

A Fundraiser's Newsletter for April 2007

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Seeking gifts? Don't take "no" for an answer! If your initial "ask" is rejected, ask your prospective donor:

- Is the timing bad?
- Did I ask for too much?
- Is there a lack of interest in this project?
- Is the problem a lack of feeling or involvement?

Probing the reasons for a rejection lets you know where you stand in the mind of the donor. The answers give you ammunition to make a second "ask" that addresses the donor's concerns and has a greater chance for success.

[Source: "Fundraising's Four Magic Questions: Answer These and the Gift Is Yours," Jerold Panas, GuideStar.org.
<http://www.guidestar.org/DisplayArticle.do?articleId=1108>]

Tell corporate donors their giving is for their own good! Sales grow an average of \$6 for every dollar that retailers, banks, and manufacturers add to their charitable-giving budget.

Companies that sell directly to consumers receive the most economic benefit from giving. Giving enhances corporate image, which is followed by more

sales. Firms that advertise their giving can improve their bottom line as well as providing publicity for the charities they support.

For more information, see the report, "Is Doing Good Good for You? Yes, Charitable Contributions Enhance Revenue Growth," available free online at <http://ssrn.com>.

[Source: "Corporate Giving Spurs Sales Growth, Study Finds," Ian Welhelm, The Chronicle of Philanthropy, February 8, 2007. <http://www.philanthropy.com>.]

Avoid the "10 horrid reasons" for not getting gifts:

1. Not making the call to set up a visit. Don't put it off!
2. Inadequate preparation. Take the time to learn about your prospect, and practice your pitch.
3. Anxiety: Overcome your nerves by preparing and practicing.
4. Assuming too much. Even when you know the prospect or they know you, you still need to make a good pitch to win a gift.
5. Failing to probe. No matter how well the visit seems to be going, you still need to ferret out possible concerns or questions.
6. Poor listening. Don't spend all your time talking. When the prospect speaks, give them you undivided attention so you can answer their questions.
7. Overemphasizing "features" over "benefits." Talk about outcomes and results, not just money and infrastructure.
8. Premature selling. Don't skip the preliminary steps. Make your program irresistible. Probe for concerns. Ask questions and listen to answers. Then make the sale.
9. Failing to detail donor benefits. The gift should be a "win-win" for the donor, your group, and your constituents.
10. Forgetting to ask. Don't wait for the perfect moment to ask, because it might not come. No matter how well the presentation goes, close by asking for a gift. If you don't ask, you won't get the gift!

[Source: "If You Didn't Get the Gift, Here's Why," Jerold Panas, GuideStar.org. <http://www.guidestar.org/DisplayArticle.do?articleId=1096>]

Be prepared for media interviews. Practice. Conduct mock interviews and tape your replies. You can't control the questions a reporter asks. But you can control the answers you give.

Think about the information you want to convey and the impression you want to make. Weave key messages into your answers.

Avoid "spin" and "no comment": spinning your answers or refusing to reply makes the reporter think you're hiding something. It doesn't give them any material to write their story, even a positive one. If you're dealing with a crisis, provide the information you are authorized to release. If you don't know the answer to a question, tell the reporter you need time to find the information. Don't guess.

Use anecdotes and case studies to illuminate your message. If you use names of clients, get permission first. Compile key statistics and have them at hand during your interview.

[Source: "Are You Ready for Your Media Interview?," Paul Lima, Fundraiser Cyberzine, April 2006. <http://www.fundraiser.com>.]

Sooner or later, every nonprofit will do something to annoy or anger a donor. Don't let a misunderstanding or faux pas ruin a good relationship.

To soothe a disgruntled supporter:

- Admit the mistake. Apologize and tell the donor you'll make sure it doesn't happen again.
- Don't argue. Accept their version of events, even if it's not entirely accurate. Acknowledge their anger. Provide "safety values" that can lead to a productive conversation.
- Use incidents to instruct staff. Emphasize that donors must be treated with respect. Continued mistakes, even if not willful, connote disrespect.
- Let the donor know what you're doing to correct the problem.
- For serious errors, convene a "response team" to discuss the problem. Offer to meet with the donor to explain how the problem occurred. At a minimum, have your CEO or development director call or write an apology.
- Maintain databases of donor information. Make sure names and other data are accurate and up to date. Ensure that acknowledgment of gifts are generated within days, not weeks.
- Check mailings for errors before they go out.

[Source: "What you Should Know About Soothing a Disgruntled Donor," Kay Sprinkel Grace, Fundraiser Cyberzine, November 2006. <http://www.fundraiser.com>.]

