

Selecting Campaign Leadership

It is impossible to overstate the importance of strong leadership to the campaign's success. Selecting and enlisting capable, enthusiastic leaders arguably is the single most important aspect of the campaign.

A fundamental principle in successful fund raising is that active participation by many volunteers will create more and larger charitable gifts. The campaign's leadership recruits, trains, and motivates volunteers. It is essential to select dedicated committee chairpeople who will attract other, equally dedicated volunteers to serve the campaign.

The identification, evaluation, selection, and recruitment of all campaign committee chairpeople should be made very carefully. If suitable volunteers cannot be secured, the church is not ready to undertake this important fund raising program.

I. The Campaign Chairperson

This person serves as chief executive officer for the campaign and has the privilege of leading the fund raising effort to a successful conclusion. He or she must be respected, recognized for previous involvement and commitment to the church, and demonstrate excitement and support for the project.

Qualifications

The ideal campaign chairperson will have the managerial strengths of Lee Iacocca, the patience and compassion of Mahatma Gandhi, the drive and tenacity of Attila the Hun, and the wealth and philanthropic inclinations of Andrew Carnegie. He or she should be influential but not intimidating and have strong convictions while being open-minded to direction or advice. A great chairperson also will be very familiar with the church and dedicated to keeping the campaign on schedule and on budget.

Where to Look

Unless your church is very fortunate, the candidate that embodies all of the above characteristics probably doesn't exist. So how do you go about selecting and enlisting the right person?

Step 1: Ask yourself who in the congregation has been exceptionally generous in the past and frequently served in a leadership role. Former wardens or members of the vestry often are likely candidates. He or she should have the reputation for getting

important tasks accomplished. The old adage, “Busy people get the most things done,” can provide direction in identifying candidates. Several names should come to mind as you realize who gets asked to do the most and always finishes on time and within budget.

Step 2: Narrow the list of candidates by examining their qualifications to determine who has the strongest leadership skills and the ability to motivate volunteers as well as contributors.

Step 3: Next, test the revised list of candidates for each one’s likely willingness and ability to give the necessary time, effort, and gift to the campaign.

By following these steps a clear candidate or very short list of candidates should emerge. The best candidate should be selected, then very carefully recruited for this important job. This identification and recruitment process continues until a suitable chairperson is enlisted.

Enlistment

Enlisting the chairperson requires a plan and suitable strategies. The right team, usually others in the parish who are respected by the candidate, must solicit the person’s participation in the campaign. The team, which typically includes the rector, should inform the candidate of the job’s responsibilities, the time required, and the need to make a significant, sacrificial gift.

Enlistment is rarely accomplished with one visit. Unless the candidate is already familiar with the project and strongly committed to its success, a request of this nature requires time for thoughtful consideration. The recruiting team should be prepared to set a second appointment before the candidate reaches a decision.

If the first choice for campaign chairperson cannot or will not accept the position, the recruiting team should suggest other ways in which that person can participate. These include identifying and helping to recruit another candidate as general chairperson, chairing the leadership gifts committee, or soliciting some of the top prospects.

Responsibilities

The campaign chairperson, in his or her role as chief executive officer for the campaign, has several important responsibilities. These include, but are not limited to:

- presiding at campaign executive committee meetings
- helping identify, enlist, solicit, and motivate other outstanding leaders and volunteers
- cultivating and soliciting a limited number of prospective donors

- maintaining regular contact with campaign leaders to ensure they are fulfilling their accepted responsibilities
- along with the rector, select the speaker and plan the program for the campaign dinner
- acting as spokesman for the campaign at special events and other functions
- keeping daily contact with the campaign office to make day-to-day decisions
- motivating, recognizing, and thanking campaign volunteers and donors.

II. The Rector's Role

The rector's role, and that of other key staff, is essential to the success of the campaign. It is one of initiation, inspiration, and support of the project. Clergy, lay ministers, and staff can offer many opportunities to challenge and stimulate the parish to understand and respond to the church's program.

