



WLN Academy

Raising Money from Individual Donors

www.westernlibertynetwork.org • 503-970-1876

Introduction. Raising funds from wealthy individuals requires a personal approach. Building relationships, understanding donor motivations, and clearly articulating your cause are crucial components of successful fundraising. This training guide provides an overview of the key steps involved in securing donations from individuals capable of supporting your project or cause.

Section 1: Research and Identify Potential Donors

A. Market Segmentation

- Identify target demographics aligned with your cause.
- Utilize wealth indicators, such as income, assets, and philanthropic history.

B. Prospect Research

- Conduct in-depth research on potential donors.
- Understand *their* interests, values, and past philanthropic engagements. Look for ways your project or cause aligns or supports their interests and values.

C. Networking

- Leverage existing connections to gain introductions to potential donors.
- Attend events and networking functions frequented by affluent individuals.

Section 2: Building Relationships

A. Cultivate Connections

- Focus on building genuine relationships *before* making financial requests.
- Understand the donor's personal and professional background. Look for things you might have in common. For example, you might have a similar hobby or relatable experiences that can help you build connections.

B. Engagement Opportunities

- Provide opportunities for donors to engage with your cause apart from your requests for financial support. Donors don't typically like to be thought of as ATM machines.
- Invite them to events, volunteer opportunities, or provide exclusive updates.

C. Regular Communication

- Establish a regular communication plan to keep donors informed. You don't want a reputation of only communicating with donors when you are after their money.
- Share success stories, impact updates, and upcoming initiatives.

Section 3: Crafting a Compelling Case for Support

A. Mission and Impact

- Clearly articulate your organization's mission and impact.
- Highlight the tangible outcomes of previous donations.
- Have clear and measurable goals for your project or cause. If you are raising money for a political campaign, the primary goal is usually to win an election. If the donor is skeptical of your chances, you can offer secondary goals such as building cadres of donors, volunteers, media contacts, and other assets of value that will survive your campaign whether you win or lose.

B. Tailored Proposals

- Develop personalized proposals based on donor interests.
- Showcase how their contribution will make a meaningful difference.

C. Transparency

- Be transparent about how funds will be utilized.
- Provide detailed breakdowns of budget allocations.

Section 4: Making the Ask

A. Timing and Context

- Choose an appropriate time and context for making the donation request.
- Align the ask with significant milestones or achievements.

B. Face-to-Face Meetings

- Whenever possible, conduct face-to-face meetings for a personal touch.
- Customize your approach based on the donor's communication preferences.
Above all, talk to each donor about their goals and interests, listen carefully and, if you can with sincerity, show how your their donation will support their goals and interests.

C. Handling Objections

- Anticipate potential objections and prepare responses.
- Address concerns with facts and figures, emphasizing impact.

Section 5: Acknowledgment and Stewardship

A. Gratitude

- Express sincere gratitude for the donation, regardless of the amount.
- Send personalized thank-you notes and acknowledgment letters.

B. Stewardship

- Maintain ongoing communication with donors.
- Keep them informed about the progress and impact of their contribution.

Your Attitude to Fundraising Will Determine Your Success. Most people dread asking for money because they don't like to feel as if they are begging or have their hat in hand. This is a good thing as nobody should regard one's need as a claim on what other people have. But remember: *You are not begging, you are offering an honorable exchange of value as if you were selling a product or service.*

You are giving a chance a chance to exercise their political power, through your campaign or project, using their checkbook instead of their time. You are also offering to promote their values through political action in exchange for their financial support. Whether the answer is YES or NO, nobody is dishonored just as nobody is dishonored whether they agree to buy a car or not that someone wants to sell. Don't ever be ashamed or too bashful to ask for something of value in exchange for something else of value, particularly when you believe in the value of the campaign or project you are raising money for. A *confident* appeal based on an exchange of value is a proven way to be successful at fundraising. You won't always get a YES, but you will get respect (and maybe a YES in the future)!

Conclusion. Successful fundraising from wealthy individuals is a nuanced process that requires a combination of research, relationship-building, and effective communication. By implementing the strategies outlined in this guide, you can increase your chances of securing meaningful donations that contribute to the success of your organization. Remember, each donor is unique, so adapt your approach to suit their individual preferences and priorities. ☑