

# Eskin Fundraising Training: Advice For Non-Profits

*Non-Profits have risen to meet formidable challenges in the past and can do so again*

SAN ANTONIO, TX, UNITED STATES, April 10, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A quote from the iconic children's story Winnie-the-Pooh created by English author A. A. Milne and English illustrator E. H. Shepard in 1925 comes to mind: "Always remember you are braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, smarter than you think, and loved more than you know."



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*Winnie-the-Pooh*

The non-profit sector is facing a barrage of profound challenges impacting organizations of all sizes, missions and parts of the country. Let's set the stage.

- Clouds of uncertainty loom over government funding.
- Societal needs aren't going away, if anything they're escalating.
- Stock market and world trade conditions are extremely volatile.

Non-profits are no strangers to adversity. It wasn't that long ago that the pandemic forced the social sector to rethink and pivot every phase of operations including delivery of essential programs and services, and especially in fundraising that fuels missions.

Now the nation's 1.5 million non-profits are being challenged ferociously by external forces. This will require nothing less than working even harder and working even smarter. Successful organizations must be brutally honest in assessing what's working and opportunities for improvement. After leading advancement for three institutions of higher learning and now serving as a fundraising trainer/consultant since 2018 for a wide range of organizations the following 10 strategies and observations stand out:

No. 1: Passion is a superpower. This is a non-profit's trump card. It motivates, pushes and energizes professional and volunteer leaders to scale higher and higher heights. They share an

unstinting conviction that they can make a genuine contribution in touching, improving and saving more lives, especially helping those who are struggling.

No. 2: Revisit mission, vision and values. Consider the dilemma of donors who are forced to make excruciatingly difficult decisions not between the good and the bad, but between the good and the good. Non-profits are challenged to meet the test of making bold statements that all the other good causes can't. Gather a wide circle of the team together to ensure that the case for support is timely, relevant and distinctive.

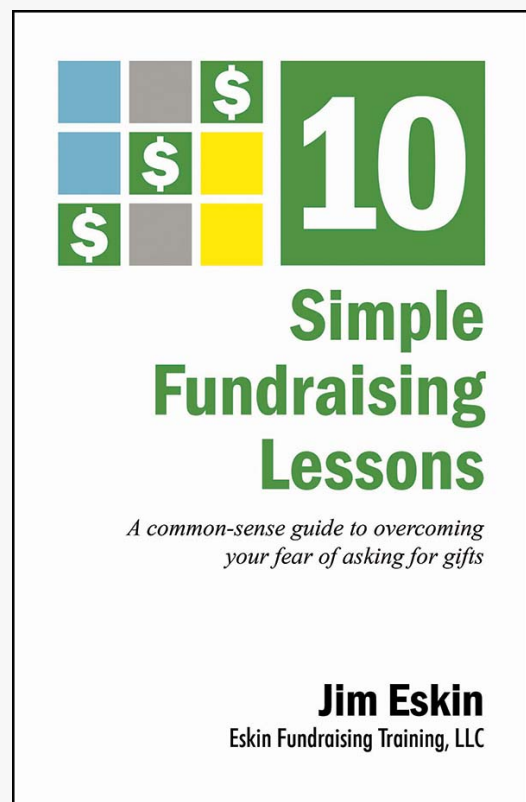
No. 3: Mobilize the entire non-profit family. Non-profits that expect that development staff can bear resource development responsibilities by themselves are doomed to fall short of gift income potential. Every member of the non-profit village can and should play a role in the discovery, cultivation, and stewardship of donor prospects with solicitation left to development professionals and the special volunteers who excel at the task.

No. 4: Double down on major gifts: Approximately 90% of American philanthropy's \$557 billion comes from just 10% of the donors. While the definition of major gifts will vary from organization to organization, and even historically within the same organization, fundraising results will succeed or fail on a laser like focus on the largest contributors whose gifts achieve the greatest impact on advancing the mission.