The rector, as the church's spiritual leader and chief executive officer, should participate actively in the campaign. His primary responsibility is communicating the project's goals and benefits to the congregation. Additionally, he should present and explain the scriptural basis for stewardship and sacrificial giving. This can be done with sermons, announcements, personal conversations with prospective major contributors, reports in the newsletter, support at committee meetings, and many other ways.

The rector also should be vitally involved in selecting the campaign chairperson, assisting in recruiting other leadership, and playing a supportive role in selected solicitation visits. Only under very special circumstances, e.g., when the rector is clearly the best choice, should he or she solicit prospects. Throughout the campaign the rector must be encouraging, optimistic, and provide the essential leadership and pastoral care required during this rewarding, demanding, and occasionally frustrating project.

III. Other Campaign Leadership

The campaign chairperson should use the same care and attention to detail applied to his or her selection when enlisting other leaders. "It's not what you can do, it's what you can get others to do," is as axiomatic in fund raising as in any other field.

The campaign executive committee is comprised of all the committee chairpeople, the treasurer, and the rector. This committee determines the campaign structure, sets policies, and assists in recruiting volunteers. Each member is expected to attend all meetings, to serve as a volunteer solicitor, and to make a sacrificial gift to the campaign.

Advance Gifts Committee Chairperson

This chairperson will formulate a small committee (two or three people) chosen from those best able to give and secure major gifts. The importance of this committee's work cannot be over-emphasized. It is responsible for generating about one-half of the campaign goal. The advance gifts solicitation phase must be completed thoughtfully, thoroughly, and on schedule.

It is essential that this chairperson be respected by his or her financial peers and, whenever possible, have demonstrated previous success in major gift solicitations. In addition, the chairperson should be recognized as a leader in the church and must be willing to give the time and energy necessary for success.

Other responsibilities:

- Solicit committee members and selected other prospects for the major gifts so necessary for success
- Accept responsibility for achieving 45 to 60 percent of the campaign goal
- Demonstrate his or her commitment to the campaign by making an advance-gifts-level gift.

Leadership Solicitation Committee Chairperson

Members of the vestry and campaign executive committee should be the first group solicited in the campaign. It is important for these leaders of the congregation and the fund raising effort to make their own gift before soliciting others. The Leadership Solicitation Committee chairperson will coordinate this effort and, if necessary, recruit other members to help. This person often is a member of the vestry and should be well known and respected in the parish.

Other responsibilities:

- Assign the appropriate solicitor for each prospect
- Personally solicit several prospects
- Attend all training and report meetings.

General Gifts Committee Chairperson

This committee, composed of three or four team captains and five or six volunteer solicitors per team, will visit most families in the parish. The chairperson will recruit, train, and solicit the team captains. The captains will in turn recruit, train, and solicit their team members. The personal visits to team captains and members should be completed within the first few days of the campaign and before any other general gift prospects are solicited.

The general gifts committee chairperson should be recognized as a leader in the parish and a financial peer to the general gift prospects. He or she will keep in close contact with captains and volunteers throughout the solicitation period. The chairperson should create a climate of enthusiasm that will lift the sights of team members and encourage them to bring the campaign to a timely and successful end.

Other responsibilities:

- Enlist three or four people as team captains
- Assign the appropriate solicitor or solicitors for each prospect
- Personally solicit all team captains
- Attend all training and report meetings
- Make his or her personal gift before soliciting team captains.

Campaign Treasurer

The treasurer is responsible for all financial aspects of the campaign, including receiving and disbursing funds during the intensive phase of the campaign and the three-year collection period that follows. During the collection period, the treasurer will review from time to time the pledge status of each donor.

Other responsibilities:

- Establish the campaign bank account and determine authorized signatures for campaign expense checks
- Review all pledge cards and provide for their safe-keeping
- Verify the accuracy of receipts, transmittals, deposits, and reports
- Audit all records at the end of the campaign and prepare a financial summary
- Oversee the management or transfer of gifts of property.