Make sure your PowerPoint presentations have "punch." Slide shows can be a great aid for illustrating the key points of your presentation. But your message, not the PowerPoint show, should be the focus.

When making a PowerPoint presentation:

- Don't read slides to the audience. People can read for themselves.
- Keep slides succinct and to the point. Don't bombard the audience with information.
- Interact with the audience. Allow time for listeners to process the information you are presenting. Take and answer questions at least every 20 minutes or so.
- Be energetic and enthusiastic.
- Address room and technical problems before you start, such as temperature, lighting, and equipment.
- Make sure your slides are proofread.

Design slides to be visually interesting and easy on the eyes by using:

- type sizes large enough to be read from the back of the room
- white text in black boxes
- bullet points
- pullquotes
- serifed fonts like Times New Roman
- photographs rather than clip art to illustrate your points

Remember the "666" rule for PowerPoint design: no more than six words per bullet point, no more than six bullets per image, and no more than six word slides in a row.

Save charts and graphs for handouts. Limit the use of zooming and other special effects that can be jarring to the audience.

If you're addressing a small group, forget the PowerPoint. Talk to your audience directly.

As with any presentation, don't let style trump substance. Stay focused on your message. Keep your content as clear and compelling as possible.

[Source: "Show and Tell: How to engage your audiences with PowerPoint presentations with punch," Mary Ellen Collins, *Advancing Philanthropy*, November/December 2006. <http://www.afpnet.org>]

Resources. . .

How to Write Fundraising Materials That Raise More Money, by Tom Ahern. Emerson & Church Publishers. Also see Tom's newsletter book *Raising More Money With Newsletters Than You Ever Thought Possible*. Full of facts, tips, and examples. Just visit www.amazon.com.

Communications Toolkit: A Guide to Navigating Communications for the Nonprofit World. Tips, templates and strategies on the broad spectrum of communications, from developing a communications plan to the tools you need for raising awareness and fundraising. Available free from Cause Communications; to download PDF file go to http://www.causecommunications.org/cc/pop_form1.asp?id=toolkit.

The Mercifully Brief Real World Guide to Attracting the Attention Your Cause Deserves, by Joseph Barbato. Advice and tips on getting your message out to the media and to funders. <http://www.amazon.com/Mercifully-Brief-Attracting-Attention-Deserves/dp/1889102067>

The Public Relations Handbook for Nonprofits, by Art Feinglass. Includes step-by-step public relations plans, case histories, and advice on how to use public relations to attract volunteers and raise money. <http://www.amazon.com/Public-Relations-Handbook-Nonprofits-Comprehensive/dp/0787974544>

Publicity for Nonprofits: Generating Media Exposure that Leads to Awareness, Growth and Contributions, by Sandra L. Beckwith. Tips, tools, examples and background on publicity planning and implementation. Includes information on how to create an affordable publicity plan that integrates your nonprofit's goals, objectives, and key strategies. <http://www.amazon.com/Publicity-Nonprofits-Generating-Awareness-Contributions/dp/141952299X>

Absolute Beginner's Guide to Databases, by John Petersen. Includes an overview on database design, maintenance and use, as well as information on products like Visio and Microsoft Access. <http://www.amazon.com/Absolute-Beginners-Guide-Databases-Petersen/dp/078972569X>

Content Management Bible, by Bob Boiko. Detailed reference work on database content, document, and information management. <http://www.amazon.com/Content-Management-Bible-Bob-Boiko/dp/076454862X>

WARNING! See below for information about Joyaux presenting and consulting services, and Simone's personal observations.

A FEW TESTIMONIALS ABOUT SIMONE'S WORK

- "Ms. Joyaux is the best speaker I ever had the chance to hear. I'm truly inspired by her performance."
- "Very forthright, direct, practical, passionate and integrity: fabulous mix!"
- "This consultancy has been the best investment we've ever made. You have been a wonderful help to us in turning this organization around and giving it new life!"
- See www.simonejoyaux.com for information about training and consulting.

SELECTED QUOTATIONS FROM SIMONE'S 30+ YEARS OF COLLECTING

- "Once we realize that imperfect understanding is the human condition, there is no shame in being wrong, only in failing to correct our mistakes."
(George Soros)
- "We cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community... Our ambitions must be broad enough to include the aspirations and needs of others, for their sakes and for our own." (Cesar Chavez)

SELECTED TITLES FROM SIMONE'S PERSONAL READING LIST

Get to Work: A Manifesto for Women of the World, by Linda R. Hirshman

You Can't Be Neutral on a Moving Train: A Personal History of our Times,
by Howard Zinn

Robin Hood Was Right: A Guide to Giving Your Money for Social Change,
by Chuck Collins and Pam Rogers