

The Best of....

Building Relationships

Articles reprinted from Augment's Newsletter



Building Relationships began as a newsletter for Augment's clients. Later, I distributed issues to students in classes I taught and to colleagues in the fundraising profession. My original intent was to post past issues of *Building Relationships* on the augmentdirect.com website. In reviewing the content, I found that at least one article in each issue included information that was dated. Not wanting to share statistics that are two or three years old, I decided to select the Best of *Building Relationships* articles and share those. I hope you find these articles as interesting and helpful as past readers have found them.

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Five Things to do to Raise Money in the Lean Months

Many nonprofit agencies will tell you that every month, with the possible exception of December, is a lean month. When the economy, changes in government funding, or local conditions drive more clients than donors to the doors of nonprofits, this is the time for fundraising professionals to become truly creative. There are many methods a nonprofit can employ to raise additional funds.

Here are five proven fundraising strategies — and a bonus strategy — that you can use to raise money in the lean months.

Technique #1: Contact previous donors who did not respond to your last two direct mail appeals. Ask board members or other volunteers to phone those donors who gave significant gifts in the past. Mail a follow-up letter to donors of smaller gifts. Invite their comments on why they did not give recently. Offer a pledge or monthly giving program if they would like to give again, but can't comfortably give one large gift.



Technique #2: Launch a special needs campaign. Usually, your annual campaign raises money for general operating needs. Create a campaign for something special — a van to transport seniors, sports equipment for a youth program, a computer



for your volunteer office. The special need could easily be an item from your general operating budget, restated in an appealing way. Pick something that your donors can easily understand — an item or project that also is attractive. This technique will work best if the special need relates to the vision and mission of your agency.

Technique #3: Take a Risk. Ask for donations in a new way. If you've always used events or direct mail to raise most of your finds, try something new such as email, phoning, or going door-to-door. Be sure you have permission from your donors before contacting them by these methods.

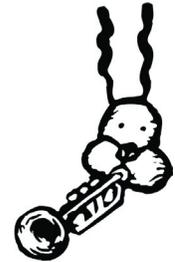
Technique #4: Involve previous donors and/or the public in what you do. Invite donors to lunch at your facility. Give tours of your programs. Explain current needs. Follow up with a phone call inviting those who toured or lunched to become involved and to donate.

Technique #5: Have an Event — This is an especially good idea if you did not have an event in the last three months. Do something different. Make it fun, colorful, and exciting. Even if it turns out not to raise a lot of money, it may "raise" new friends you can solicit later in the year.

BONUS! Technique #6: Invest in the Future.

Spend at least 10% of your time cultivating and bonding donors.

Establish a giving club if you don't already



have one. Give donors additional information about your programs and success. Send newsletters or letters that don't ask for money. Educate and inform donors. Spend an additional 10% of your time researching prospective major donors — then move them into the cultivation stream.

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