Campaign Dinner Committee Chairperson

The chairperson oversees the campaign dinner, which may carry out the campaign theme and must be held at an appropriate time prior to the general gifts solicitation. The chairperson will enlist others to assist all aspects of the plans and arrangements except for selecting the speaker and planning the formal program. The rector and general chairperson coordinates these.

The ideal candidate will be efficient and well-organized and have experience in planning special events or other social functions. Attention to detail and a strong sense of urgency and responsibility are primary qualifications.

Other responsibilities:

- Enlist a small committee to plan the function and implement its details
- Arrange for invitations to the event and for mailing them.
- Select the dinner menu and arrange for suitable table decorations
- Work with the restaurant or catering staff to assure the dinner will run smoothly
- Form a telephone committee to call each prospect to encourage attendance
- Use members of the executive committee and other leaders as hosts and hostesses for the dinner and to distribute campaign brochures
- Arrange for a head table and any necessary audio/visual equipment
- If a nursery is planned, provide the staff to care for the children
- Arrange necessary transportation for elderly or physically challenged attendees.

Publicity Committee Chairperson

The publicity committee works with the campaign chairperson and the rector to inform the congregation about the campaign's progress. The chairperson, who ideally has journalism, communications, or media experience, will need to involve several people to manage the duties of this committee.

Other responsibilities:

- Supervise preparation of the campaign brochure
- Plan items for inclusion in the church newsletter
- Prepare a bulletin insert to be used each week during the campaign
- Prominently display campaign results
- Serve as a clearing house for all public announcements
- Arrange for short speeches or announcements to all adult classes and groups
- Review printed material with the campaign chairperson prior to publication.

Memorials and Recognition Committee Chairperson

During the campaign many donors will designate their gifts to support specific projects or to honor or remember a loved one. This committee ensures that each and every gift is recognized in the way it was intended. The chairperson should select a small group of one or two members to help fulfill the committee's duties.

Other responsibilities:

- Acknowledge each designated gift with a personal note

- Maintain a Memorials and Remembrance books with appropriate entries
- Supervise the selection and installation of recognition plaques.

Spiritual Emphasis Committee Chairperson

This committee is responsible for developing the programs and materials that spiritually support the campaign. The chairperson should select a small committee to work closely with the rector to communicate the aims, goals, and purposes of the project.

Other responsibilities:

- Prepare a special prayer for use at worship services, team meetings, and for each family's daily devotions
- Organize a prayer vigil
- Provide lay speakers for brief testimonials at worship services.

Youth Committee Chairperson

The main goal of this committee is involving the young people of the congregation in the campaign. Although in most cases the gifts will be nominal, youth participation in both visitation and giving can be very meaningful to the parish. The chairperson should be recognized as a leader by his or her peers and be willing and able to dedicate sufficient time to the campaign. He or she will select a committee with four to six members to increase awareness of the campaign among the parish youth and to demonstrate their support.

Other responsibilities:

- Attend all campaign executive committee meetings
- Assist other campaign chairpeople as needed
- Organize a special event, such as a car wash, to raise funds
- Provide speakers at youth activities.

Donor Appraisal Committee Chairperson

This committee functions anonymously and confidentially and is charged with assigning recommended giving levels to each prospect prior to the solicitation phases of the campaign. The chairperson will select three to five people who know the church family well. Members of the committee also should be chosen from among bankers, attorneys, accountants, financial advisors, or other individuals who can realistically evaluate the giving potential of prospective donors.

Other responsibilities:

- Prepare suggested giving levels for all prospects
- Assure that suggested gifts are sufficient to reach the campaign goal.

Campaign Secretary

Often a paid position, this person reports to the campaign chairperson. He or she is responsible for the timely flow of all correspondence and the maintenance of campaign files and records. The campaign secretary may be recruited from existing church staff, but must be allowed to give top priority to campaign needs throughout the implementation phases.

Other responsibilities:

- Record minutes at all campaign executive committee meetings
- Send acknowledgments for each gift or pledge
- Prepare donor thank you letters for appropriate signatures
- Handle campaign receipts and expenses as directed
- Supervise all office activities.