

Coffee Chat: Fundraising Skill Share

June 19, 2019

Notes:

Events people are currently/recently working on:

- Food and beer pairings hosted at a brewery in December: citrus tasting to highlight the abundance of seasonal fruit; unique way to learn about the intersection of food, science, and community
 - successful b/c it's easy to set up, exposure to community
- Local food awards to honor people in the food community (ex. farmer, school board member, chef)
 - heavier lift
 - largest area of funds come from sponsors from local organizations
 - have struggled to get board members to help with this
 - Builds awareness of the local movement
- Iron chef competition w/ a silent auction
 - silent auction had great participation from donors but not so great for the actual funds -- learning: should have posted "minimum bids"
- Empty Bowls Event w/ local potters to make 1,500 bowls
- Open house
 - not as successful in getting board members there
- Highlighting the different offerings that communities have to engage and bring people into the communities that they may not go to
- Golden Crockpot - team competitions
- [Add your ideas here!](#)

Non-in-person events:

- Phone and video engagement w/ membership organization
 - calling members to ask to renew membership
 - engaging folks on zoom, building relationships w/ people
- Amazing Give
 - Community Foundation helps to organize events around the town to max out fundraising for nonprofits
 - Offer fun incentives - special prizes for whoever gets the most from the furthest location
 - Creative way for staff and boards to reach out to more partners outside of their immediate community
 - Actual giving is all in an online format

Common Challenges:



- Breaking even with events! Labor involved is a lot; sometimes writing a grant is less intensive than planning an event
- Staff fatigue, questionable ROI
 - Consider calculating the actual cost of all staff time into the ticket price
- Engaging the board to give at events, invite people in their network, and network during the actual event

Context of events:

- Need to think strategically about them: their purpose, return on investment and how they're structured is very important
- NPOs use social capital and lots of effort to organize - but often times don't get the revenue they want - cost of events and staff time is a lot
- Events can be a way to build relationships
- Important for board members to engage in sponsorship but also need to prime them to build relationships w/ people at events
- Opportunity to build your list of contacts

Board engagement:

- How to help a board feel comfortable to plan and execute different events?
 - Provide board members with a menu of options w/ tips and steps for hosting their own events (ex. asking restaurants to donate a percentage of funds)
 - Provide cheat sheets and prep materials for board members and staff:
 - Conversation starters, interesting stories for members to share w/ external audiences
 - who's going to be there and what they should be approached to talk about
 - List of key events for board members to go to to help spread the word about the org
- Board committees and job descriptions can help with identifying roles and responsibilities
 - board priority should be fundraising
 - Board's fiduciary responsibilities: If the board approves a budget, they're responsible for achieving that goal
 - Onboarding process should include those responsibilities and expectations -- these must be explicit from the beginning. Creates a stronger sense of responsibility and commitment to the org.
 - Can formalize this through:
 - job description
 - thanking donors -- call them and thank them, w/o asking for money
 - culture of philanthropy
 - develop a strategy - what are the skill sets that your board should have?
 - board members can solicit from each other the donations

Invite list

- City and council members



- community members
- board members

Relationship Asset Mapping Template

- [Link to the template](#)
- work through this w/ your board members to help members think about their relationships
- priming board members to think strategically about their role and their responsibilities - how to think strategically about your assets and relationships
 - corporate connections, business connections, family, etc.
- working through this with your board can also help the board feel more excited when they recognize overlap and help them get more comfortable w/ shared connections and discussing the mission of the org

