



Seven Basic Lessons: A Capital Campaign for your Church

It is a common belief that church fundraising consists of car washes, bake sales, bazaars, tag sales, and the Sunday collection. The reality is that these small efforts do not and cannot support a growing church. The strength of a church lies in the commitment of its' members to understand and participate in tithing. Tithing is a biblical teaching directing 10% of ones income or wealth to the church.

But what of the church that at some point needs to raise significant funds over and above – sometimes in the millions – to continue its' service to the congregation and the community it serves?

A capital campaign can be a powerful vehicle for raising necessary large contributions and for unifying and increasing the spiritual commitment to tithing, as well as supporting the churches mission.

Here are 7 basic lessons for carrying out a capital campaign for your church.

Instruct and Inspire

- ***Provide Biblical Teaching.*** Many congregants need practical and inspirational instruction and encouragement in the area of Christian Stewardship. The vision of the church is portrayed and taught by the Senior Pastor, often conducted through a series of sermons. A congregation which confirms the vision of church leadership is one poised for success in a campaign. “40 Day Spiritual Journey to a More Generous Life” is a Bible devotional which some have used with great success and which has inspired people to become more generous and to increase their giving commitments.
- ***Aim to Make it a Spiritual Experience.*** Many churches have indicated that their campaign drive helped to deepen people’s faith and spiritual commitment. Share the good news of increased vision from within the congregation; interact with people during the drive and celebrate the increase in sacrificial giving to the Lord’s work at the church. Keeping people informed of the spiritual impact that the campaign is having on the church is critical. United we stand, divided we fall.
- ***Include Personal Testimonials.*** A number of churches have found that providing personal testimonials, either in written form via a church newsletter or spoken during the service, to be extremely useful. The focus on the grace of giving in our lives, and how we are led by God to become more supportive to the given campaign, is purely inspirational. People love and can relate to personal stories of any type and this is no exception.



Identify and Inform

- ***Have a Comprehensive Plan.*** It is important that any successful fund raising effort have a specific plan on how to instruct, inspire, inform and properly involve key donors in the following groups:

Leadership: Church leadership, pastor(s), staff, board members and key leaders of church ministries and committees.

Active Membership: These are people who are already actively engaged in serving and small group ministries.

Potential Major Donors: People who have exhibited the gift of giving in the past or who may have the potential to be a major financial contributor to the given campaign.

Regular Attendees: People who attend church at least twice a month.

Prospective regulars : Occasional or sporadic attendees and visitors.

- ***Get Experienced Counsel and/or Help.*** In addition to the active participation of the lay leaders of the church, nearly all successful campaigns have secured the assistance of professional guidance. Resources for fundraising professionals should come through recommendations of trusted advisors and friends of your church. The key function of counsel is personalized, hands on guidance in directing the leadership of the church through the successful effort of fundraising in the campaign, with a specific focus on the fundamentals and best practices of fundraising principles.
- ***Develop Helpful Collateral Materials.*** Successful church campaigns have provided information to their congregation that includes the plan, the purpose of the campaign, the goal and the role of the congregants play in reaching the goal.

Items developed as collateral can be in the form of multi-media presentations, case-statement brochures, personal presentation packets, commitment or pledge cards, mailings, and regular updates on the progress of the campaign in the weekly church bulletin, newsletter or other publication.



Invite and Involve

- ***Pastoral Invitation.*** A consistent message from church leaders encouraging people to become involved and to become active participants is the single most powerful motivator for involvement.
- ***Provide a Peer to Peer Experience.*** The most important element in a victorious campaign is an invitation to participate and get involved in the project. Often times, peer to peer invitations are the most successful. Creating subcommittees of regular attendees, active membership, major donors and church leadership, whose specific purpose is to reach out and invite others to get involved financially and through a volunteer effort, is critical to a successful campaign.

If you are considering a campaign for your religious institution, Harvest Development Group, LLC can help make the process easier, starting with a study to determine if your campaign goal and effort could be successful.

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For more info please go to www.harvestdevelopmentgrp.com

About the Author: Lauren Garell has over twenty years of non-profit leadership experience and a proven track record in many areas of development. Lauren's accomplishments include generating over 10 million dollars while managing planned giving and estate planning programs for the Salvation Army. She is a consultant with Harvest Development Group LLC., specializing in planned giving and fundraising for religious institutions.