

Three Track Training Program

Raising Money in 30 Days

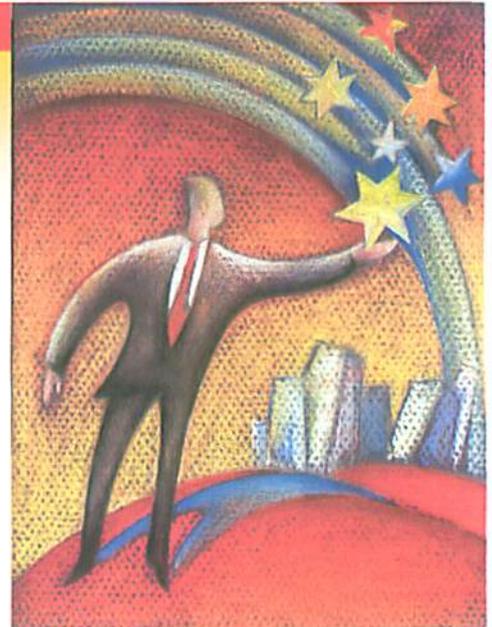
Sometimes an organization needs to raise funds in a hurry. It's easy to say, "You should have established a fundraising plan earlier!" That's probably true, but it doesn't help now. Here are some ways to raise modest funds in a pinch. Because institutions (like foundations, government, service clubs) take longer to make decisions than individuals, raising money in 30 days usually involves asking individuals for donations.

1. **Have a phone-a-thon** four days in a row, Monday through Thursday of one week. Get all the board members to gather at the organization's office (or one of your offices) at 5 pm. Practice how you're going to ask for donations on the phone and order pizza. Divide up the lists of members, donors, clients, patrons, neighbors, or whatever other lists you have. Call them.
2. **Post an acronym chart.** Make a poster of frequently used acronyms and post it on the wall of every meeting.
3. **Write an "anticipated action" for each agenda item.** Example: "Finance committee report, brief questions and answers: no action needed."
4. **Make sure that each person says at**

least one thing at every board meeting.

5. **No one-way communication from staff.** If you have a regular ED or staff person giving a briefing, be sure that the presentations need a response from the board.
6. **Don't include committee reports on the agenda just to make the committees feel worthwhile.** If the committee has done work but doesn't need it discussed, put the report in the board packet.
7. **Make sure that the two most important matters facing the organization is on every board agenda.**
8. **Encourage "dumb" questions, respectful dissent, authentic disagreements.**
9. **Make sure the room is comfortable.** Not too hot or cold or crowded. Offer beverages and something light to each such as cookies or fruit.
10. **Adjourn on time, or agree to stay later.**

Resource: Boardcafe
(www.compasspoint.org/boardcafe)



Who Should Take the Board Minutes?

Two schools of thought...either works. On some boards, the Secretary takes the minutes and gives them to staff for distribution. On other boards a staff person writes up the minutes which are then reviewed by the Secretary or President prior to distribution. Whichever way your board does it, mark the minutes as "draft" until they are approved by the board at its next meeting. (I'm reminded of John Kenneth Galbraith's strategy for serving on government commissions: let everyone else talk and then, at the end of the meeting, volunteer to write up the meeting notes. If you can control the commission report, it may

Four Cool Ideas for Recruiting New Board Members

1. **Form a "One-Meeting Nominating Committee."** Draft up a list of 20 well-connected people of the sort you would want on the board but who you suspect wouldn't join. Call those 20 people and ask them to come to a one-meeting committee over lunch. Tell them that at the lunch they'll be told more about the organiza-

tion and what it's looking for in board members. At the end of lunch they'll be asked simply for the name of one person they think would be a good board member. The day after the lunch call up each nominee and begin by explaining who nominated them.

2. **Take out a "Help Wanted—**

Volunteer Board Member" ad in the neighborhood newsletter or alumni newsletter of a local college. EXAMPLE: We're looking for a few talented and conscientious volunteer board members to help us guide our organization into the next century. If you can contribute to one evening a month and have

Board Meeting Packets

What should be included in the board meeting packets? A thoughtful packet not only provides the board with the information it needs for the meeting, but increases board confidence in the staff and the board-staff relationship.

More specifically:

1. **Board members want information that will be needed for the next board meeting.** If approval of a new program or new budget is on the agenda, a clear statement of the proposal must be in the packet.
2. **Board members want enough time to read the packet.** Some organizations send the packet by email as well as by regular mail.
3. **Critical, but often overlooked information.** Meeting location, directions to the meeting, hotel phone and fax, and an annotated agenda, and names and phone numbers of people to call if there's a question about a given item.

4. **Brief and usable updates on priority matters, especially financial status.** In financial information, board members want to be able to tell—either from the statements or from a cover memo—whether the organization is on budget, is financially sound.
5. **Board members don't want to read things that will be repeated at the board meeting, and they also don't like routine committee reports at board meetings.** In other words, put committee reports in the board packet, and don't include the report on the agenda unless there is action needed on a proposal from the committee. Do allow for questions about written reports, and say a word of thanks to committees who submitted reports but who are not giving verbal reports at the meetings.
6. **Survey the board members every couple of years** and ask them which components of the board packet they like best, like least, and what they'd like to see that they don't?

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Quote for the Quarter:

"Never doubt that a small group of committed citizens can change the world; indeed it is the only thing that ever has."

—Margaret Mead



For More Information

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Four Cool Ideas for Recruiting New Board Members, cont.

skills in accounting or special event fundraising, please call Meagan to find out more about this volunteer opportunity.

3. **Ask the executive director or the volunteer coordinator if there are 2 to 3 hands-on volunteers who would make good board members.** Volunteers, donors and clients should be the

first place you look since you don't have to sell them on the program.

4. **Pick 4 local organizations where you don't know anyone, but you'd like to.** Ask each officer to call one of the 4 local organizations and ask to have coffee with the board president or executive director. Suggest that your organization recommends "retiring"

board members to each other as a way of establishing organizational links and strengthening ties among communities.

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