



Bar Foundation Best Practices: Fundraising Tips for Bar Foundations in a Tough Economy

Be proactive. During a troubling economy, many organizations, including bar foundations, decide to wait on fundraising. For some foundations, this may make sense but for others, this economy may just be the time to be proactive about fundraising. In fact, studies show that, in hard times, organizations that continue to fundraise will be successful, while those that stop or slow down will lose income well into the future.

Why fundraise now? This may be the perfect time to enhance the way the foundation fundraises. The foundation has the opportunity to build stronger relationships with major donors through face-to-face meetings, develop a fundraising campaign with a targeted group of donors, or collaborate and fundraise with other organizations on similar projects.

“Be sensitive to your donors, but realize that the economy has affected people in different ways. Many are still willing to give in hard times. Sometimes they will give more.” *Association of Fundraising Professionals*

Tips from Bar Foundation Executives:

- Create a more personal appeal letter such as handwritten envelopes and signatures, including a personal card to the donor, or following up with a phone call
- Cut costs where you can with electronic appeals, hosting parties at homes, or honoring speakers with awards rather than money
- Brainstorm with Board members about creative ways to fundraise such as holding an online auction, retaining donors with awards and naming opportunities, and developing ways to communicate case for support/facts about the foundation

Other Tips

- Ask major donors for advice about possible fundraising strategies
- Take incremental steps; give planning the same amount of thought as acting
- Be realistic about the economy but be optimistic—ensure that Board members and staff lead by example
- Increase marketing efforts, especially through “freebies” (foundation and association websites, banner ads)

References:

ALPS Foundation Services, www.foundationservices.com

American Bar Association, www.abanet.org/barserv/resourcepages/economy.shtml

Association of Fundraising Professionals, www.afpnet.org/resource_center/fundraising_news

Foundation Center, http://foundationcenter.org/getstarted/topical/econ_crisis.html

Nonprofit Good Practice Guide, www.npgoodpractice.org/Resource/fundraisinginhardtimes.aspx



In partnership with  **ALPS**
Foundation Services