

# Strategy: Setting Your Course for Fundraising and Marketing

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# What strategy is **not**

- Not how to meet your funding target
- Not just “a way to do things”
- Not techniques such as advertising, direct mail, special events
- Techniques are *tactics*

# What strategy is

- Strategy vs. tactics
  - Strategy = “win the war”
  - Tactics = “win the battle”
  - No strategy = muddle
- The concern of the commander-in-chief, not captains and majors
- How to deploy all your resources
- The Big Picture, not the small stuff

# A 6-phase process

- 1) Research and analysis
- 2) Determining strategy
- 3) Positioning
- 4) Planning and budgeting
- 5) Implementing the plan
- 6) Evaluating, correcting course

# 1) Research and analysis

- Market research
- SWOT Analysis
- Feasibility study
- Unique Competitive Advantage

# Market research

- Formal
  - Surveys
  - Focus groups
  - Interviews
- Informal
  - Random surveys
  - Questionnaires
  - Donor consultation groups



# SWOT Analysis



# Competitive Advantage

- What is the one thing you do better than anyone else in the world?
  - Defined by **what** you do?
  - By **who** you do it for?
  - By how **much** of it you do?
  - By **how** you do it?
  - By how **well** you do it?
- What is unique about what you do?



## 2) Determining strategy

- **G**rowth – build the donor base
- **I**nvolvement – make donors active
- **V**isibility – raise public profile
- **E**fficiency – lower the fundraising ratio
- **S**tability – ensure long-term survival
- **G + I + V + E + S = GIVES**

# Five Strategies

- Select one primary strategy
- One secondary strategy
- You cannot pursue all five simultaneously
- Some strategies are mutually exclusive

# Growth

- **Dynamic**
- Audacious goals, bold leadership
- Low entry-level gift
- Direct mail acquisition is common
- Environmental groups, animal rights organizations, anything new
- Broad reach, substantial impact

# Involvement

- Rewarding
- Concerts, exhibitions, volunteer programs, grassroots lobbying
- Membership, telephone fundraising, donor newsletters, welcome packages
- Museums, performing arts organizations, public policy groups
- Public participation

# Visibility

- Familiar
- Public opinion, many stakeholders
- Brand identification
- TV/radio, special events, cause-related marketing, publications
- Medical research organizations, emergency relief charities
- Broad public awareness, widespread name recognition

# Efficiency

- Resourceful
- Cost-conscious, well-established
- Legacies, major gifts, foundations, corporations, monthly giving, workplace giving, government grants
- Human service agencies, hospitals
- Frugal management



# Stability

- Enduring
- Unchanging values, unending needs, broad financial base
- Endowment, diversified fundraising, monthly giving
- Universities and colleges, residential care facilities
- Sound finances, cash reserves, long-term perspective

# The **GIVES** model . . .

- An approach, not a formula
- A systematic method of analysis
- A way to allocate resources
- Most of all, a way to devise the right strategy to match your **unique** mission, goals, resources, opportunities . . . at this stage of your development

### 3) Positioning

- Clarify vision and mission
- Review organisational identity
- Position the organisation
- Write the case for giving

# People respond to vision and mission

- **Vision:** What will the world be like if you receive the resources you need to fulfill your full potential?
- **Mission:** What is the essence of your work to realize your vision?

# Organisational identity

- Name of your organisation
- Logo and graphic guidelines
- Tagline (strapline) or slogan
- The “elevator rap”

# Putting positioning to work

- Unique Competitive Advantage
- Who knows that?
  - Prospective donors?
  - Prospective clients?
  - The media? Government?
  - The public?
- How will you let them know?



# Writing the case for giving

- Describe how your vision will be advanced, and how your mission will be fulfilled, by the work for which you seek support
- Describe how the grants and gifts you receive will directly lead to the results you desire

# The case for giving

- Tailored to every campaign
- Adapted for every major donor
- Includes, as appropriate:
  - Both general and specific
  - Budget to be met
  - Description of funding sources
  - Timeline
  - The Ask
  - Donor recognition, other benefits

## 4) Planning & budgeting

- Assess available resources
- Target market opportunities
- Select fundraising techniques
- Determine resource needs
  - Training
  - Staffing
  - Capital

# Fleshing out the plan

- Set three- or five-year goals
- Set annual objectives
- Match objectives with techniques
- Assign responsibilities
- Establish benchmarks
- Agree on evaluation criteria

## 5) Implementing the plan

- Leadership buy-in
- Senior staff participation
- Dedicated staff
- Training in fundraising
- Patience and persistence

## 6) Evaluating progress

- Reporting benchmarks monthly
- Reviewing progress semiannually
- Evaluating performance annually
- Correcting course as necessary



Keep in mind . . .

“If you don’t know where  
you’re going, you could  
end up somewhere else.”

—Yogi Berra, American philosopher

# Time for questions now!

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