Chapter 4

Introduction to Fundamentals of Fundraising
The Foundation for Accomplishing Church Projects & Campaigns

By Lilya Wagner

Much can be accomplished for all nonprofit organizations, including churches, if sound fundraising principles are followed, and practice is based on successful experience. Fundraising is an organized practice, a logical process—one that takes time and careful thought to implement.

In this handbook, any organization for which money is raised, and which is either a church or associated with a church, will be referred to as a nonprofit organization.

Often well-meaning individuals perceive a need and immediately seek to remedy it by seeking funds. This kind of practice frequently results in failure or a disagreeable experience. Certain steps must be taken in order for fundraising to be effective and productive. Following is a brief description of steps involved in a successful fundraising program.

1. **Understand that fundraising is an exchange of values.** A responsible fundraiser, whether a professional, lay person, or pastor, begins the fundraising process by realizing that it is a reciprocal relationship. Any nonprofit, including churches, invites individuals to donate, and it also cultivates and solicits its friends of many types, many of whom become donors. Donors should be thanked and recognized, and should be informed about the use of the money. As donors provide funds for programs and operating needs, they desire gratitude and recognition, as well as some intangible rewards, such as a sense of belonging and making a difference. In short, there is an exchange taking place—if donors of any kind support the cause, they will do so because they share the values the organization represents.

2. **Consider the environment and climate for fundraising.** An organization’s environment has an impact on the feasibility of fundraising. If current economic factors, changing demographics, and other factors aren’t considered, you may find it difficult to meet its fundraising goals. Internal circumstances also dictate success or failure, such as an organization’s readiness to raise funds. Have appropriate personnel assignments been made? Is there an accounting and recording system? Has strategic planning been done? These and other questions must be answered before donors are approached.
3. **Create and examine the case.** A case includes the reasons someone should or could give money to an organization. Making a case means sharing the mission, goals and objectives, and programs. It includes describing programs and evaluation procedures, and providing financial reports. It means there is an effective governing body committed to the mission of the organization to whom the organization is accountable. It means pastors and lay leadership are credible and competent. Once a case has been developed, various methods of communications are then prepared for expressing the case. These materials must be appropriate for the potential donors with which the nonprofit seeks a relationship. Because there isn’t one “right” case statement or case materials, please contact PSI for appropriate samples and help in preparing your own materials.

4. **Involve board and other volunteers.** Although board membership and practice varies greatly in the Adventist Church versus other nonprofits, the use of volunteers and board in securing and managing financial support is crucial. Therefore, boards should be involved from the inception of planning for programs and fundraising. Volunteers are the most effective persons to ask for funds because they represent a selfless commitment to a cause. However, volunteers must be carefully selected. Also, volunteers should have credibility if they are going to interface with potential or existing donors. A pastor will model the need for visiting prospects and donors, and the right volunteer can be engaged and trained to visit the right candidate selected as a potential donor. Steps for volunteer involvement include:

   a) Identify volunteer needs—what kind of persons are the best for meeting face-to-face with those persons being invited to support a project and campaign? What qualities are needed?

   b) Invite volunteers to become involved—expecting people to willingly give their time in today’s busy societies and lives is unrealistic. Being invited makes this endeavor special. Besides, inviting according to established criteria suitable for the project or campaign avoids potential ill feelings by those who would be willing but aren’t, perhaps, the right candidates.

   c) Train volunteers—ensure they understand how fundraising is a process and what steps are taken toward success; that they are comfortable with the roles selected for them (or self-selected); that they are willing to work on the project or campaign.

   d) Value the volunteer’s time and resources—busy people often make the best volunteers, but a plan must be in place to maximize their time and talents.

   e) Recognize volunteers—celebrate, thank, and ask for feedback. Build a team!

5. **Determine possible donors.** Potential funders for church projects and programs are primarily and initially members, but they should also include foundations of various types (explained later in this chapter), businesses of all kinds, government agencies (for particular projects), and, most importantly, individuals. Many of these possible funders may become apparent because of relationships with members. In addition,
another possibility for funding is collaboration—working with a similar organization when requesting funds, a practice many donors like.

