



# TOP TIPS FOR FUNDRAISING

## TEN TIPS FOR ...

### EFFECTIVE FUNDRAISING

- 1. Give funders a helping hand**  
Their job is to distribute money, your job is to help them spend it wisely!
- 2. Make yourself fundable**  
Make sure you meet the minimum requirement for applying for a grant, e.g. have a bank account, etc.
- 3. Make friends with funders**  
Effective fundraising is about building relationships.
- 4. Learn the language**  
Keep your applications clear and simple but learn the jargon.
- 5. Remember the 5 Ps.....**  
Preparation, Partnership, Presentation, Paperwork and Passion.
- 6. Network, network, network**  
Whether we like it or not, who you know (as well as what you know) is important.
- 7. Funders give to people, not organisations**  
In the end your application will be judged on the perceived ability of the people delivering the project.
- 8. Get the basics right**  
For example, check you're eligible for funding by the organisation you're applying to.
- 9. How to avoid the dustbin**  
Read the funders' guidelines and answer their questions concisely.
- 10. Match the money with mission**  
Decide what you want to do and then find the money to do it, not the other way round.

## TEN TIPS FOR ...

### AVOIDING THE FUNDER'S WASTEPAPER BIN

**1. *Ring before you write***

Before you put pen to paper, ring the funder (if possible or unless they say not to) for a brief chat about the suitability of your application. Some, like the Nationwide Foundation, insist on it.

**2. *Are you eligible?***

Check you meet the funder's rules on eligibility. If they only support charities and you are not one, don't apply!

**3. *Is the timing right?***

If you are planning to change your status, e.g. to become a charity, the Community Fund advises you to apply to them after the change.

**4. *Don't do the council's work***

Check that the service you intend to provide is not covered by statutory provision. (non-governmental) Funder is unlikely to support this work.

**5. *Answer the question***

Fill in **all** the boxes on the application form, unless the form states an answer is optional. If a box does not apply to you say so. **And** send all the supporting documents the funder asks for (but not more).

**6. *Are you responsible***

Show you can be trusted with money through past experience, the financial control mechanisms in place, and by providing realistic costings.

**7. *What's the plan***

Your application needs to show evidence of planning. Does your project have realistic targets or benefits?

**8. *Timescales?***

Give funders enough time to consider your application before your planned project start date. Most won't fund retrospectively.

**9. *Do it yourself***

Involve people in designing the project and writing the application if you can. Funders may reject an application if they suspect a "support worker" has written it from another organisation.

**10. *Does it make sense?***

Get someone who knows nothing about your project to read your draft application before submitting the final version.

## TEN TIPS FOR ...

### WRITING FUNDER-FRIENDLY APPLICATIONS

**1. *It's good to talk***

If you're unsure about anything on the application form, call the funder. It could save you both a lot of time.

**2. *Read the writing***

If you're asked to write answers in black ink, don't use blue. Black is requested to make photocopying of applications easier.

**3. *Type your answers if you can***

This may mean physically cutting and pasting text. And use a font size of at least 11 point. If you have to hand write, make sure it is legible.

**4. *Help the reader***

Write clear and concise answers to questions. Explain acronyms (GAG - Grandparents Action Group) and abbreviations (CVS - Council for Voluntary Service) used and avoid jargon. Use bullet points, bold or underline to highlight helpfully.

**5. *Contain yourself***

Make your application as "self-contained" as possible. Don't add lots of additional sheets of information unless asked to do so. If you continue an answer on an extra sheet, mark the relevant question number by it.

**6. *Answer all parts of the question***

If a question asks a number of things, address each one under sub-headings (ideally the same as in the question).

**7. *Figure work counts!***

Make sure your figures add up (literally) and that they are consistent throughout the whole application. For example, if you change a figure that re-appears elsewhere ensure both are the same.

**8. *On the record***

Keep a record of how you arrived at the figures (budget, output targets, etc.) even if you're not asked to explain this in your application.

**9. *Don't worry about repeating yourself***

Some answers will overlap with others. If you can't answer a question, don't leave it blank, phone the funder for guidance.

#### **10. *Be on time***

Make sure you meet the funder's deadline - late applications don't get funded!

