

HOW TO AVOID THE POST-CAMPAIGN LET DOWN

**Or, “I’ve Survived My Campaign and Now Need to
Know What To Do with All this Spare Time”**

AFP MASTER CLASS MAY 9, 2018



Partnership Resources Group

Session Outline

- ❖ **Introductions**
- ❖ **Defining “Campaigns”**
- ❖ **Myths and Truths About the Post-Campaign Experience**
 - Bay Area Survey of Major Donors and Campaign Chairs
- ❖ **Here Comes the Panel**
- ❖ **Break**
- ❖ **Practical Tips Following a Campaign**
- ❖ **Plenty of Conversation**

When We Say “Campaign” We Mean:

Any large-scale fundraising initiative with a specific quantifiable goal, a beginning and an end, its own Case for Support, and a specific volunteer/professional leadership structure. Customarily conducted in Phases.

- **Capital**
- **Endowment**
- **Special Project/Initiative**
- **Planned Giving**
- **Debt Retirement**
- **Anniversary**
- **Blended Versions of Above**

A Curious Dynamic

A successful campaign leaves an organization stronger than prior to the campaign because:

- There are simply more tangible assets to fulfill the mission
- Donors charged up and greater in numbers
- Increased visibility heightens awareness in the community
- Involvement of volunteers provides bench strength
- Staff members gain untold knowledge and experience

So.....

Why are so few resources and efforts geared to maximizing the immediate aftermath of a successful campaign?

The Post-Campaign Experience

TRUE OR FALSE?

- Annual Giving Goes Up
- **Donors are Tapped-Out and Fatigue Sets-in**
- Staff are Ready to Take a Breather
- **Staff Turnover Occurs**
- Most Other Donors Know About the Campaign Outcome
- **The Organization has Experienced a Major Life-cycle Change**
- Post-Campaign Strategies Receive Widespread Attention

Regional Donors & Campaign Leaders: What Do They Say?

PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS:

- 16 Individuals, Drawn From Campaigns of \$5M+ 2014-17
- Most local counties – San Francisco, Marin, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Marin, Alameda
- 8 Capital, 3 Endowment, 2 Special Project, 3 Planned Giving, 1 Debt Retirement
- 16 Donors (7 @ \$100K+), 5 Campaign Chairs, 5 Have chaired more than 1 Campaign (we want those folks!)

Findings from Donors & Leaders

As a *Donor*, when the Campaign Ended:

- 12 continued giving to org. (beyond campaign \$)
- Felt part of “something big” and historic
- Felt much more attuned to the *Mission*

As a *Campaign Leader*, When the Campaign Ended:

- 9 were “satisfied” and 3 would re-up
- 3 “Never Again”
- Felt a combination of relief and “let down”
- Wanted to commit to similar mission elsewhere
- Took way longer than imagined or sold

Findings from Donors & Leaders

Post Campaign Debrief/Evaluation, formal or informal?

- 2 Yes
- 11 NO
- All Wish They Had
- Felt disconnected – Where Was the Board?

What Would Keep Donors Engaged and Giving?

- Don't pull back – keep communicating
- Continue Recognizing, esp. after pledge period
- Find meaningful volunteer opportunities
- Resolicit, case-by-case

Findings from Donors & Leaders

Core of a Post-Campaign Plan?

- Campaign donors want to protect their investment
- Start planning *before* the campaign is over
- Don't equate celebration/recognition with engagement
- Apply same techniques used in campaign. Why dispose?

Opportunities Missed or Lost

- Educating donors beyond the campaign messaging
- Planning for staff departures/changes
- Creating new “on ramps” into leadership and volunteering
- What if we had stayed in campaign mode “lite?”
- Involving the next generation, passing the torch

Now On To Our Panel...

- ❑ Grace Hughes
- ❑ Johnathan Logan
- ❑ Elizabeth Rogers
- ❑ Jordan Simmons

BREAK TIME!

Five-Steps Towards a Post-Campaign Strategy

Plan for Your Post Campaign as Part of Campaign Planning!

- 1. A Serious Debrief**
- 2. Use That Data**
- 3. The Engagement Menu**
- 4. The Future of the Professional Team(s)**
- 5. Communicate, Communicate**

Tips for After

1. Fundraising Campaign Debrief Framework:

- Appreciations: What did you appreciate about how the campaign went?
- New Information: What did you learn through the campaign?
- Puzzles: What aspects of how the campaign went didn't seem to add up?
- Hopes & Wishes: What do you hope happens from this campaign?

Tips for After

Use That Data

1. Get it all in, especially the anecdotes
2. Segment out the “ 1-and-dones”
3. Know and flag the pledge timetable – there is opportunity there
4. Down time is great for prospect research

Engagement Menu for Stewardship (not gifts!)

1. Volunteer opportunities inside
2. Board and committees
3. Special task forces aligned with the campaign outcome
4. Ambassadorship outside
5. “Adopting” a Program, esp. for younger donors

Tips for After

Staff Implications:

1. Remember, they hold key donor relationships
2. Opportunities for growth
3. Acknowledgement and incentives
4. Value of temporary to permanent

Communicate, Communicate & Steward

1. From *acknowledgement* to knowledge
2. Never assume donors know what happened with their \$
3. Do the rest of your donors know what happened?
4. Donor reunions and briefings with content
5. Design 4 informational “touches” per year, segmented by your data