Engaging Corporations in Your Watershed Work

Schuylkill Watershed Congress
March 14, 2015
Today’s Session

• Building relationships and partnerships with corporations – more than just raising $

• Reasons why corps partner with NFP

• Pros and Cons of relationships/partnerships

• Approaches to businesses/corporations
“To raise money from a corporation, you need to think like one.”

RICHARD MALE
2013 Contributions:
$335 Billion by source of contribution

- **Bequests** $27.7B 9%
- **Corporate** $17.9B 5%
- **Foundations** $49B 14%
- **Individuals** $240.6B 72%

*Source: USA Giving*
Why Corporations Give

- They want to connect with the community
- To promote the company
- To receive recognition
- To gain tax and financial planning benefits
- To increase their profits
- They are specifically asked
“People give to people”

Successful fundraising goes hand-in-hand with building relationships with prospective donors.
Relationship Building

Identify – Inform – Interest – Involve

Invest
Variety of partnerships

Funding
In-kind gifts
Volunteer
Event Sponsor
Promoter
Leverage other donors
Benefits for employees
Partnerships vs Relationships

Both sides see the benefits from the relationship

Not a one-sided ask; but a negotiation

Not a one-time occurrence; lasts over a length of time

Results in impact for both
“What can my nonprofit organization do for this corporation/business?”
Three approaches

Membership

Philanthropy

Marketing
Memberships

small dollars (hundreds, not thousands) gets your foot in the door
Philanthropy

most common - $1,000 – $10,000 range given on a year-to-year basis for specific projects.

The corporate giving staff is frequently housed in the public relations department;
Cause-Related Marketing

- Billions spent every year to market goods and services.
- Assist the company in enhancing its image, reaching potential customers, or reinforcing existing customer relationships.
- Majority of corporate dollars going to nonprofit groups has come from marketing rather than their philanthropic budgets.
Pros and Cons

• Evaluate these “opportunities”
• No “free” lunch; strings attached
• Mission appropriate
• A steady stream of funds for nonprofit
• Discuss with Board before entering any partnership
Gift Acceptance Policy

A screen for review ...

• before entering into any corporate partnership
• before accepting any corporate gift
Employee Engagement Strategies

Matching Gift Program
Workplace Giving Program
Employee Appreciation Days
Learning/Demo opportunities
Encouragement to volunteer
Ideas to Engage Corporations

- Ad in publication
- Event sponsor
- Corporate Foundation grant
- Volunteer Day for Employees
- In-kind services/product
- Provide site/program for employees
- Share a day’s profits
- NFP provides FFS for corp – rain garden, etc
Start with your own ...

businesses w/which you do business such as:
banks
accounting firms
office supplier
insurance companies
restaurant/caterer
equipment rental
others???
In summary ...

- Consider approaching corps even if no connection... companies develop relationships after funding.
- Cultivate employees ... but never ask anyone to apply pressure to the corporate funder.
- Increase your org’s visibility and positive reputation in the community - media coverage, public events
- If your org is small, relatively unknown, consider delaying an approach
- Evaluate your strategies and outcomes
“To raise money from a corporation, you need to think like one.”

RICHARD MALE
Questions
Resources

• “7-Step Non-Profit Plan to Attract and Keep Corporate Partners” by Simon Mainwaring on Beth Kantor’s Blog
• River Network’s River Fundraising Alert
  – Working with Breweries and Roasters
  – Cause-Related Marketing for Small Nonprofits
  – In-Kind Gifts: 20 Rules of Thumb
  – Workplace Fundraising
  – Building Business Memberships Part 1 and Part 2
Resources

River Network Leadership Development Institute

http://www.rivernetwork.org/LD-institute

Upcoming webinars:
– May 14th: Nonprofit Financial Management
– June 11th: Volunteer Recruitment & Management

http://www.rivernetwork.org/effective-organizations

River Network FREE Organizational Assessment Tool

http://www.rivernetwork.org/status-report-survey
Mary Ellen Olcese
Leadership Development Manager
410-745-3053
meolcese@rivernetwork.org