6. *Select programs and strategies.* How will the prospects be solicited, and for what programs? It starts with systematic giving as a foundation, and then may extend to capital campaigns, special projects, and other fundraising efforts as needed. Strategies for approaching donors include use of the Internet and other electronic means, mail, telephone, special events, and face-to-face solicitation. The more personal the approach, the more effective the solicitation. Matching potential and existing donors with the right tools for inviting them to give is important. Some members of the fundraising team are best at writing, while others excel in personal visits or public presentation. Because face-to-face solicitation is often feared, perhaps because of fear of a rejection or because the asker doesn’t know how to carry out such a personal request, a fundraising plan should consider the right person for the right task, and this can happen quite effectively because fundraising is a process consisting of many steps and components.

7. *Research prospects.* In addition to respecting church members on a par with other donors, other constituent groups should be determined, as well as their interest and proximity to the organization. It’s vital to have minimal information about all prospective donors, such as their interest in the project and their possible level of giving so they can be invited to give appropriately. It’s also very important to assure prospects and donors about confidentiality, and that the organization will not violate their trust.

8. *Create, use, and communicate a plan.* Planning is a means to determine what must be done, how it will be accomplished, and who will do it. It is the ultimate step in accountability, a major interest of all funders today. By now prospects and donors have been selected and matched with strategies for solicitation. The fundraising campaign has been chosen, the case has been prepared (along with materials that will express the case), board members and other volunteers have been involved in all steps, and the organization’s readiness to raise funds, which includes a strong infrastructure such as a way to track donations and thank donors, has been determined. Now it’s time to create a plan that includes details on all fundraising program elements, and one that provides evidence of good stewardship on the part of the nonprofit. If the leader—pastor or lay person—is not proficient in planning, please contact PSI for guidance, sample plans, and even personal visits by staff members or professionals contracted by PSI.

9. *Solicit the gift.* After all this preparation, the time has come to ask for the donation. Thorough preparation, which may vary in intensity, time, and detail, ensures the likelihood of success. It also increases the pleasurable aspects of fundraising which, while not easy, yields great satisfaction. Appropriate and timely recognition paves the way for the next step.

10. *Renew the gift.* The best prospect for a donation is the person who has already given. The opportunity to give and give again should be provided to all who are prospects and can be attracted to support an organization’s cause. Donor retention means
continuing to nurture the relationship, reporting appropriately, thanking and acknowledging the donor and the gift, providing ongoing reports, and keeping the donor engaged in ways that are suitable for him or her.

As can be seen, fundraising is a highly integrated management process and takes time to implement. Time elements may vary; each step in a successful fundraising program may not require the same emphasis for each organization, but no steps can be missed without diminishing the likelihood of favorable results. However, rushing into a fundraising effort without adequate preparation often causes disappointment and lack of results. At times organizations feel that they can skip steps or can "just do it," but this is not advisable. Again, we need to stress that the timeline of a campaign, which emphasizes much preparation before the campaign is launched, can vary according to the type of organization, what kind of donors and prospects are available, how strong is current giving (including stewardship in a church setting), and how effective is the team in planning and organizing a campaign.

It is a privilege to raise funds for worthy causes because fundraising is a ministry, because it is a way of accomplishing worthy goals, and the money is the price tag for those worthy causes. Those who are willing to be engaged in such activity and do it with some level of success deserve a special honor because they have helped bring about needed and valuable results.

Perhaps a few points of what fundraising is not are appropriate to remember. First, it is not begging, coercing, or giving a guilt trip. It is honestly sharing the excitement and potential of a cause that deserves financial support and inviting others to be part of such an endeavor. If a person working on a campaign, whether the leader (e.g., pastor, school principal, board chair, committee chair), views fundraising with distaste, this attitude will permeate the rest of the team, constituents, members, and potential donors.

Second, the simplistic methods of fundraising used in the past, for the most part, will not work today. Donors are much more savvy and have greater expectations from the organization requesting their funds, want more information, and unrestricted giving on the basis of "trust us, we'll use the money well," is a dream of the past. Neither do simple strategies such as dinner and pledge cards raise the sums of money needed for projects and capital campaigns. Yes, small amounts can be raised by a letter-writing campaign or even a bake sale, but these are minimal and certainly do not engender loyalty by the givers.

Third, fundraising must be done ethically and professionally, and a process must be followed. There are, of course, exceptions to the process depending on the campaign or the situation, but in general these exceptions should be carefully undertaken. Today all organizations that succeed in raising funds do so intelligently, understanding what is needed in our times.

