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## **I. Familiarise and follow school policy on fundraising**

What is your school's fundraising policy? The school policy on fundraising should follow the legal guidelines and education department policy requirements.

For example, what can and can't the school legally sell, auction or raffle with and without permits? The importance of understanding your constraints was illustrated when the principal at a High School in NSW was stood aside in 2006, after admitting to selling school furniture on eBay. Education guidelines at the time restricted methods of sale to advertisements in P&C newsletters, local newspapers, school assemblies and auctions at school fetes. Keeping abreast with community expectations is also part of your job. For example, there is a current push to restrict the type of food that can be sold at school fetes because of government policies banning unhealthy food at canteens.

In addition, accurate and timely records of income and expenditures should also be maintained and made available to relevant bodies as part of that transparency. Money raised should be deposited into the school's bank account, using receipts. The intention and procedures of fundraising activities should be transparent to the authorities and the community the school serves.



## 2. Form a committee (Gather the right people around you)

Forming a competent, dedicated committee is one of the fundamental requirements to successful fundraising.

The committee can be responsible for anything related to fundraising, including developing ideas, recruiting volunteers, planning the budget, hiring resources, promotion and post event analysis. Elect a chairperson to be the face of the committee and provide an accessible contact point. The committee should ideally include those most enthusiastic and committed to the cause and those prepared to put aside the necessary time to make a success of each event organised. Your school may wish to include a mix of staff, parents, students and possibly, interested community members such as church or business leaders. Ideally you'll need to include people who are skilled in fundraising and have specific skills for each job required. For example, invite people into the committee to do a specific role, such as finding sponsors, bookkeeping, public speaking, media contacts and so on. Committee meetings should be regular, purposeful and to the point. Effective communication is imperative to maintain trust and confidence in the committee as it strives to raise its profile and its causes.



**5.**

### **Use the best ideas**

It's a fact that some fundraiser activities work better than others, but no two schools are ever going to claim the same experience or replicate the same levels of success. The task of skilled fundraisers is to evaluate which events and products work best for their school. In coming to this decision, consideration should be given to understanding the donor and creating events that are accessible for the greatest number to become involved with. This in turn will produce the best possible returns (see also *Selecting the Right Fundraiser for Your School*, Page 30). Don't forget to piggyback events and up-sell wherever possible to maximise your returns. Keep in mind also the best ideas are not necessarily the same ones you used last year. Also keep an open mind and look at ideas on their merit without prejudice.

**6.**

### **Generate enthusiastic school community support**

Most people will want to help as much as they can, but everyone and everything thing has a limit – so try not to get all funding or volunteers from one place or from one group of people. There is a tendency to take volunteers for granted, namely because they are often staff and parents. The erroneous assumption is that they don't need looking after because they are doing it for their students anyway. Far greater results can be achieved if the volunteers are properly looked after and inspired to achieve their best (see also *Getting the Most out of Your Volunteers*, Page 16).

7.

## Know your donor

To some extent, it does not always matter about the reason people donate – guilt, loyalty, love, friendship, shame, prestige, showing off, nostalgia – as long as they do. But understanding which of these apply to which people, gives you a decided commercial advantage (see also 24 Ways to Increase Your Profits, Page \*\*). Knowing your donor is about knowing what it takes for them to give.

*\*\*Query Author - no such section*



8.

## Promote and advertise the event (marketing strategy)

The importance of this task is such, that an otherwise good fundraising event may not be as successful as it could, because the promotion of the event was not effective enough to attract support. Professional charities employ fulltime marketing people whose sole task it is to promote their events (see also Publicity and Promotion: How to effectively promote your fundraiser, Page 42). What promotion and clever publicity campaigns do you have in place?

## 5. Offer other incentives for sponsors and donors

The students who seek out sponsors for particular events are often offered incentives or rewards. This is usually in the form of gift prizes like stereos, DVD equipment, sport equipment and books. Commercial fundraising companies rely heavily on this mode of operating.

- Be careful not to over indulge customers and sponsors as your product or service on offer should be good quality, useful and excellent value for money anyway. Adding incentives beyond what is necessary can eat into your profits. Besides, no-one is really that interested in junk prizes anyway.
- Acknowledgment for effort or achieving sponsorship targets could be achieved by exploring other alternative, no-or low-cost incentives such as:
  - *Drawing prizes for participants, publishing names of high achievers in the school newsletter.*
  - *Restricting incentives to highest achievers and early bird donors.*
  - *Writing personally to the family or sponsors and thanking them – don't forget to let them know the final amount raised.*
  - *Organising a group thank-you for the top class such as a BBQ, party, movie excursion or a limousine ride. These sorts of prizes encourage healthy competition between different groups at school.*
  - *Offering fun rewards such as making the male teachers wear a dress for the day or being able to throw pies at the teachers if a certain target is reached. These sorts of acknowledgements can be as memorable and enjoyable as any other.*