successful former classmates and colleagues
- Go to public meetings at your municipality or town hall and get to know the aldermen and public officials. This can often get you introductions to other prominent, influential and affluent individuals who share your passion, concerns and mission

Why Have A Newsletter? An effective newsletter does not tell all the great things your organization is doing in the hope that people will see your good works and send you their good money just because you impressed them or tugged on their heart with an emotionally poignant photograph. A newsletter can become your organization’s service to the people on your mailing list. It can provide an opportunity for them to share the stories about how participating with you has been meaningful, transformational, and satisfying. If your recipients look forward to receiving your mailing list and make time to read each issue, find out what they like best about it. If you consider your newsletter to be your main fundraising appeal device, rethink whether it is being cost effective. Newsletters give your readers information, a voice, the feeling of being in community with you as you work together with them to solve serious social problems. Newsletters can build transparency via words and pictures that prove that giving to you is a good investment.

Development Office In A Box: a one year program where our team (a grant-writer, a CPA, and the donor relations coordinator retired from a major university) will help your organization expand by activating your mailing list, increasing your donor base, conducting a significant fundraising event, doing an audit, and helping in the search for a full time development coordinator. Call about it today. We customize processes to help you grow and become more efficient and effective.



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