

Fundraising 101

money minder®



Fundraising 101

Nearly every non-profit organization has a need to raise money to support its goals. Some activities just bring in money; some have both money coming in and money going out. Some of the things you do raise a lot of extra money; some barely break even.

In this guide, we'll talk about how you might look at your fundraising activities, some fun ideas for raising money, and how to say thank you at the end of an event.

The place to start is purpose.

Fundraising is about making money that you can then use for activities that your organization really wants to provide. It is how you get the money to help you achieve your core purpose.

We are big believers in having groups think about why they are in existence. What is your core purpose? Your mission? How are you going to make a difference in your community or in the world? What is it that you have to offer? We encourage your group to take the time to step back and question the things that you have been doing "forever" and see if they still meet your needs. See if they're still in alignment with your group's values.





Keys to successful fundraising

Once you've identified your "why" you're ready to look at best practices so you can ensure your fundraising activities are successful.

Any barriers between you and your donors will reduce the success rate of your campaign. The easier it is to give, the more likely it is that your campaign will be successful. Here are some things to consider:

Technology

- Provide mobile, text and online giving options. This is going to sound like common sense, but you may be surprised by how many organizations don't realize this: giving needs to be easy.
- Provide mobile, text, and online giving options so that no matter the preferences of your donors, giving is straightforward and easy.
- Post an easy "donate" button on your website's home page. Make donations shareable by allowing someone to post about their donation on social media.

Keep it personal

Donors are much more interested in connecting with real people than with a faceless organization. When a potential donor gets to interact with someone who cares about the same things as they do, they are more likely to get involved as donors or volunteers.



Share who you are and show gratitude

Posting information and sharing stories about your organization throughout the year goes a long way. If your donors only hear from you when you're asking for money, they are going to get tired of hearing from you. We encourage you to highlight success stories, show the impact of your giving, showcase pictures and videos, and provide data about how recent donations have been used. Gratitude for your donors' involvement is appreciated by those who give and motivating to those who are considering it.

Fundraising ideas that work

WALK-A-THONS / JOG-A-THONS

During a Walk-A-Thon, participants walk or jog as many laps as they can within a specified time period. The course can be designed in such a way as to take into account the ability level of the participants. The goal is to earn as much money as possible from as many sponsors as possible. A sponsor can pledge money based either upon number of laps completed by the participant or by a fixed dollar amount.



DIRECT ASKS

Identify concise and measurable donation requests. For example, say \$50 will support one team member at soccer camp for one day, and make sure you have a beginning and end to the donation period. This could be a day, a weekend, a week or bi-weekly period. Remember that unending asks can lead to donor fatigue.



RAFFLES

Ask around to your family and friends. Luxury items with wide appeal are good, and jewelry, vacations, spa days, or electronics will always be appealing to a potential raffle ticket buyer. Consider a 50/50 raffle where you don't even have to procure prizes. You just split the gross proceeds in half – the winner taking half and your group keeping half.



PERSONAL GIFTS

You've probably seen this method used in your social media feed. Instead of asking for presents, ask for donations to your favorite cause. Let your family and friends know how meaningful this would be to you and your organization.



MATCHING GIFTS

Did you know that hundreds if not thousands of corporations match their employees' donations, usually dollar for dollar? Many employees don't even know about this benefit, so educating them can be a good way to double your money.

LEMONADE STAND

Lemonade stands never go out of style. They can be a one-time event or an accompaniment to a weekly game or a special event. Let your thirsty customers know that all monies raised go to your cause or group and don't forget to put out a tip jar! Find a high foot traffic area and some cute kiddo servers.



SELL YOUR MERCHANDISE

If you have official organization merchandise, sell it! Production can be limited to the number of sales made. And if you don't refer to a particular school year, inventory can be sold for years to come.

SPONSORS

Brainstorm a targeted list of supplies that you need, with costs for each; then ask people to sponsor items. Request a wide range: iPads for the classroom, books, art supplies, or teacher training. The campaign could last the summer followed by a fun party for donors in the fall. Announce what they've sponsored with little stickers on their name tags.



COLLECTION AT YOUR LOCAL GROCER

Ask your local grocer if they'll allow you to set up shop out front for a few hours on a Saturday. Have a couple of collection buckets and plenty of information on hand for patrons wanting to know about your cause.