**Making a case: preparing for the funding request**

One of the most important functions of fundraising is how to make a case for funding that is suitable for all prospects and donors identified as potential givers (these are explained in the next section). A case is the compilation of information about the organization, its needs, and its opportunities, which will be presented to the prospective donor through a variety of means, ranging from face-to-face conversation to brochures.
A case tells the listener (prospect or donor) why he or she could or should support the cause. Preparing this document takes considerable time and thought because all the appropriate information must be gathered, agreement on the content must be achieved inside the organization, and the case must be customized for all possible donor markets—individuals or groups.

The preparation of a case statement serves various purposes:

1. Bringing internal agreement on what needs exist and how these can be met.
2. Verifying information so that accuracy and credibility are achieved.
3. Achieving support from the organization's leadership and constituents.
4. Seeing what gaps in information exist.

Case preparation consists of three steps:

1. Gathering all relevant information about the organization, the cause, and the need for which fundraising is to take place;
2. Compiling this information into one accurate, concise, clear document for internal use, which is the case statement; and
3. Developing case expressions for various purposes and types of donors, such as brochures, letters, and personal visits.

A case statement should consist of these parts:

1. Definition of the problem—a description of the problem that exists or what need should be met. Donors cannot and most often will not respond to a simple request that says, “We need money for . . .” They want to know what problem will be solved. However, donors don't give money for the problem; they give money to the next step.
2. The solution—a case statement should be explicit about what will improve, what will be better, what will be different, and what will change when money is given to solve the problem or meet the need.
3. Values—it is equally important to explain the value of working toward a solution for the problem. Fundraising is an exchange of values, and explaining the values answers the question of “Why is this important to solve, or why should this need be met?” In addition, mission statements express values, and this is a good testing point to see if an organization is adhering to its mission.
4. An explanation of what will be done to reach the expected outcomes, who will perform these tasks, when will they be accomplished, and any other detail necessary to understand the case being presented to the donor.
In compiling the information for the case statement, the following documents should be included:

- Mission statement, because this is the underlying philosophy and belief of why the organization exists.
- Goals and objectives of what is to be achieved along with brief descriptions of how these will be achieved.
- Qualifications of those who will carry out the project, program, or campaign to show that they are capable of carrying out the programs.
- A project budget.
- Success stories that verify the organization is capable of carrying out the goals and objectives—in other words, a track record.

Once the internal case statement has been prepared with the input of church leadership, both pastoral and constituent, case expressions can be developed that will address various audiences. One case expression cannot meet all audience needs. Sometimes a brochure or even a flyer is appropriate. For other instances, the case expression is actually the person interfacing with the donor on a one-to-one basis. Materials that express a case can include the following:

- Proposals
- Brochures
- Letters, personalized or for mass mailings
- Phone conversations, or mass phoning
- The many uses of the Internet, e-mail, and texting
- Oral presentations to groups
- One-on-one conversations

The fundamental case statement, which an organization prepares, is the foundation for approaching prospects and donors for a specific purpose. The preparation of the case statement and case expressions will sometimes expose weaknesses in operations, planning, and project or program implementation. Without a strong case statement that is based on facts as well as carefully analyzed needs for funding and human resources, the fund-raiser, whether a pastor, a full-time professional, a volunteer, or a part-time employee, will have a difficult time talking to a prospect or donor about the cause and the need, and bringing the effort to a successful conclusion.
Finding donors: understanding who might or will give

Generosity is not culturally specific, nor is it confined to certain populations or religions. Many people like to and want to give, for a variety of reasons. On the other hand, the single most important reason why people don’t give is because they are not asked!

Before you look at the possible donors and prospects for your program, identify some of the key concepts for this step in fundraising.

First, overdependence on one donor, or even a few donors, is risky. The donor might quit giving, move away, change interests, or even die. The best idea is to diversify your donor pool as much as possible, keeping in mind that the church team can also ensure they have enough human and financial resources to steward the donors effectively.

Second, it’s vital to take into account all possible donor markets. In theory, any person or organization could or might give to your organization, but you need to determine qualities about the donors that might make them receptive to your funding requests.

Third, acquiring donors requires a mix of human relations skills as well as technical expertise, because such relationships are based on good communication and relationship building. This activity also needs the technical support of record keeping, preparation of materials and reports, and activity tracking. In order to find a diverse donor pool, at first consider all possible donors. At this point, never say, “Oh, I don’t think they would give to us.” Consider the possibilities. In making a list, include those listed below. This list encompasses all possible donors to churches, schools, and various church organizations such as community services.

