



view from the **EDGE**

FEBRUARY 2009



Jim Shapiro



Shannon Barnes

Friend-Raising vs. Fundraising

Using Events to Raise Awareness, Support, and New Donors

It is always a good idea to find ways to acknowledge, appreciate, and motivate top level donors. Often we are so caught up pursuing new ways to raise money that we miss opportunities to strengthen new and existing donor relationships.

One way to encourage existing donors AND meet new donor prospects is through “friend-raising” events. A friend-raising event is any event with the primary aim of acknowledging existing donors while casting the vision of your organization to new donor prospects. Friend raising events come in all different shapes and sizes – breakfasts, lunches, facility tours, golf tournaments, etc., can all fall into the “friend-raising” event category.

Recently, a partner client of ours hosted their first ever friend raising events. They chose to invite their key donors to a free lunch at a local restaurant. At the event, key donors and new prospects alike heard the organization’s leader share his 2009 Vision for the organization. The event was a huge success! First, ninety percent of invitees attended. Second, several donors brought first-time guests to hear the organization’s vision. And last, over \$4,500 was raised to underwrite an upcoming fundraising event! (You see, even though this organization didn’t make an “ask” at this friend raising event, a natural outcome is often motivated donors ready to do whatever they can to see the organization succeed.)

Intentional friend raising events can feed future fundraising events. As you plan your 2009 fundraising activities, I’d like to encourage you to consider how you will find new friends in your community who have the potential to support your work. Friend raising events could be a new donor acquisition strategy that works and is leveraged by existing donor relationships. JS



The EDGE Group helps organizations acquire and maximize the human and financial resources needed to increase their effectiveness and impact. We work with community and faith-based nonprofits, churches, and schools, increasing their mission impact by strengthening leaders and boards, defining a clear strategic course, and raising the funds needed to act.

As advisors and leadership partners, we work alongside organizations for the long-haul to insure organizational growth and success. The result: we’ve helped more than 50 organizations raise more than \$70,000,000 and significantly further their mission objectives!

See next page for more of this month’s View from the EDGE

Webinar

February 11, 1:30 p.m.

A Better Way To Build – Creating a system for funding and building capital projects.

Guest hosts include Phil Frisk (PWF Architecture) and Jeff Fransen (The EDGE Group)

Survive and Thrive Seminar

February 19, 8:30 a.m.

An interactive workshop on developing a visible fundraising plan, successfully retaining donors, and acquiring new donors in a down economy.

Good to Great Governance

February 25, 9:00 a.m.

A board-leadership workshop for CEOs/directors/pastors and their board chairs.

Webinar

February 25, 1:30 p.m.

Board Meetings That Matter – Tools and tips to help you make the most of time with your board.

Register for these events at www.theEDGEgroup.org/thrive.htm

Book Recommendation

Simply Strategic Stuff by Tim Stevens and Tony Morgan.

Particularly relevant for pastors, this book has 99 tips for effective organizational leadership. Great reference!

Contact Information

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100% Is a Breeze

The Mission Impact of No-Compromise Leadership

I know it's tempting. But don't blame the competition, your donors, or the economy for holding your organization back. As studies and experience show, often the real culprit is compromise at the leadership (executive and board) level.

In his book, *The Success Principles: How To Get From Where You Are to Where You Want to Be*, author Jack Canfield gives an example of "no-compromise" leadership commitment. Here's the premise: 99% is hard work, 100% is a breeze. If we brush our teeth every day, that is a 100% commitment to dental health. It's a done deal – we don't have to think about it. We get up and brush our teeth. But if we make a 99% commitment to dental health, every day we have to re-decide to care and re-determine what action to take.

Before Gregg Scott became CEO of the Weingart Center (Los Angeles, CA), the organization faced a major economic shortfall, a growing skid row population, and a lack of vision for the future. Under Gregg's leadership, and in less than three years, the organization had not only met its shortfall, but increased its donor revenue by over sixty percent! More importantly, the organization reframed its mission-objectives and significantly increased its ability to impact the lives of homeless people in one of the most difficult environments in the United States.

Gregg attributes these significant changes to renewed focus and a commitment to the organization's core objectives. By not allowing numerous small compromises in fundraising, programs, client outcomes, the organization became accountable for its actions, and immediately experienced the benefits.

Here's the lesson: leadership is a 100% activity. We can't decide 99% of the time to pay attention to the important needs of our mission and our organization. We need to lead ALL the time, and to resist any compromise in crucial areas and activities. Make a plan, and give it your 100% commitment – that's no-compromise leadership. SDB

What Does It Mean for Us?

The historic effect of the economy on philanthropy

Here are two interesting facts from the article "Resilient Philanthropy" (Advancing Philanthropy September/October 2008). (#1) There has been only one year in the past 27 in which philanthropy has dropped from one year to the next (1987), and it was only a modest drop. (#2) Even during the worst decline in the stock market (in 2002, when the Dow Jones Average decreased 17 percent and the S&P 500 Index dropped 23 percent), philanthropy increased by 1 percent. SDB



Empowerment, Not Charity

Changing the world doesn't require much money. Think in terms of empowerment and not charity. How much were Gandhi's teachers paid? How much did it cost to give Dr. Martin Luther King the books that catalyzed his mind and actions?

Tim Ferris, author of *The Four Hour Work Week*