BAKE SALE

Going back to an oldie but goodie, bake sales are always a great way to help raise funds. The reason they've stuck around so long as a preferred method of raising funds is because cupcakes never go out of style. People always love buying homemade baked goods and the non-profit doesn't need to invest much when setting it up.



TEXT MESSAGE CAMPAIGN

Since cell phones are constantly attached to their owners, text campaigns are a sure-fire way of reaching them. The best part of text campaigns is that they enable your non-profit to collect donations at all levels.



GOLF TOURNAMENT

Plan and host a charity golf tournament. Collect more than registration fees at your charity tournament by including skills contests, auctions, raffles, and sponsors. While these require a fair amount of planning, the results can be well worth it.

GAME NIGHT

Your club members can invite guests and form teams before the event or just sell tickets and create teams on the night of the event. Raising funds from this type of event can happen through ticket sales, concessions, dinner, and more.





COIN DRIVE

Collecting change has always been a way to raise money. There are several ways to collect change and raise money for your non-profit. You can connect with local businesses willing to ask all their customers to put their change towards your booster club. You can ask folks to contribute their pennies and other change for a collective effort. Or you can use an online company to assist with the process.



SHOE DRIVE FUNDRAISER

Here's how it works: Sign up with a shoe drive fundraising company. Set goals and develop a plan. Collect gently worn, used, and new shoes. Arrange a pickup with the fundraising company. Receive money for your donated shoes. But why shoes? Walking is the primary mode of transportation in many countries. These companies focus on supporting developing nations by donating your gently used footwear.



T-SHIRT FUNDRAISING

What spreads spirit better than a custom t-shirt? Heck, don't stop at t-shirts, create and sell custom spirit wear (think hoodies, beanies, and more) to represent your organization.

SPORTS CAMPS

Recruit teenagers to get involved as coaches or hire a professional for a sports day camp for kids. Here's a bonus idea: after the camp is over, ask parents to donate their kids' dirty shoes from the camp to make some additional profit with a shoe drive fundraiser.

BBQ EXTRAVAGANZA

No outdoor summer event is complete without the enticing smells of an all-you-can-eat BBQ. You might also sell tickets for BBQ cooking lessons, cook-offs for the best BBQ, and so on. Consider reaching out to local businesses to sponsor your event or donate items.

MURDER MYSTERY PARTY

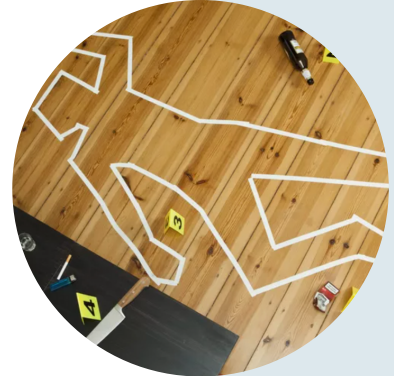
See who can piece all of the clues together to solve a murder mystery. Generate revenue with a registration fee. Increase the fun factor by encouraging attendees to dress in costume, maybe even having a best costume prize!

WINE TASTING

Ask local wineries or restaurants to donate a bottle or two in exchange for free marketing, or host your wine tasting at a local business that would contribute a portion of their proceeds to your organization. Consider hiring a sommelier to teach attendees how to properly taste each wine and educate the group on the history of each drink being served, or collect a basket of fine wines, cheeses, wine glasses, and bottle openers to auction off at the event for additional donations. You could even throw in a gift card to a local vineyard.

ONLINE SHOPPING FUNDRAISER

Launch an online shopping fundraiser by partnering with an online shopping program or various retailers. Encourage your community members to start making their everyday purchases through the shopping program or retailers. By doing so, a percentage of their sales totals will be sent to your school, all at no additional cost.





RESTAURANT NIGHTS

Sometimes called “percentage fundraising programs”, restaurants will often work with you and give you a percentage of their profits on a scheduled day. Your only job is to promote this fundraising night to your supporters and encourage them to visit the restaurant you’ve partnered with.



GIVING DAYS

Some larger corporations like Whole Foods, Office Depot, Kroger, and more have established giving days with applications located in their local stores as well as online. Check out how you can earn cash from purchases your donors make at these businesses.

