



# Major Gift Campaigns or How to Raise \$50,000 in Six Weeks

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# Required for Success

- A “champion”—ideally the chair of the campaign
- Enough prospects to reach your goal
- Good systems for keeping track of donors, contacts, pledges made and received, etc.
- Ability to keep in touch with all the solicitors and keep them up to date on progress of campaign
- Everyone has to be willing and able to follow up and follow through
- Thank you notes sent promptly

# Above all....

Willingness to  
ask for  
money

Don't even think of  
doing this kind of  
campaign if you don't  
have a team of askers



# Five Tips For Successful Asking

## 1. Success is **ASKING**

*Fundraising is a  
volume business.*

You have to ask 2-3  
more people than  
the number of  
gifts you need.



# Five Tips for Successful Asking, cont.

## 2. Be OK with NO

People say no. Their “no” has nothing to do with you.

People say no because:

- They don't have the money
- They have too much else on their minds
- They have given already to someone else
- They don't believe strongly enough in your cause
- Etc

# Five Tips for Successful Asking, cont.

## 3. Believe in your cause

***What you believe in must be bigger than what you are afraid of.***

*Why are you doing this?*

*What people, animals, trees will be better off?*

*What beauty or knowledge will be created?*

*What profound social problem will be addressed?*

**Pick an image of your work and lead with that.**



# Five Tips for Successful Asking, cont.

## **4. Ask real prospects. Don't ask everyone.**

In general:

- Don't ask people who work for you
- Don't ask people who you know will give only so that they can ask you for their cause
- Don't ask people who owe you a favor
- Don't ask people you don't like
- Don't ask anyone you really don't want to



# Five Tips for Successful Asking, cont.

## **5. Put Yourself in the Donor's Shoes**

How do you feel when someone you know and like and respect asks you for an amount of money you can afford?

How do you feel when you find out you haven't been included in something that you would have been interested in?

# How to Raise \$50,000 in Six Weeks

## Step One:

Identify a goal and message for the campaign:

- A specific need, such as a van or playground, or a time-limited organizing campaign
- An event such as a demonstration or a conference (going to US Social Forum, Raising Change: A Social Justice Fundraising Conference)
- Annual major donor campaign, highlighting current work
- A near crisis, such as loss of a program unless money is raised (be careful with this)

# Create Materials



- Draft a letter for solicitors to send
- Have return envelopes and reply cards
- Put something on your website about the campaign
- Develop FAQs and a one page description of campaign for solicitors

**NOTE: NO NEED FOR FANCY MATERIALS**

# Create a letter to introduce campaign

## Elements of the letter

I write with an urgent request. As you know, we recently ....

We must raise \$50,000 in the next six weeks to insure success...

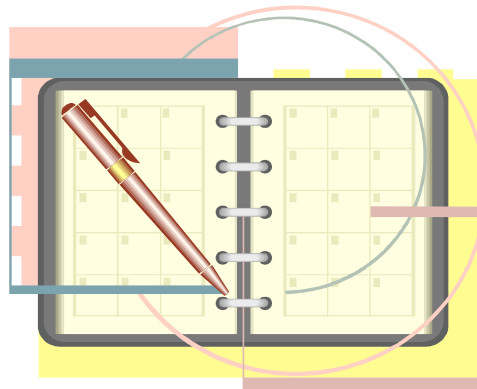
We hope you can make a gift of \$\_\_\_\_....

I'll call you within the next week to schedule a time to meet....



## Step Two:

Pick a 6 week period of time for the campaign itself, with 2-3 weeks preparation time on the front end and 1-2 weeks follow-up and mop-up on the back end.



