

Eskin Fundraising Training Salutes Mantra: It Takes A Non-Profit Village

Non-profits that delegate resource development responsibilities entirely to a single staff member(s) or a volunteer(s) undermine fundraising potential.

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-- Fundraisers are not Superman or Supergirl. Typically, they are

trained and experienced in the art and science of fundraising and the mechanics of advancing donor prospects through the fundraising cycle. When other staff and volunteers have made progress in introducing people to the virtues of the organization, the task of requesting gifts is

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The active and enthusiastic engagement of all staff and volunteers is a necessity in the discovery, cultivation, solicitation and stewardship of donors, especially major gift donors. ”

Jim Eskin

meaningful ways.

Eskin Fundraising Training accomplishments include more than 250 live and/or virtual learning communities facilitated by distinguished experts from a wide range of disciplines and engaging thousands of professional and volunteer non-profit leaders representing organizations of all different sizes, missions and parts of the country, and now even internationally. The fundamental premise of educational approach is that while no single person has all the answers, in the live and/or virtual meeting space, there is the collective capacity to answer any question.

Based on the cumulative knowledge acquired during interactive programs over the past seven years the following 10 lessons have emerged in the compelling case of engagement of an entire



non-profit family in the crucial responsibility of obtaining gifts of time, talent, and treasure. The critical 10 themes include:

1. First and foremost, the organization must have a distinctive mission, vision and values to help it stand out from all the other good causes. Donors are forced into the excruciatingly difficult position of making decisions not between the good and the bad but between the good and the good. All stakeholders in the non-profit must be part of an inclusive process of defining such a mission, vision values that genuinely resonates with donors and prospective donors.

2. There is so much more to securing gifts than just the solicitation. The “ask” is but a single moment in the gifting continuum. Likely donors must be identified, introduced to the mission and the impact of the organization with forging a credible friendship before a solicitation is ever attempted. Broadly termed this is referred to as creating a “culture of philanthropy,” in which everything that happens in the life of the non-profit is a genuine opportunity to prepare prospects to be solicited.

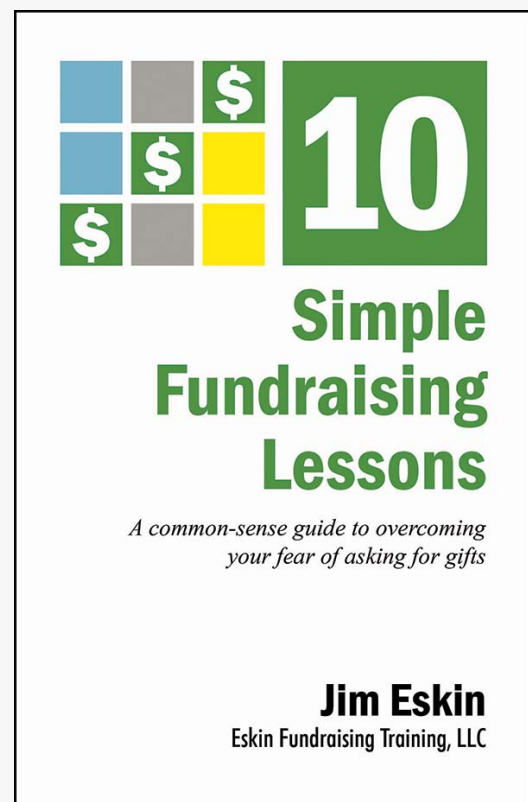
3. All staff and volunteers can contribute mightily to the resource development success without ever asking for gifts themselves. This includes identifying likely donors from their networks of professional, personal and civic contacts, proudly telling stories of how organizations have changed lives and profusely expressing gratitude for gifts.

4. Fundraising takes time. The larger the amount the more time it will take. Typically, donors don’t start with huge gifts. They make modest gifts and see how the non-profit treats them and reflect on results achieved. Then it might be possible to consider a major or leadership gift of much larger amounts.

5. Board members play a crucial role in leading by example in the giving and getting of gifts. This



Jim Eskin, Founder, Eskin Fundraising Training, LLC



10 Simple Fundraising Lessons

starts by making stretch but realistic commitments themselves. Failing to do so they will not have credibility approaching others in the community to provide support.

6. Board members and volunteers who have strong friendships with likely donors make for “dynamic duos” when teamed up with professional fundraisers in meetings. Note that board members and volunteers play crucial roles in scheduling quality time meetings with prospective donors, particularly when larger gifts of six and seven-figures are target amounts.

7. The opinions and voices of those professionals and volunteers closest to resource development responsibilities are heard on all programmatic, operational and strategic decisions. They will bring a keen and savvy understanding of how such decisions impact the attitudes of donors and prospective donors.

8. Fundraising successes need to be celebrated throughout the organization on a timely basis with recognition given to those who made them possible. This is absolutely crucial to maintaining morale and motivating professional and volunteer fundraisers through the many occasions when requests are declined.

9. The entire organization is involved in setting budgets that empower delivery of programs and services, and open doors for growth and expansion. There can and should be multiple revenue streams including earned income, philanthropy and government funds. In the current environment, government funding is being reduced, stalled and interrupted. This is placing ever increasing dependency on private funds from individuals, corporations and estates. It is even more essential that the resource development function be adequately supported including

HOW TO SCORE
Your First
OR NEXT
Million-Dollar Gift



Jim Eskin

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The easy-to-understand guide to seven-figure gifts.



Non-profits improve every part of the quality of life.

investing every dollar possible to retain high-performing fundraising staff who donors know, like and trust.

10. Leadership ensures an atmosphere of can-do optimism. Fundraising in a fiercely competitive world is never easy. Every member of the non-profit family must passionately believe in the importance of the mission, abilities of colleagues and generous nature of the American people to respond to appeals of non-profits that make a profound difference in addressing the needs of the less fortunate and those who need a helping hand.

The American philanthropic ecosystem is a wondrous and vast enterprise. It encompasses more than 1.5 million organizations, 13 million employees, 24 million board members, nearly 80 million volunteers and hundreds of millions of donors ranging from MacKenzie Scott who has contributed more than \$20 billion to some 2,450 organizations with “no strings attached” to your neighbor next door who deposits \$10 weekly in the collection plate. MacKenzie Scott will be the first one to remind us that everyone is a philanthropist — altogether their generosity results in nearly \$600 billion a year.

And everyone who wants their favorite non-profit or good cause to succeed can and should welcome a hands-on role in the resource development processes that empower organizations to touch, improve and save more lives, especially helping those who are struggling.

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About Eskin Fundraising Training

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 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. He 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 to unlock exciting opportunities that elevate organizational impact to the next level. 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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