No. 5: Bring up planned gifts at every turn. Donors from all different socio-economic backgrounds can make gifts several times larger from estate plans than from current wealth positions. An unprecedented wealth transfer from the Baby Boomer (and Silent) generations of a mind numbing \$84 trillion is projected by 2045. There are only three places these dollars can go to — loved ones, government and charity. Non-profits must make it a priority to have planned giving infrastructure in place, articulate strategies to magnify the impact of current gifts and engage next generations in the gifts of time, talent and



Jim Eskin, Founder, Eskin Fundraising Training, LLC



10 Simple Fundraising Lessons

treasure of their elders.

No. 6: Scrutinize operations. Non-profits are mistakenly criticized for not operating more like for-profits. In the overwhelming number of examples, this is far from the truth. By necessity, non-profits know how to stretch dimes into quarters. They don't offer the lucrative compensation and benefit packages that the corporate sector does. Still, there is room to make sure all phases of operations are being conducted as effectively and efficiently as possible. Innovation and ideas on new and better ways of doing business can be welcome from all levels of the organization. Seek out every opportunity to collaborate with other non-profits such as submitting joint requests that funders welcome.

No. 7: Recognize mental health concerns. Today's increasingly complex workplace is pushing employees harder than ever with expectations of a 24/7 mindset. The pressures are typically greater in the non-profit sector where employees constantly need to do more with less. Multitasking is the norm not the exception. Supervisors must be sensitive to the impact of increased stress levels. To retain employees and keep them healthy, investing in flexible scheduling, hybrid officing and access to counseling is prudent and pays handsome returns.

No. 8: Tell your stories, tell your stories, tell your stories. Facts and figures have their rightful place but can be overdone. Research repeatedly indicates that personal testimonials from beneficiaries of gift dollars get through to donor prospects more robustly. New technology continues to open the door to a growing array of affordable media to disseminate core messages, images and appeals. Impact videos and social media are prime examples of affordable communication channels available to even the smallest non-profits.

No. 9: Practice the Six Degrees of Separation. Too often non-profit leaders say they lack access to

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OR NEXT  
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**Jim Eskin**

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PROFIT  
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The non-profit sector has men, women and youth who are ready to lead

high wealth individuals who can make major and leadership gifts. Never forget that everyone on the planet is separated by no more than six personal relationships, and in many communities it's more like two degrees of separation.

No. 10: Celebrate victories. Morale is lifted by acknowledging accomplishments — both small and large — and everyone contributing to making them possible. Don't forfeit these opportunities. They remind everyone that more is possible and unite the team to aspire for the best.

It will be far from easy but organizations, for-profit and non-profit alike, can emerge from adversity stronger and better positioned to tackle future challenges. Successful non-profits don't shirk challenges, they confront them with a renewed sense of purpose, creativity and grit. Resilience has long been a hallmark of American philanthropy. Time and time again, it has overcome formidable challenges in the past. Fueled and motivated by its noble role and inspiring leadership, watch for it to again climb mountains to continue a relentless pursuit of championing good works.

After a successful career leading advancement for three institutions of higher education, Jim Eskin's consulting practice, Eskin Fundraising Training, launched in 2018, builds on the success of his more than 250 fundraising workshops, webinars, webcasts, podcasts and board sessions, and provides the training, coaching and support services to equip non-profit leaders to replace fear of fundraising with comfort and confidence. He has authored more than 150 guest columns that have appeared in daily newspapers, business journals and blogs across the country, and publishes Stratagems, a monthly e-newsletter exploring timely issues and trends in philanthropy. [Sign up here for a free subscription.](#) You will also receive invitations to free virtual learning community programs. He is author of [10 Simple Fundraising Lessons](#), an 82-page common sense guide to understanding the art and science of fundraising, and [How to Score Your First or Next Million-Dollar Gift](#), 104 pages filled with strategies, best practices and homework assignments. Both are available in print and digital formats through Pathway, the book distributor, and Amazon. Quantity discounts are available to non-profits who want to share books with teams of management, development staff, board and volunteers. Eskin is also available for customized virtual training for boards, staff, and fundraising committees. His newest customized service, Fundraising Urgent Care, offers 48-hour turnaround in addressing general strategy and tactical challenges that require immediate responses.

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