Building Nonprofit Capacity:
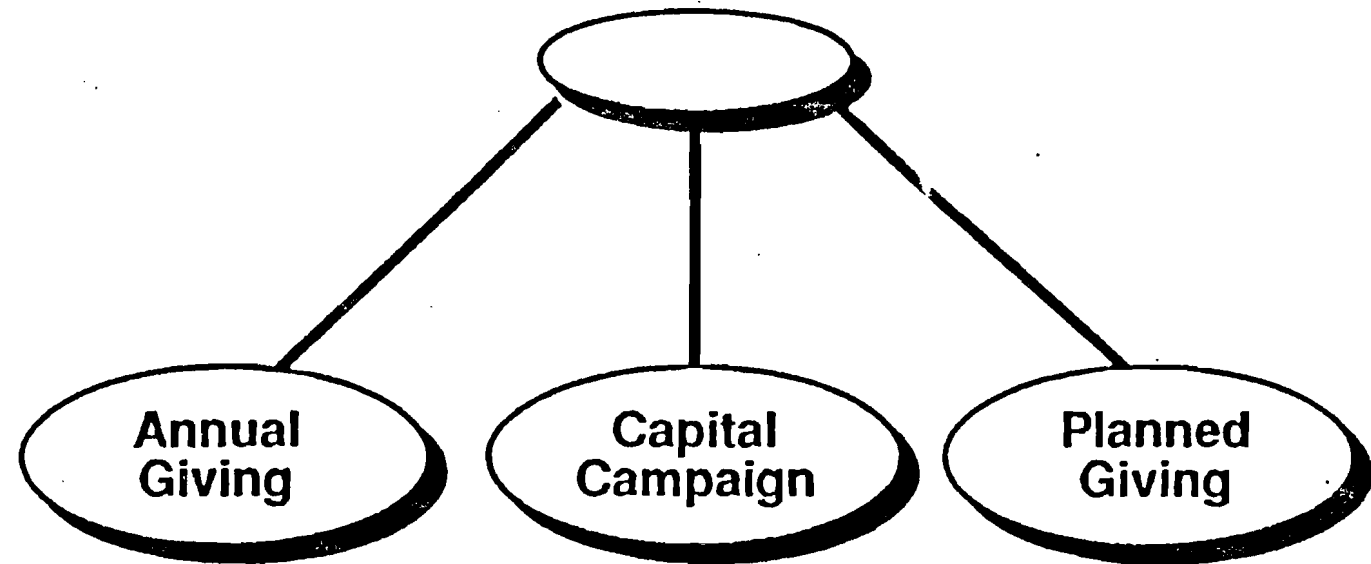
Fundraising

Julie Pietroburgo, Ph.D.

