



Fundraising in 2021

As we recover from the trials of 2020, the effects of a chaotic year are still with us and present unique challenges for fundraising.

CHALLENGE: I cannot meet with my donors in person.

SOLUTION: Video call is the new face-to-face!

It is widely accepted that the best strategy for securing a gift is to make an ask in person to a donor who has been properly cultivated. When this can't happen, we must **look to new ways of connection**. Zoom/Teams is the new face-to-face! Schedule a 30 minute call with your donor and another volunteer. **An outline of that meeting may look like this...**

- **Introductions & Intentions:** Introduce everyone on the call. **Tell the donor right away that you are going to invite them to support the Y in 2021 during the call.** This way they are ready and can be thinking about their response.
- **Impact:** **Share the impact the donor has made** on the Y through their gifts. Invite your volunteer to share their Y story and how they have seen donor support show up at the Y.
- **Invitation:** Invite the donor to participate in the 2021 campaign, making your case for **how their gift will impact others.**
- **Gratitude:** **Thank the donor for their gift and/or time** on the spot. As soon as the call ends, send them a thank you note from yourself and the volunteer and drop it in the mail that day.

You can also meet with your donors in person if both you and the donor feel comfortable and it is done in a safe, socially distanced manner.

CHALLENGE: My donor may be facing economic challenges.

SOLUTION: Never assume a donor's response will be no!

Yes, the pandemic has affected many individuals and businesses greatly. It has also helped others thrive. Giving has actually gone UP over the last year. One of the NPO divisions to see the biggest increase in giving? Human Services! People are looking for inspirational organizations that align with the spirit of who they are. Show them our impact and invite them to be a part of it! It is our responsibility to allow the donor to make the decision as to whether or not they can give financially this year. We cannot make that decision for them. If they say they can't contribute financially, that's okay! Keep them engaged and keep inviting them to participate in other ways (volunteerism, membership, etc.).

CHALLENGE: Making new connections is difficult in a virtual world.

SOLUTION: Start with who you know!

It can be a real challenge to try to establish a connection when you aren't able to attend your usual networking events in person. One way around this is to start with who you do know, and asking them to open their sphere of influence. Perhaps you ask your board members to each host a 30-minute video call with 5-7 friends/colleagues where you can simply share the message of the Y and extend an invitation to them to learn more.

Many organizations are also hosting virtual networking opportunities either as stand-alone events or tagged onto another event. Look for these with your local chamber or rotary groups!