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## Making the Ask

**Jenifer Gursky**

Program Officer, Local Community Foundations

[jeniferg@mtcf.org](mailto:jeniferg@mtcf.org)

1-406-443-8313




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## Who's in the room?

- 1/3 are Board Members
- 1/3 are Executive Directors
- 1/3 are Program Staff, Development Staff or Volunteers

- 1/2 have an annual budget smaller than \$100,000
- 1/2 have an annual budget between \$100k and \$500k

- Fundraising plan? 50%
- Board Member Giving? 40%
- Individual Giving Program? 60%
- Individual donors and Private foundations are primary sources of funding for those who answered the survey.

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**When I say the word “Money”  
what one word comes to mind?**

<b>Private</b>	<b>Important</b>
<b>Growth</b>	<b>Necessary</b>
<b>More...</b>	<b>Resources</b>
<b>Opportunity (2)</b>	<b>Wealth</b>
<b>Ability</b>	<b>YES!</b>
<b>Personal</b>	<b>EEK</b>
<b>Save</b>	<b>Limited</b>

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**Individual giving made  
up \_\_\_\_ of all charitable  
giving in the U.S. in  
2016.**

<https://www.nptrust.org/philanthropic-resources/charitable-giving-statistics/>

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**What were the top three  
sectors for charitable giving  
in the U.S. in 2016?**

<https://www.nptrust.org/philanthropic-resources/charitable-giving-statistics/>

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What percentage of American households give to charity?



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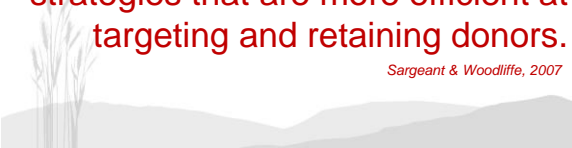
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Understanding a variety of motivations for giving is important because understanding people's motivations leads to fundraising strategies that are more efficient at targeting and retaining donors.



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### Fundraising and You

How do you feel when you make a gift?



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# Why do people give?



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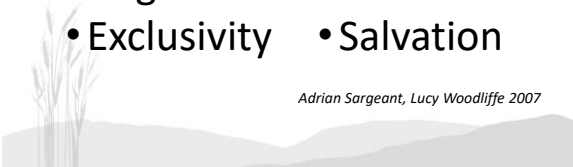
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## Why do people give?

- Fear
- Hope
- Anger
- Exclusivity
- Altruism
- Guilt
- Praise
- Salvation

*Adrian Sargeant, Lucy Woodliffe 2007*



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## What are your fears about fundraising?

- Spending too much energy and money on an event and failure
- Asking the wrong person for the wrong donation
- Fear of being turned down!
- The Ask. How do I connect with potential donors and express a need without desperation?
- That we haven't encapsulated our story enough to start asking.
- Asking the same donor in a small community to decide "which" nonprofit.
- Falling flat



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### What are your fears about fundraising? (cont.)

- Not having enough time to follow through on asks
- Not asking for enough
- Embarrassing a potential donor
- Unrealistic expectations from the board
- Not being able to adequately communicate the importance of our program to the community
- Asking too high
- Competition with other programs in the community
- Lack of interest in our program

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## Fundraising Overview




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## Fundraising Overview

- Identify** Who? How do you know who?
- Invite** Now what? How do they get to know your organization? Do they have an affinity?
- Cultivate Educate** Again – how do they get to know your organization?
- Ask** So...you HAVE to do this in order to fundraise...
- Thank Steward** How do we treat donors after they give?

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## Ladder of Effectiveness

- Personal Solicitation—50%  
*(Teams of two are ideal!)*
- Personal Phone Call—25%
- Personal Letter or Email—10-15%
- Effectiveness of social media varies, increased 8% last year

*Use personal approach for \$\_\_\_\_\_+ donors*




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## Language...



Give,  
or we are  
all going to  
die!!!

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## Language...

- Kind
- Caring
- Compassionate
- Helpful
- Friendly
- Fair
- Hard-working
- Generous
- Honest
- Responsible
- Loyal

Example: Men and women respond differently to certain words in fundraising asks. Studies shows that when appeals use adjectives like **“kind and compassionate,”** women increased their giving on average by 10 percent. On the other hand, male donors are prompted to give more when solicitations use adjectives like **“strong,” “responsible,”** and **“loyal.”**

*Jen Shang, 2012*

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## Be Okay with No (50% will say no)

It's not about you when people say no!  
They say no because:

- They have other giving priorities
- This isn't a project they care about
- They don't have the money
- Etc




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## Steps in a Successful Solicitation




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## Start with Your Own Gift



- Begin every ask with "Join me"
- The first gift to any campaign begins with you which means your first ask will be a success!
- Give at a level that is personally significant




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“It’s easier to get the gift than the visit.” - Jerold Panas



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### Make Arrangements to Meet

- Send a letter or email first
- Avoid getting trapped on the phone
- Be honest
- Overcome objections
- Get the meeting



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## #1 – Do Your Homework

- Get the right team in place
- Agree on roles
- Know what you are asking for. Have a number in mind when you ask.
- Practice your script and asking out loud

**Know the person you are talking to – and know how they want to be asked! What emotion drives them? What language are you going to use? What project are you going to highlight?**



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## #2 – Practice

You’ve done your homework.  
Now work out the jitters!



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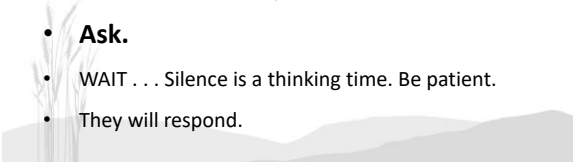
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## #3 – The Ask

- You’re not asking out of the blue. You’ve built relationship. You’ve invited, you’ve educated. They’re ready!
- Ask for advice – pose questions – the conversation is about the donor, not you.
- **Ask.**
- WAIT . . . Silence is a thinking time. Be patient.
- They will respond.



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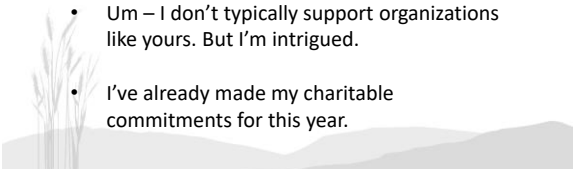
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## #4 – The Response

- “Yes – I think I can do that.”
- “Um – I’m not sure. I have to check with my spouse.”
- Um – I don’t typically support organizations like yours. But I’m intrigued.
- I’ve already made my charitable commitments for this year.



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Savage Chickens by Doug Savage

# Let's Practice!



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# Let's Practice!

The **asker** is a current board member.

The **prospect** is a former board member who has been giving \$500 a year since finishing a three-year term in 2015. You were on the board for one year with the prospect. She has not given this year yet.

**Ask** for a gift of \$1,000 for the new project you are launching this year. (\$500 to sustain her giving and \$500 to increase.)

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## #5 – The Donor Centered Thank you

- Immediately thank the donor. IMMEDIATELY.
- What did their gift do? Make specific reference to intended use of funds.
- How did you feel when you received the gift?
- The letter is PERSONALLY signed and PUNCTUAL.
- It communicates excitement, warmth.
- It ABSOLUTELY does not involve an ask. Of any kind.
- The opening sentence grabs the reader.
- Always thank potential donors for the meeting.

Penelope Burk, "Donor Centered Fundraising, 2005

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# Thank you

Jenifer Gursky  
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jeniferg@mtcf.org



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