

Capital Campaigns

Large, capital campaigns call for gifts that are far larger than most church members would normally share. That so many similar appeals have succeeded, often exceeding their targets, indicates that people of faith will, however give generously to a worthwhile cause or project if asked in the right way at the right time by the right person after the right preparation. In general, we accept the principles that:

- a. People give more generously to people with causes than to causes alone;
- b. "askers" must first be givers;
- c. "askers" generally obtain no more than they themselves give; and, therefore,
- d. **critical to the capital campaign are the "askers" who will first commit themselves financially to the appeal and will then approach others in their peer group to seek their financial support.**

In developing the fundraising plan, we also accept that:

- a. People do not give equal amounts;
- b. People do follow, or are influenced by, a lead or example;
- c. "givers" will give to join success; therefore;
- d. **A successful appeal needs to establish early, high standards of giving and credibility.**

The fundraising structure that we need to develop thus becomes a team of volunteers, which develops from a core of "movers". Members of the team will themselves give to the appeal and will then, after appropriate training and preparation, seek the similar support of up to five others.

We need "Gift seekers" whose task it will be to obtain, progressively, the gifts necessary to establish the standard and credibility of the appeal and then to seek the further gifts needed for success.

We *do not* initially attempt a complete member canvas. The appeal to the general membership is a component of the campaign that**

We *do* seek to deliberately and selectively approach a sufficient number of identified persons who we believe will respond generously according to individual circumstances.

The personal approach within a planned program and in a short and finite time span is the most effective way to major fundraising.

In broad terms, a **fundraising campaign** falls into four phases:

- Preparation – setting up the program after a feasibility study
- Advance gifts - pacesetting gifts to inspire
- Community gifts - widening the appeal
- Consolidation - on-going fundraising and pledge fulfillment.

Obviously, in a larger appeal, there may be sub-categories to address specific interest groups.

The critical phase is the first one. Before proceeding to the actual solicitation of gifts, we must have in place a key leader. In the preparatory phase, we set up a steering committee and select the Chair who will then participate in selecting a key leader who then, in turn, proceeds to enlistment of the full Fundraising Team. We also finalize the fundraising calendar and prepare support materials.

Selection of the best leadership is crucial to success.

The actual soliciting of gifts will progress from larger to smallest through major, key and community gifts teams. It should be noted that the success of a capital appeal comes from a small number of targeted approaches rather than a community wide canvas - though that will follow.

The "heavy" work is up front and for this reason we place great emphasis on preparation. We aim for a smoothly flowing program while retaining the ability to pause or take longer at any of the critical points.

Thus: we must complete the preparation before commencing the gift seeking phases. We need early, large gifts to provide motivation and credibility before going to the wider membership. The phases of the fundraising program are distinct but inter-woven.