Individuals (who give more than 80 percent of all donations in developed countries, such as the U.S., Canada, and Bermuda).

Foundations—local, national, and international. Often a community foundation can be a good source of advice. Foundations usually have specific areas of interest or geographic limitations for giving. PSI can help you with foundation search if you do not have a local resource, or can help you do your own research for this type of funding.

Businesses—local, national, and international. Businesses often give because it’s good for business. Businesses are not required to give away their profits but many business leaders recognize that this is good for the community as well as good for attracting customers. Organizations can consider what influence their cause has in the community, what linkages can be developed between their members and the business interests, and how a business can benefit from being philanthropic.

Government agencies for particular projects. As with most donations, giving by a donor to an organization (whether church, school, or community outreach program) or to a specific project is a matter of a contract between the donor and the organization, whether the contract is simply a promise made that the money will go to a specific cause or aspect of a project, or whether it’s an extensive written contract.
This is certainly true for government funding. If the wording of the contract extracts promises that the organization cannot or does not want to agree to, then the money is declined. Government contracts are often far more interested in outcomes promised by the recipient of funds than in restrictions, although the latter may be expressed sometimes. Because government funds come from citizens, they can also benefit the general population.

Associations, groups of professionals in a certain field, such as insurance agencies or physicians, who may at times, wish to help projects.

In-kind gifts can be a great resource. If a building campaign is underway, supplies can be donated. Or, a piece of land might be offered or professional services, without charge. However, all in-kind gifts must be carefully assessed. You must work within the policies of your local conference when considering either a gift of land or purchase of a property.

Once a list of all possible donors has been compiled—and this should have input from board members, staff, other volunteers, and friends of the organization—it’s time to determine which prospects will most likely give. Is the prospect capable of making a donation and, if so, how much? Equally important to consider: is the prospect likely to give? While we appreciate all gifts, including the proverbial widow’s mite, we need the large gifts. Asking for the appropriate amount is also important in a funding request, and this evaluation will aid in preparing for such a request. Above all, please avoid overdependence on one source or donation. Ample examples exist of organizations that rely too much on too few donors. Besides, such practices do not build ongoing relationships and involvement with a broader base constituency.

A key element in identifying the best prospects is to determine motivations for giving. While cultural, regional, or religious differences do occur on occasion, most human motivations for giving are surprisingly universal. Some of these are to:

- Make a difference.
- Be involved in something larger than one’s self.
- Accomplish more than just one person can do.
- Have a sense of belonging.
- Give back to a cause or type of organization that once helped the donor.
- Fulfill a religious obligation.

Many more motivations have been identified through research. Once motivations have been identified, they are one more element on which to base a relationship and make a case for support.

Find out some information about prospects—what interests they have, who knows them well, what is an appropriate amount to ask, why they would want to be involved, and other information, making sure it is used only in preparing a funding request.
A good database is highly essential and is the beginning of the development and use of such technological support. Even if the congregation and the campaign are small in size, recording of information and donations as well as capability of reporting is necessary. Assistance in determining just what technology is accessible is readily available through PSI.

Selecting and structuring the right campaign or project for fundraising

It's important to determine the right campaign format and structure for a fundraising effort.

There are several campaigns that an organization might consider. The first of these is the annual fund campaign that a school might consider, including church sponsored schools. In a church setting, this is usually considered as systematic giving. Emphasis on consistent giving is beneficial because it develops a generosity habit, informs members about the church and/or organizational plans and challenges, and lays the foundation for other campaigns.

Systematic giving, the equivalent of the annual fund in organizations other than churches, is truly the foundation for giving because other campaigns most often build on this fundraising effort, such as a capital campaign. A planning committee should ask, How strong is the stewardship of this church (or school, or community service organization)? Personal visits to members and constituents is a most effective way, even today with all the myriad of communication means, to develop and ensure giving.

The capital campaign (please see subsequent section which presents more information and detail) usually has a large goal and this campaign is most often used for buildings and renovation, although the model for this campaign can also be used for endowment campaigns. The usual elements necessary for a capital campaign are:

- Clear mission and purpose statement
- Specific goals and objectives
- Commitment to the campaign
- Active congregational leadership
- Board dedication and participation
- An understanding that it takes human and financial resources to raise money
- Committed persons who will work the campaign and take responsibility
- A positive stewardship foundation—church member giving on a regular basis
- Prospect research, identification, and cultivation
- Acknowledgment and recognition
- Communications capability
In order to carry out any campaign, the following structure is necessary, with few exceptions that need to be carefully weighed and considered. Each point in the following list is vital for fundraising success.