Summary

Fundraisers can range from extremely tricky to super simple to pull off. Well thought out campaigns tend to produce the best results. If you’re in a pinch, it’s still possible to raise the money necessary to keep your organization afloat. Just be sure to be thoughtful about the process.

Show your appreciation

Thank You Letters

Sending a donation “thank you” note not only shows your appreciation but reassures the giver that choosing your cause was a good decision. Be sure to acknowledge the donation soon after it’s received – ideally within 48 hours. People are less likely to give again if they feel unappreciated.

Also, be sure to provide proper document to donors who wish to receive a tax benefit.

They will need a written acknowledgment from your organization that includes:

- name of your organization
- the date of the contribution
- amount of the contribution
- it’s also good form to include your organization’s EIN number



Here are some tips for writing your “thank you”:

- Make your note about the giver, not you or your cause. Be sure to give details about what services were made possible with the money.
- Keep a generic version on your computer that can be personalized quickly.
- Keep the tone personal.
- Very large donations deserve a phone call or a personal visit.
- Include a receipt/acknowledgment.

Sample Donation Request Letter

Name of potential donor

Title of potential donor

Business name

Street Address

City, State, Zip

Date

Dear [name of potential donor],

I am writing to you on behalf of Sunset Lane PTA. The school PTA is currently planning our Christmas Fundraising Event –The Jinglebell Challenge which takes place on December 1st. This will consist of an afternoon of fun for the children and their families.

Previous events have always proved very popular. Money raised at the event will be used to refurbish our technology lab which currently houses outdated equipment from 2005.

We were hoping that [name of business] might be willing to supply us with a prize for our raffle. [Name of business] gift baskets are always popular but any suitable product you could donate to us would be much appreciated.

If you are able to help please send your donation directly to the school at the address above. If you require additional information please contact me at the school address or email yourname@pta.com

Thank you in advance and best wishes from everyone at Sunset Lane Elementary School.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Sunset Lane Elementary PTA

Sample Donation Receipt

Date

Name of Cause

Street Address

City, State, Zip

We acknowledge, with thanks, the receipt of [amount], which you have so generously contributed to [name of cause].

Donor: [name of donor]

Donation: [amount]

[Name of cause] is recognized as a nonprofit organization by the IRS.

IRS Code: Section 501(c)(3)

Tax Identification Number: [Tax ID number]

Sample Donation Thank You Letters

Thanking Vendors

Dear Company,

Please accept my heartfelt appreciation for your donation. Our auction was a huge success, in part due to your help. Your beautiful gifts were highly sought items.

Thank you for your generosity and your quality products!

Sincerely,

Thank You to Friends

Dear Kim and Frank,

I want to express my appreciation for your generosity in support of [name of cause here]. Your personal commitment was incredibly helpful and allowed us to reach our goal. Your assistance means so much to me but even more to [name of cause here]. Thank you from all of us.

Thanks again for your kindness,

Thank You for Raffle Donation

Dear Mr. Pritchard,

We would like to thank you and your company for the generous gift to our fundraiser. Our raffle was a huge success, and would not have been possible without your help. The raffle funds will be used to [purpose], so you are truly making a difference in people's lives. Thank you on behalf of [name of cause].

Respectfully,

Alone, we
can do so
little;
together,
we can do so
much.

Helen Keller



See for yourself how easy MoneyMinder is.

No Bookkeeping Experience? No Problem.

**START YOUR
30-DAY TRIAL**

NO CREDIT CARD REQUIRED.



moneyminder.com

Copyright © NonProfit Central Inc 2023

This work is copyright protected. You may copy, display, print, and reproduce this material in unaltered form only (retaining this notice) for your personal, non-commercial use or use within your organization. All other rights are reserved. Requests and inquiries concerning reproduction and rights should be addressed to: PO Box 30307, Bellingham, WA 98228, (360) 255-4300.

LIMIT OF LIABILITY/DISCLAIMER OF WARRANTY: The author and publisher have used their best efforts in preparing this booklet. NonProfit Central Inc. and the author make no representations or warranties with respect to the accuracy or completeness of the contents of this booklet. The accuracy and completeness of the information provided herein and the opinions stated herein are not guaranteed or warranted to produce any particular results, and the advice and strategies contained herein may not be suitable for every individual or entity.

Neither NonProfit Central Inc. nor the author shall be liable for any loss of profit or any other commercial damages, including but not limited to special, incidental, consequential, or other damages.