The Tripod of Development

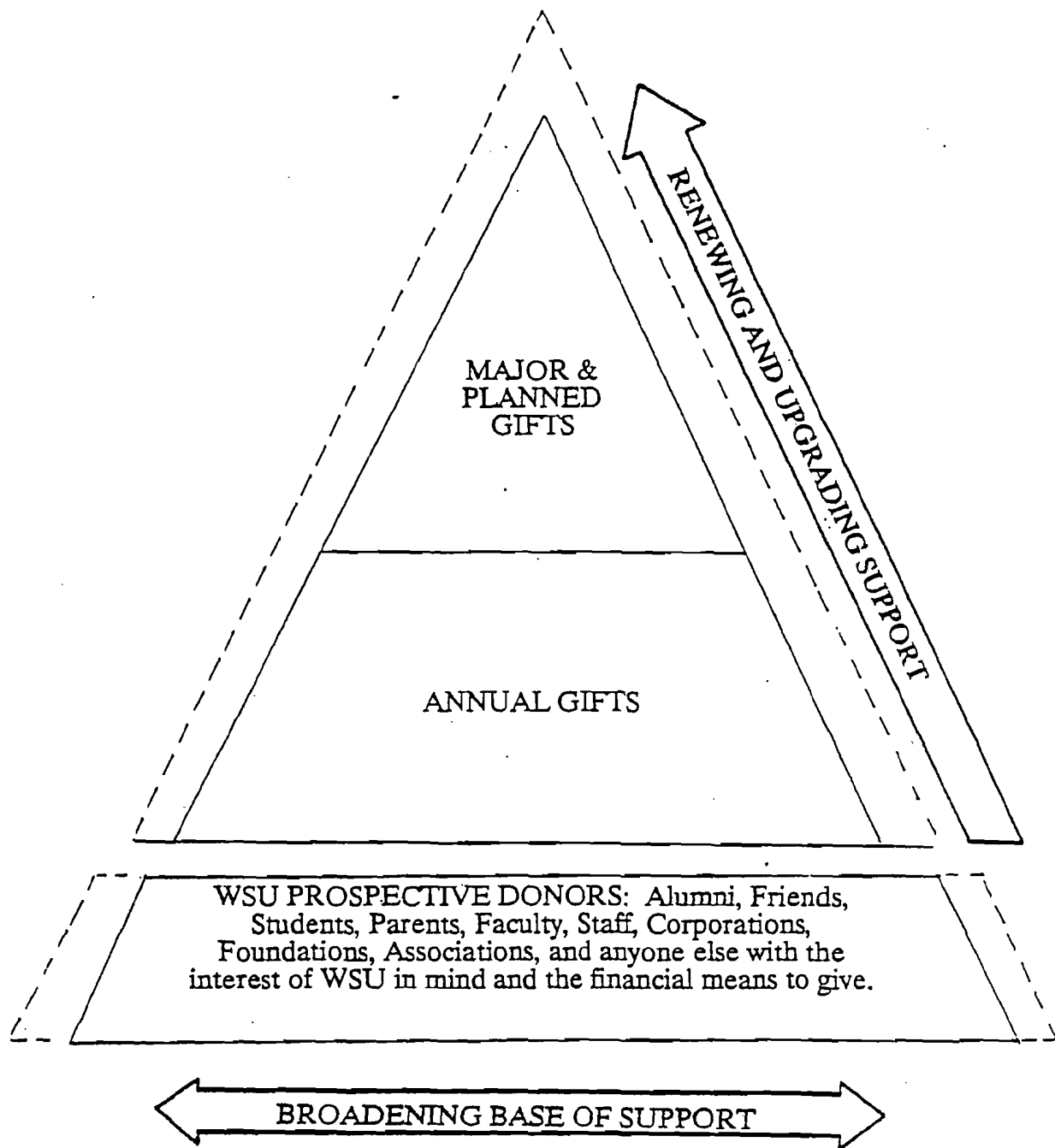Development is comprised of three major fund raising approaches:

```
                    ( _____ )
                   /     |      \
                  /      |       \
      ( Annual  )    ( Capital )    ( Planned )
      ( Giving  )    (Campaign )    ( Giving  )
```
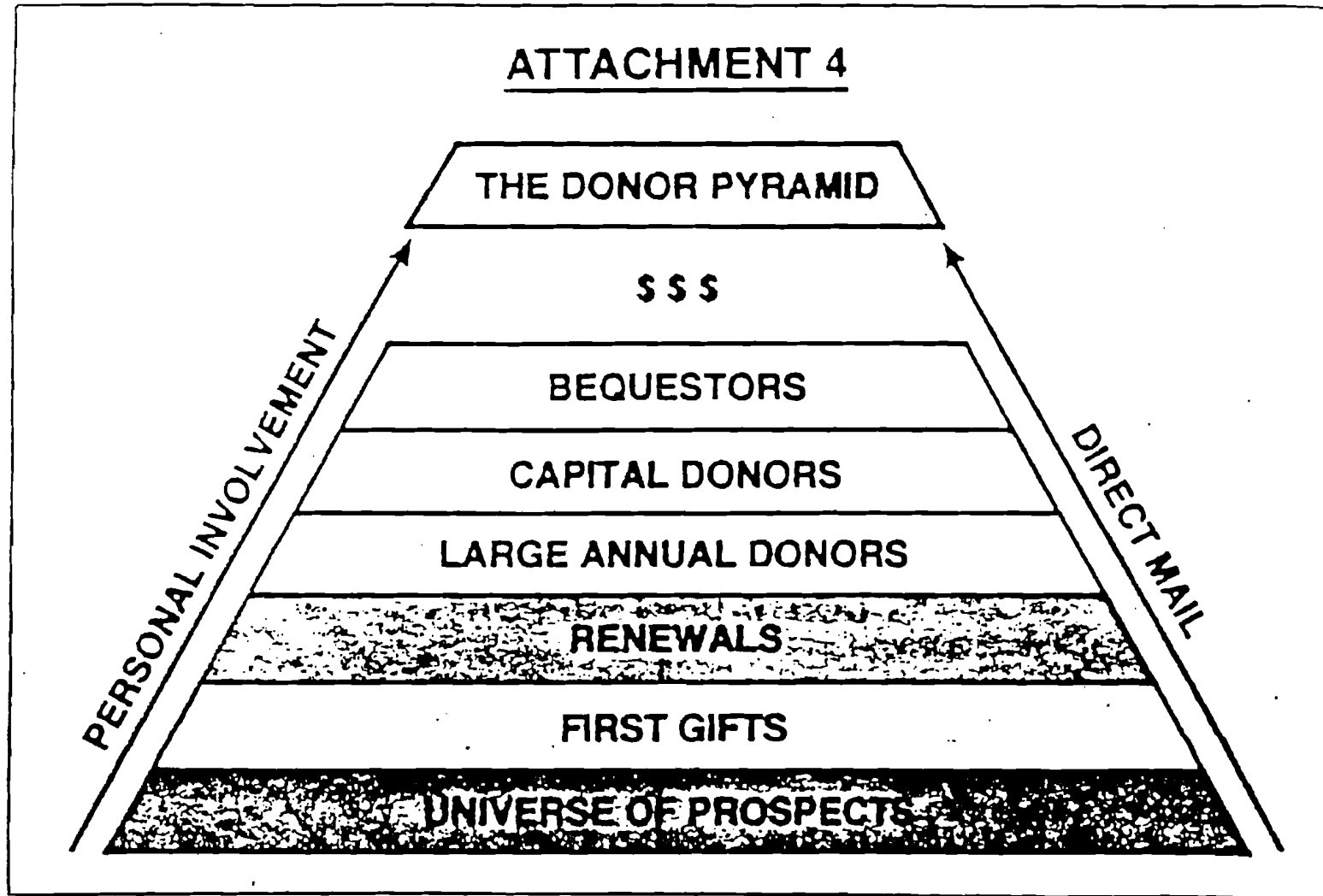
Annual Giving: The Primary Fund Raising Method to:

- Broaden Support
- Upgrade Giving Levels
- Provide Operating Support for Ongoing Programs

THE DONOR PYRAMID

MAJOR &
PLANNED
GIFTS

ANNUAL GIFTS

RENEWING AND UPGRADING SUPPORT

WSU PROSPECTIVE DONORS: Alumni, Friends, Students, Parents, Faculty, Staff, Corporations, Foundations, Associations, and anyone else with the interest of WSU in mind and the financial means to give.

BROADENING BASE OF SUPPORT

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ATTACHMENT 4

THE DONOR PYRAMID

$ $ $

BEQUESTORS

CAPITAL DONORS

LARGE ANNUAL DONORS

RENEWALS

FIRST GIFTS

UNIVERSE OF PROSPECTS

PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT

DIRECT MAIL

OUTSIDE ENVELOPE

RETURN
ENVELOPE

From:

Operation Food Search, Inc.
6282 Olive Boulevard
St. Louis, Missouri 63130-3300

45
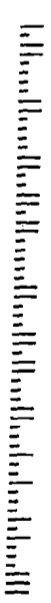
HUNGER HAS A NEW FACE

St. Louis, Missouri 63130-3300
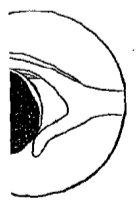
OPERATION
FOOD
SEARCH

The result of hunger in Amer
necessarily starvation, but rathe
malnutrition. Children who can't
in school. Young bones that aren'
Seniors who weaken and lose hope.

No one *plans* to stand in a food l
We don't *expect* to be the next one
or "right sized." We *can't believe* t
catastrophic illness will hit someor
family and threaten our financial st
Bad things do happen, even to peopl
and love.

No one expects to be hungry in
but the sad fact is that over 37 mi
women and children, young and old a

"Hungry In America?" Unthin

No longer. But you can help. Y
provide nutritious food for young c
You can help the thousands of senic
living in poverty. You can give hor
lies struggling to stay together. A
encourage single parents as they st
provide for their children.

Your contribution to Operation
Search will help us supply food to
kitchens, food pantries and shelter
Missouri and Illinois that help fee
100,000 people each month, nearly 1
are children.
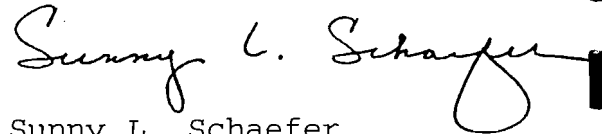
One dollar provides $19 wort of food...

Yes, because we are a private
sector solution to hunger, your

*Women represent nearl
two-thirds of the adults
seeking food assistance*

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350,000 individuals in the bi-state region are hungry. More than 157,000 are children. Hungry, <u>right here in the heartland</u>!

Yes, it's true! Please, send your check today and be part of the solution in your own community.

