

Fund Raising in Schools

Fund Raising in schools is an area whose success depends on the level of trust and relationships among the school administration, parents, donors, business community and other stakeholders. In fact (Glass, Jackson & Luke, 1998; Rooney Hall, 2002,) discussed the link between fund raising and relationship building. Involvement by all stakeholders is the key (Dove, 2001). Klein asserted that the purpose of fundraising is to build donors and relationships (as cited in Rooney Hall, 2002). The variables of the relationship are trust, mutuality of control, satisfaction, and commitment. People give because of the relationship they have with an organization (Rooney Hall, 2002). The credibility of the organization is another factor that compels donors to give or not to give (Bell a& Cholerton, 1994; Peterson, 1999).

Fund raising is a long-term process and function designed to achieve the long-term physical and financial growth of an institution (Glass, Jackson & Luke, 1998). The donors do it on goodwill and therefore have a sense of ownership to the funds. The fundraising manager must develop interpersonal and communication skills and brief donors about what is going on from time to time. “Institutions often measure their success by how much money is raised in relation to established incremental goals, forecasted needs of an institution, or perceptions about how much can be raised” (Glass, Jackson & Luke, 1998, p. 9).

Rationale for Giving

Bell and Cholerton, (1994) discussed the self-deception theory, which posits that compliance with the initial request leads the subject to viewing self as helpful and concerned. The other rationale for giving is determined by the “type of stewardship that linked donors’ past support not just to the immediate results it produced for them, but also to the long-term

success of the mission, students and programs the donors cared about” (p. 48). Research seems to suggest that all moneys collected for fundraising are left in the custody of the appointed manager or agent for the long-term mission of the organization (Bell and Cholerton, 1994; Glass, Jackson & Luke, 1998). The manager is responsible for the stewardship of the money, keeps financial statements, and informs stakeholders all times (Peterson, 1999). In cases where plans have been shelved or there are no immediate results, it makes sense to keep money for long-term success of the organizational mission (Bell and Cholerton, 1994). However, Rosenbaum (1988) underscores the need for fundraising campaigns to have clearly articulated goals, and that organizations must have achievable objectives.

Put differently, the nature of the relationship between organizations and donor’s results in increased or decreased fund raising support. Parents and partners should be made to feel that they are significant. Great efforts should be made to build convivial occasions, created through the choice of the venue, parking, flowers, music and guest list (Dove, 2001). A gesture like offering a drink can make people feel indebted to give or to do this out of reciprocity (Bell a& Cholerton, 1994). When programs succeed, cultivate donor support by inviting donors to important occasions to show appreciation of their support.

Models of Fund Raising

There are basically four models of fund raising or soliciting for funds according to Kelly (as cited Rooney Hall, 2002). There is the publicity model that focuses on the emotional appeal to potential donors. Second is the public information model, which relies on the mass media to by providing information, needed to motivate and convince people to accept the idea and subsequently give for the cause? The third is

the two-way communication, where besides sending information, the fundraiser gives an audience to key publics. This way the fundraiser gets the concerns and interests of the public. The fourth model relies on research to find out all about the concerns, interests and the motivation of their potential donors. The hallmarks of this third model according to Rooney Hall (2002) are research, objectives, programming, evaluation and stewardship. This will guard against accepting funds that shift the organization from its priorities and mission. Things such as timing and a prudent judgment of the prevailing economic climate may be considerations that fundraisers take into account. The threats or opportunities can either weaken or boost the fund raising efforts.

Bell and Cholerton, (1994) offered two approaches that both get compliance through sequential requests in fund raising. The first approach is foot-in-the-door (FITD), which attempts to increase compliance with a critical request by first obtaining compliance with a smaller request. The hypothesis is that if the initial request is accepted, compliance with the second request will increase as the magnitude of the initial request increases. (Beaman & Stenlay, 1998; Fern, Monroe & Avila, 1986; Preston & Klentz, 1988). Embedded in this strategy is the notion of pre-giving, which can produce substantial gains and creates a feeling of indebtedness. The second is the door-in-the-face (DITF), which uses a two-request system. The first request asks for a substantial amount. Once it is rejected, the target request is advanced. The DITF operates on the premise that the second request pressurizes people to make a compromise to give. The DITF implies that people give because there is a link with the self-supportive attribution such as being labeled as generous or helpful.

Brownstein and Katzev (1985) added two other types of strategies. These are low-ball condition and the control condition. The low-ball condition first asks for a stipulated amount. While receiving the funds, the fundraiser agent asks for a smaller donation for an unrelated program. For instance fund raising campaign could be focused on donations for extending the school library. As the donors send in their

monies, additional monies could be asked for raising airfares for a students' trip to Paris or the New York Stock Exchange. Cann, Sherman and Elkes (1975) advised that the amount and timing of the second request must be considered. Their study revealed that second smaller requests tended to yield results compared to second big requests. There is a low probability of gaining compliance when the second requests are big in amount. In the control condition, a flat figure is simply requested. Their study revealed the low ball to be most effective while the DITF was the most ineffective. For DITF to be effective, the critical request could be enhanced “.

Concessionary critical request is more available than the information associated with own behavior in rejecting the initial request. However, FITD approaches are also weak because they are subject to chance and subject to numerous other factors (Beaman et al., 1988).

Bell and Cholerton, (1994) and Barry and Shapiro (1992) stated that there are soft tactics where compliance to give is sought through friendliness and flattery. There are also hard and soft tactics used to gain compliance giving behaviors. Hard tactics are characterized by direct and assertive request while soft tactics seek compliance in a polite, friendly and humble manner. The study by Barry and Shapiro (1992) revealed that soft tactics that use flattery and friendliness high ten compliance in the absence of an offered exchange. Indebtedness to give is increased when the beneficiary has a positive evaluation of the benefit received according to several research cited by Bell and Cholerton (1994).

Joule, Gouilloux & Weber (1989), offered yet another compliance tactic called the lure. This involves potential donors to make a public decision to execute a highly advantageous type of behavior, and then inform them afterwards that the circumstances have changed. The potential donors are then asked to do a less advantageous behavior. The results in Joule et al suggested that this is an effective way because even when asked to do lesser thing donors sustain a “public image whenever the same person is requesting the lure behavior and the target behavior” (p. 747). Harris claimed that a norm for social responsibility might account for

increased compliance after an initial request (as cited in Beamnan et al., 1988).

Conclusions that can be drawn from this research brief is that the issue of fundraising in schools is aimed at sustaining the long-term mission and financial well being of schools. All monies raised are entirely for the achievement of the mission. In cases where plans have been shelved, and donors do not see immediate results, the monies received are still left in the custody of the school or the fundraising agent or whatever the case maybe. School administrators should work at establishing sound relationships with parents, and other stakeholders. Great effort should be made to educate parents about the rationale behind fundraising. Clear articulation of goals and objectives of fund raising should cushion administrators from potential critiques. Above all the whole fund raising campaign must be transparent and there must be regular feedback as parents feel a sense of ownership to the funds. Building credibility is of utmost importance

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