Successful Fundraising

Many student organizations have big plans and excellent ideas for programs or services. However, few organizations have the finances to make these plans real. It is important for student organizations to have some kind of fund raising plans and to execute those fundraisers with the utmost professionalism, accountability, and legitimacy.

The following are ideas for creative fund raising projects. This list just touches the surface of all the many projects available to raise money. Just be creative and do some great brainstorming for other ideas.

**Fundraising Ideas**

- Bake sale
- Spaghetti dinner
- Recycling drive
- Candy sale
- Rummage sale
- Marathons
- Decathalons
- Best beard contest
- Road rally
- Car washes
- Talent show
- Hand made boat contest
- Kite flying contest
- Paper airplane contest
- Sell candy canes at holiday time
- Sell stadium seat cushions
- Sell buttons with school spirit slogans
- Pool/board game or bowling tournaments.
- Sell flowers for special occasions
- Hand out advertising flyers for companies.

**Planning Your Fundraiser**

- Set a goal.
- Ask for suggestions from your members. What do the members want to do?

**Brainstorm for ideas.**

- Find out what has been done before. What worked? What didn’t? Why? How can you improve?
- Check into local and state regulations.

**Check University policy.**

- Involve all segments of your group, not just the officers.
- People contribute to what they create. Get as many volunteers for your project as possible. Make sure they understand the cause and are willing to contribute their time and effort.
- Determine your market: college students, community, parents, etc.
- Know your overhead.
- Advertise wisely.
- Let everyone know your expectations in advance and update on progress. Using a goal poster is a great idea; make sure that poster is displayed prominently.
- Recognize everyone involved in the planning and implementation of the fund raising project. Reward those who achieve. Make certificates, ribbons, or other type of small rewards for everyone who volunteered for the project.
- Thank supporters. Give your big donors some kind of tangible reminder of how they contributed to a good cause. Create and maintain good will with these contributors, because they will tend to help in the future.
- Complete a written evaluation or report.

**Make sure you include:**

- Contact names, addresses, and phone numbers.
- Time lines and important dates.
- Suggestions of things to do differently.

**Find a way to incorporate the mission of your organization with your fundraising project.** People will remember the event. Start a tradition; repeating your fund raiser identifies your group with a specific event.
Look for unusual avenues - sometimes an off the wall suggestion can turn out to be a lot of fun for planners and participants alike.

Fundraising Ideas (Cont’d)

- Cartoon, horror movie, special films festival
- Product testing for local or national companies
- Get on lists to act as group test subjects for surveys
- Carnival booth at Homecoming, Greek Week, or Spring Fling and Fall Fests
- Sell small throw pillows with the name of your organization glued on in felt
- Sell miniature paddles with the Greek letters or your organization’s name painted on it
- Watermelon contests (i.e. seed spitting, eating the fastest, the most (timed), throwing, stack-relay)
- A-thons (bike, dance, phone, haircut, run, walk, horse back riding, singing, etc.)
- Air band contest
- Arts and crafts competition/sale
- Auction
- Beard growing contest
- Babysitting services
- Bikeathons
- Bingo, fashion shows
- Cake auction
- Carnival; pancake supper
- Concerts
- Dog wash
- Dunking booth

One of the most common forms of acquiring funds is through sponsorship of an outside organization. They usually contact an officer with the desire of holding an event on campus (room reservations are free for Student Orgs but may cost up to a few thousand dollars for organizations unaffiliated with the campus). They may make a donation to your organization if you agree to sponsor them.

Call Student Activities for details: 303-556-2595.

Whether you elect to raise funds for your organization’s use, for a charitable organization, or for a combination of the two, a fundraiser should be a carefully planned event.

1. Define why you want to raise money.
   * Do you want money for a specific organizational need (supplies, bringing in a speaker, etc.)?
   * Do you want to donate money to a specific charitable organization (be sure you define why your group has chosen that organization)?

2. Analyze your resources.
   * How much money do you need?
   * How much money do you have to invest?
   * How many workers can you count on to help?
   * What support (people or $) can you get from other groups?
   * How much time do you have for planning?

3. Seek input from others.
   * Your advisor
   * Other organization leaders - find out what others have done, and what has/hasn’t worked
   * Center Programs Staff

4. Generate a list of ideas - brainstorm.
   * Involve entire group.
   * Look for unusual avenues - sometimes an off the wall suggestion can turn out to be a lot of fun for planners and participants alike.