- Knowing our possible donors' understanding and acceptance of our mission, goals, and objectives, and using communications to support fundraising

- A clear definition of what the needs are that you are trying to fulfill, and therefore the need for specific funds

- An outreach program for identifying, cultivating, and soliciting prospects and turning them into donors

- Enlisting and wisely using volunteers

- Putting in place the right case for support so that we can attract both new donors and renew the gifts of existing ones

- Efficiently keeping records

- Having appropriate Thank-you and recognition procedures in place

- Understanding that fundraising consists of the right person asking the right prospect for the right cause, in the right way, at the right time, and for the right amount (A principle of The Fund Raising School, The Center on Philanthropy, Indiana University)

- Remembering that people give to people with causes

**Filling your toolbox—strategies and tools for fundraising**

There are many ways to ask—by letter, via the Internet, by phone, by mass mailing, via a proposal, in person, and at events. Which strategy or tool you choose depends on many factors—for example:

- What expertise you have

- How many people you have on your team

- The characteristics of your donors and their preferences for being asked

- How much you can outsource to consultants and others who can serve as temporary help

- What is appropriate for the size of gift you are requesting

Before you determine which strategies are most appropriate for your fundraising program, first consider the tools available, and then decide which ones work best for you. PSI can provide much information on any one of these strategies; this is just an introduction to each tool you might use.
Events

Events are suitable for a variety of reasons. If you want to acquaint others about your organization and what it does, if you want to reach large numbers of people, if you want to have the opportunity to bring together donors as well as members or recipients of your organization’s assistance, if you want to celebrate someone’s achievements or a special day, and if you want to just have an enjoyable time, an event may be appropriate as a fundraising tool. It’s important to remember, however, that events take much time and expend human and financial resources. Often they aren’t the best money-makers because of these expenditures. Therefore, it’s best to have several purposes or goals in mind when planning an event.

Many types of events are possible, ranging from dinners to walks. The important thing to remember is what is most appropriate for your organization and the intended audience. Some events can be carried out with minimal work and expense, while others take months of preparation.

Mail

The use of mail ranges from mass mailing to several hundred or thousand people, to letters sent to segmented groups on your mailing list, to individual or small group letters that are highly personalized. This is still one of the best ways to reach large numbers of prospects who may become donors, and an excellent tool for requesting repeat or upgraded gifts.

The more personalized the letters, the better the return. Through computer capability, programs can be designed that will personalize the letters (e.g., the most appropriate greeting and use of name for each prospect, such as Mr. and Mrs., versus first name use). Caution should be taken that the letters aren’t too long, have content that applies both to the heart and the mind, are specific about what is needed and requested, and capture the interest of the reader because it is well written and is readable.

Phone

A common use of mass phoning is the “phonathon.” This involves several phones in one room, trained callers, a script, materials for recording the prospect’s information and for record keeping, follow-up. The phonathon is an excellent way to make mass requests more personal, and allows for conversation and discussion, including answering questions and addressing concerns. It isn’t a technique that can be used frequently or with very large groups because of the manpower and costs involved, but certainly ranks with one of the strategies that should be reserved for ongoing donors, requests to upgrade gifts, and donors who prefer to not be contacted personally.

The phone, of course, can be used to make personal appointments and also for follow-up after a personal visit, as well as a means of keeping in touch with donors.

Variations on the use of the phone continue to increase as technology advances. Some organizations are now sending text messages that are funding appeals. The wise fund-raiser will match advances in technological use to preferences and practices of donors and prospects.
The Internet and social media

A good Web site is highly important. Through this means, donors can learn of the organization on their own time and in their own preferred way of researching an organization and cause. Web sites should also make it possible for donors to give easily.

Without a doubt, the many uses of the Internet should be part of a fundraising program's strategies, and continual changes make this tool an exceptional one, full of opportunities, as well as a challenging tool because of the knowledge and investment of time and money needed to use it wisely and effectively.

Social media strategies increase steadily and changes occur just as rapidly. Please contact PSI for the latest information on this part of use of technology. Books, articles, consulting advice, and other resources are readily available.