## Step Three

**Create a simple gift range chart:**

<u># of gifts</u>	<u>size</u>	<u># of prospects*</u>
2	\$5000	8
4	\$2500	16
10	\$1000	30
20	\$500	40
40	\$250	80
<hr/> 76 gifts		174 prospects

*\*You will need 2 – 4 times the number of prospects as the number of gifts you'll get.*

# A Variation with fewer prospects

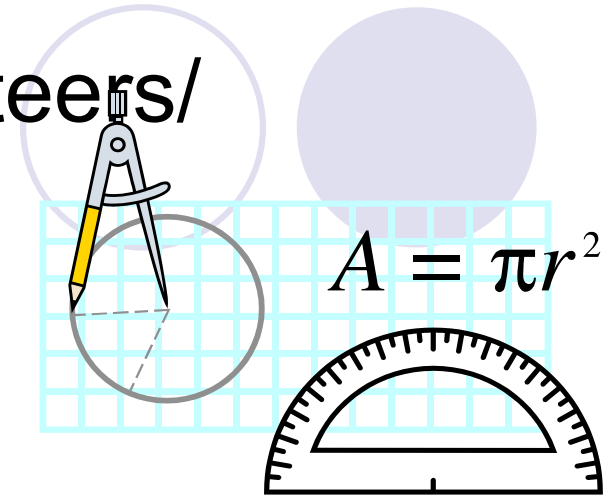
A very simple gift range chart:

Goal: \$50,000

# gifts		\$	Prospects
1	(20%)	10,000	4
2	(20%)	5,000	8
4	(20%)	2,500	8
20	(40%)	1,000	40
<hr/>			<hr/>
27 gifts			60 prospects

## Step Four:

Determine the number of volunteers/  
solicitors needed.



## FORMULA:

**# prospects / 6 weeks = # requests per week**  
**Each volunteer can take two-three**  
**prospects per week.**

**So # requests per week / 3 = # volunteers**  
**needed**

**For example:**

**174 prospects / 6 weeks = 29 prospects per**  
**week / 3 (prospects per volunteer)**  
**= 10 volunteers needed**

## Step Five: Identify Prospects

- Friends and colleagues of the campaign team: are they donors? Do they care about this cause? What size gift can they make?
- Current donors: who could give an extra gift, who could give more?
- *CAUTION: don't approach people just because they "have" money*



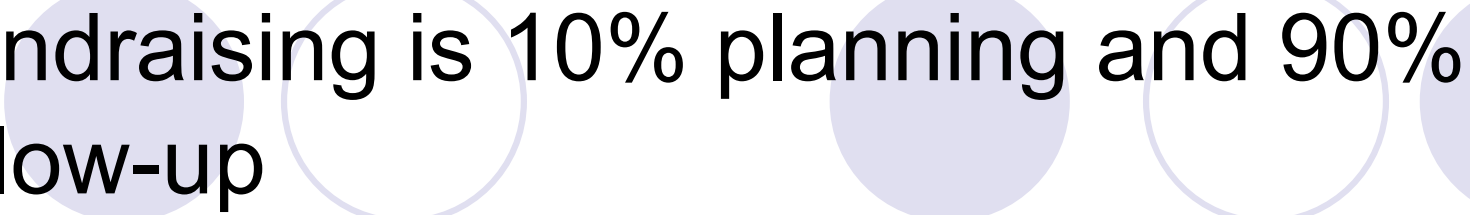
# Characteristics of Volunteers

- Care about cause
- Give \$ themselves
- Have 2 hours/week for 6 weeks
- Friendly and interested in others
- Able to keep on track and work in a team

Step Six:  
Launch Campaign

Hold a Meeting with Volunteers/Solicitors

- Describe the Campaign
- Go over message and materials
- Brainstorm more prospects as needed
- Conduct brief training in asking for money
- Send out first round of letters



Fundraising is 10% planning and 90% follow-up

Step Seven:

Each week volunteers send letters, make follow up calls or meet with prospects

Step Eight:

Keep in touch with volunteers by email and phone. Every time a gift comes in, send out an e-mail with the new total. E-mail a weekly report with each person's progress.

## Step Nine:

In 4th week, campaign team meets again in person. Go over the prospect list again. Ask team members to discuss where they are with each prospect.

*Rally volunteers for final push*



# Celebrate \$50,000 With a PARTY

End the campaign at the end of six weeks  
no matter where you are towards your  
goal.

If you fall short, figure out what you  
learned and what you should do  
differently next time

If you meet your goal, ditto above.

**ABOVE ALL AT THIS MEETING,  
HAVE FUN.**