### **TEN TIPS FOR ...**

#### **HELPING ADVISERS TO HELP YOU FUNDRAISE**

##### **1. *Keep to time***

Find out in advance how long the meeting with the funding adviser will take. Try to be punctual and if you need to change the appointment, give as much warning as you can.

##### **2. *Set the context***

Have some background information about your organisation. A well-written Annual Report can be the right amount and type of information at this stage.

##### **3. *Know your project***

Write a clear and concise outline of your plans: need/s identified and how you plan to meet it/them; likely beneficiaries; roughly how much money you need to raise.

##### **4. *What's the finding history***

Compile a brief history of your organisation's fundraising over the last three years; the funder's approached, what for and the amounts given (and refused).

##### **5. *Be prepared***

If possible, send the background information, project brief and funding history (2, 3 and 4 above) to the adviser in advance. Be prepared to talk about them.

##### **6. *Be persuasive***

Be able to "make the case" to the funding adviser for your organisation/group being given a grant. You will need to do this in your application at a later stage.

##### **7. *Ready, steady ....***

Agree an "action plan" with the funding adviser before you leave the meeting and try to do anything you say you're going to do by agreed dates.

##### **8. *Face-to-face or arm's length?***

At least one face-to-face meeting is preferable. However, if that's not possible, the above can be done at arm's length by phone, post, e-mail, etc.

## **9. *Keep in touch***

After the funder's decision (whether positive or not) let your adviser know. She/he will be delighted to hear about your successes (a word of thanks also goes down well). If you've been turned down, they may have further advice about your next step.

## **10. *You've been warned***

You have every right to ignore a funding adviser's advice but, if you do and your application fails, don't expect them to be so helpful next time!

## **TEN TIPS FOR ...**

### **GETTING SUPPORT FROM BUSINESSES**

Most organisations approaching businesses for support are asking for money (sponsorship, donations, or gifts in kind), time (employees for volunteering or fundraising), expertise (secondments or free access to professional services). As with conventional fundraising, long-term success almost always depends on detailed research and careful relationship building.

#### **1. *What's the connection?***

It helps if there's a link between your work and a company's products and services.

#### **2. *First impression counts***

Research thoroughly, produce high quality corporate literature and re-work the materials as necessary for different companies. When you finally meet face-to-face with the company, dress to impress!

#### **3. *Don't beg, talk business***

Ask yourself "what's in it for the company?" Possible benefits include improving the company's image; motivating their employees; learn more about customers.

#### **4. *Involving employees***

Think how employees might build team spirit, develop skills and reduce stress in their workplace by volunteering with your organisation.

#### **5. *What have you got?***

Think what expertise you can offer in return for support. Might your service users be a focus group for giving feedback on their products?

#### **6. *Keep it clear***

Structure your "case for support" carefully. Don't get bogged down in detail in the early stages. Learn each company's language (look at their annual report, websites and other publicity materials) and tailor your proposal accordingly.

**7. Cost it properly**

As with all budgets, make sure your figures are as accurate as possible and always be honest. Be clear about how much you're asking for.

**8. Can you commit?**

Working for companies should be a long-term commitment. Have you the time for this? Remember the company is effectively buying from you.

**9. Talk to the right person**

As with other forms of fundraising, "who you know" is often as important as "what you know". Personal links between your staff, volunteers and trustees and businesses can open doors!

**10. Get advice**

Business in the Community ([www.bitc.org.uk](http://www.bitc.org.uk)) organises events, partnership programmes and offer guidance notes.

Websites like [www.professionals4free.org.uk](http://www.professionals4free.org.uk), [www.smartchange.org](http://www.smartchange.org) and [www.bconnections.org.uk](http://www.bconnections.org.uk) aim to match charities and companies.

The NCVO's Sustainable Funding Project website ([www.ncvo-sfp.org.uk](http://www.ncvo-sfp.org.uk)) has a guide on 'corporate support'. *The UK Guide to Company Giving* (book and CD-ROM) from the Directory of Social Change ([www.dsc.org.uk](http://www.dsc.org.uk) or telephone 020 7209 5151) is also worth a look.