The face-to-face request

A personal visit by the right people matched with the prospect or donor is the most effective method of asking for a donation. Most people believe this is what fundraising really is and fear this method for a variety of reasons. However, if the askers are well prepared, committed to the cause, and have made donations themselves, often the fear is reduced or eliminated because then it becomes a conversation with the prospect or donor and is focused on mutual interests.

Preparation is key, and that includes knowledge of the prospect and donor, details about the cause, information on why the prospect might be interested and might give, what mutual benefits can be promised, and what outcomes can be expected if the donor gives.

Usually it's best to go in pairs—someone from the organization and someone who knows the prospect or donor or is in some way linked to that person. The one who knows the prospect best should be the one to make the appointment.

When on the call, remember to have an introductory section to your visit during which you establish rapport and subtly remind the prospect why you're there. You might make reference to previous events or visits, or bring greetings from some personality important to the prospect and the cause, or a reference to common interests. This part is the shortest part of the visit, although, of course, it depends on how well you know the prospect and the personality of the prospect.

Next, you move into a discussion of the project, giving details, answering and asking questions in such a way that you ensure this will be a conversation and not just a monologue, and, in general, sharing the aspects of the project.

Then you summarize, focusing on the features of the project and the mutual benefits, and again ask if there are questions—and then wait an appropriate amount of time to make sure the prospect has a chance to think and focus on what you're saying.

Finally, come to closure—here is where you help the donor focus on the outcome or result of his or her donation. Reiterate what a defined amount of money will accomplish, suggest to the prospect...
that he or she could make a major difference when giving within that range, and help the donor see emotional as well as rational satisfaction.

Although the length and type of visit are sometimes dictated by culture, be careful to make this a conversation and not a one-sided visit, don’t stay too long, focus, and try to adapt to the personality and communication preferences of the prospect.

Persons conducting face-to-face solicitation often fear rejection and therefore are reluctant to make such visits and requests. However, preparation is the key, as is the principle of the right person asking the right prospect. This extends to mutual respect, perhaps similar professional level, social ties, and other common characteristics. Also, a person making a face-to-face solicitation must ascertain if the donor is ready to consider a gift, or even if the campaign is sufficiently in progress to ensure trust in its success. Finally, consider whether a “no” is really a rejection. Perhaps the donor needs more information or time to think about this. Perhaps there is something else going on that has distracted the donor. And, every donor has the right to decline making a gift, if their interests and relationships to the organization are not considered.

The selection and use of your fundraising tools is the most practical part of fundraising, but it very much depends on what you have already done in terms of developing a case and finding possible donors. This is the step where you match your potential donors with the right way in which to make a case.

Planning for Fundraising

There is a saying in folklore, “If you don’t know where you’re going, how will you know if you’ve arrived?” This certainly is true in fundraising. While sometimes we manage to raise funds without much planning, eventually we will find that if we don’t have a clear plan, several results occur. For example:

- Our donors won’t trust us anymore if they don’t see that we clearly know what we’re doing and where we’re headed.

- There will be confusion and lack of confidence in the organization.

- We could be asking the wrong donors for the wrong cause.

- We might suddenly find ourselves against deadlines we hadn’t anticipated.

- In short, we aren’t very credible if we don’t plan.

There are many ways to plan, and also various formats that can be appropriate and comfortable to use. Sample plans can be found on the CD that accompanies this handbook. This is also one part of the campaign with which PSI can readily help you in many ways. Please contact us at any step of the way in planning.

Some people don’t like to plan because such a document holds them accountable. Others simply aren’t organized enough or dislike actually putting something on paper (or on the computer) and
would rather “just do it.” Still others don’t know how to plan. This chapter will help you to at least take the first step in formulating a good plan you can live with, and live by, and which promises results.

Those who should be involved in the planning include the organization’s board, the campaign committee members, the pastor or pastoral staff, lay members and others who carry out the plan, and advisors or consultants whose help might be needed in the planning. This, of course, represents a large and probably unwieldy group, so the suggestion is that representatives of these groups be included, with plan input and approval accorded to the rest. This group formulates the plan and periodically shares it with a wider group for suggestions and approval. Finally, the board reviews and approves the plan.

Regardless of what format you use for a plan, it should have these components:

- **Mission statement.** A review and clear understanding of your organization’s mission is essential because all other planning components must relate to this.

- **Internal and external assessment of positive and negative factors.** Determining what inhibits or promotes fundraising is vital so that unrealistic expectations aren’t set.

- **Goals and objectives for each program.** This could include programs for which specific amounts are raised, fundraising descriptions such as direct mail, or goals that relate in some way to fundraising, such as board training.

- **Possible donors.** Who might give, how likely are they to give, and how should they be asked?

- **Timeline and assignments.** Who is responsible for what, and when must that be done?

- **Budget and gift-range chart.** The fundraising budget should clearly describe efficiency and effectiveness factors. The gift range chart describes how you will raise the money and is congruent with the “possible donors” step.

- **Monitoring and evaluation.** How will you check on yourself and your department, and to whom will you report?

The benefits of planning are obvious, and these most stand out:

- Improve performance
- Stimulate forward thinking
- Clarify future direction
- Survive—even flourish—with less
- Build teamwork and expertise
- Influence rather than be influenced
Finally, consider how you will stick to the plan, motivate and urge others to do so. Revise the plan as needed, and work with it as part of your daily operations.

**Basic steps for church fundraising:**

**A planning and implementation tool**

A successful fundraising program in any organization is based on principles that have been proven over time through best practices and verified by research. In summary, these principles state that fundraising is a team effort; investment of resources and time is needed; the need of appropriate personnel; the need of a fundraising plan that reflects the organization; and strategies for fundraising that are appropriate for the organization.

The form that follows should be considered a starting point and is best used in conjunction with the services of PSI personnel who will assist as needed along the way toward developing a successful, mature program.
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<tr>
<th>Area or Function</th>
<th>Current Status</th>
<th>Future Projections</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communications</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. The church and/or its organizations has a clear mission.</td>
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<td>2. Members or constituents believe they receive adequate information regularly.</td>
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<td>3. The capability to prepare communications materials exists or can be outsourced.</td>
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<td>4. The pastor is predominant in representing the organization appropriately.</td>
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<td>5. Lay personnel take a key role in ensuring good church member as well as all constituent relations.</td>
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<td><strong>Case for Support</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Fund-raising goals are clear and substantiated with facts.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. There is agreement on fund-raising purposes and goals.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. There is broad-based involvement in providing information for making a case for the campaign</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Materials that explain and express the case are prepared.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Organizational Leadership**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Top leadership (pastoral and lay) understands fund-raising processes.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. The pastor is supportive and involved in fund-raising.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The board is the backbone of the process and involved appropriately.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional Persons Involved**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. There is adequate personnel support to carry out the goals of the fund-raising plan.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. There are personnel needed for record keeping, communications, and other campaign details.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. The board understands the fund-raising process and is committed to taking action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The board gives to organization (percent of board giving—goal: 100 percent).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The board participates in identifying, cultivating, and soliciting gifts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The board is willing to be trained.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campaign or Building Committee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The committee is representative of church or organizational membership and not dominated by a special-interest group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The committee is active and participates in fund-raising planning and implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The committee members ethically identify funding prospects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The members are involved in contacting donors appropriately.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Sufficient resources are allocated for fund-raising in the church or organizational budget.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The leadership team (including board) recognizes it takes money to raise money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. There is clear accounting of gifts according to promises made to constituents and donors.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Prospects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The fund-raising base is the church membership, who are practicing responsible stewardship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. New funding sources are being developed according to capability and plan. If feasible, funding sources are diversified; donors come from all possible sources and types of donors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Attention is given to getting acquainted with prospects and donors before they are asked.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising Strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. The range of tools available for fund-raising is considered and evaluated. Donors and donor groups are matched with appropriate asking strategies (e.g., face-to-face versus a written proposal or direct mail).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Appropriate selection of tools according to prospects, goals, and internal capability is made.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gift Receipting and Acknowledgement and Thanking Donors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Donations are handled immediately and a Thank-you is sent within 24-48 hours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Thank-yous are personalized when appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The team (pastor, lay leadership, other members) are involved in the acknowledgment and thanks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. A process of appropriate recognition strategies for various gift levels is in place and active.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The database is kept current and updated as information is received.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gift Reporting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Gift history is recorded and tracked.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Care is taken that all donations are used exactly as promised.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Appropriate reports are provided periodically to the leadership and board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Gift income is appropriately reported to constituents.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>