With gratitude,

Sunny L. Schaefer

Sunny L. Schaefer
Executive Director

P.S. As you are thinking about writing that check, imagine, just for a minute, coming home after a day at work knowing only two of your four children will eat dinner. The others will have to wait for the school lunch tomorrow before they can ease their hunger pains. <u>Please, give all that you can</u>.

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Hurricane Katrina Update.

Operation Food Search is proud to be providing food and support to the thousands of Hurricane Katrina survivors who have relocated in the bi-state region. An estimated 3,000 individuals are being served weekly through our network of agencies.

This is the new face of hunger here at home - infants, children, single parents, families, seniors. They have lost everything - their homes, their possessions, and, in some cases, their loved ones.

INSERT

We will continue to respond to the needs of those displaced by Hurricane Katrina while maintaining our commitment to the members of our community who battle hunger every day. They all need our support. Please help us ensure that everyone in our community receives the nourishment they need to rebuild their lives.

Chronology of the Creation of a Planned Giving Program

Month	Internal Work	External Work
Month 1	Budget	Meet with consultants, interview, select
	Contract	Review computer systems – data
	Current fund-raising effort	Meet key people
	Analysis	
	Volunteer identification	
	Study of organization	
	Meet key people	
Month 2	Board treaty	Visit prospective members
	Plan committees	
	Address confidentiality	
	Address ethics	
	Committee action plan	
	Prepare case statement	
Month 3	Marketing plan prepared	Meet with selected marketing advisers
		Survey of board; interview
Month 4	Define scope of program	Meet with marketing committee
	Board treaty approval	Meet with volunteer committee
	Being marketing brochure	Meet with board members
		Meet with technical advisers
Month 5	Marketing plan	Meet with marketing committee
	Internal training lunch	Assessment of finance and administration
	Case	Meet with lawyers; select
	Products	
	Seminars to attend	
	Volunteer book	
	Begin legal work	
	Prospect research	
Month 6	Core prospects; assign	Meet with financial community
	Brochures, newsletters	Meet with public relations personnel
	Staff meetings	Meet with volunteer committees
	Legal work	
Month 7	Core group strategy	Meet with marketing community
	Bequest plan	
	Newsletter	
	Proposals	
	Legal work	
	Plan donor seminars, board	
	Seminar	
Month 8	Bequest plan	Meet with volunteer committee
	Proposals	Meet with lawyer
	Donor seminar	
	Board seminar	
	Legal documents	
	Marketing brochure	

Source: The Nonprofit Handbook, Greenfield, 2001

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and expense reports; final reports pertaining to each appeal (users can decide whether to file a hard copy regularly or rely on computer-generated reports as needed); periodic and annual scorekeeping reports; an ideas file; and other files unique to your circumstances.

Should checks be photocopied, with the copies filed? Small and emerging organizations may want to, many not-for-profits still do. Organizations with strong computer systems and backup procedures may rely on computer records to check numbers, dates, amounts, use of funds, and donor information. The key here is the ability to extract the information quickly . . . combined with the integrity of the backup procedures.

Remember, computer mail lists and donor records are among a not-for-profit organization's most important assets. So, BACK UP, BACK UP, BACK UP! Periodically store a recent backup off site.

Weinstein, Stanley. 2002.
"The Complete Guide to
Fundraising Management."
San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Prospect Identification, Research, and Segmentation

Different strokes for different folks.

—Anonymous

Earlier we discussed the importance of a strong case for support. We then established an information system to record the key information about our donors and prospective donors. Now would be a good time to step back and figure out who is most likely to support our cause.

Ultimately fundraising professionals will want to adopt a highly personalized approach. When they write, their letters should sound as if the appeals are written from one person to one person—not to a group of supporters. When they put together presentation materials for face-to-face visits, they personalize the cover sheet and tailor the case for support to the individual interests of the prospective supporter.

However, before they can get to these highly personalized approaches, development professionals must put together a master list that identifies all potential supporters. Most often, not-for-profit organizations can seek support from the following broad classifications of donors:

- Individuals
- Businesses/corporations
- Foundations

- Government agencies
- Associations (professional associations and unions)
- Service clubs (Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions, Civitan, etc.)
- Churches and synagogues

(Remember the "type" code in the last chapter? These are the most common classifications to code and enter into the "type" field in your fund raising software.)

Now that the broad classifications and markets have been considered, attention can be turned to the task of identifying those most likely to support the organization.

THE BEST PROSPECTS

Board members and other key volunteers can help identify prospects and important contacts. A Community Relationships Survey is included on the CD-ROM that accompanies this book. The best prospects will vary from organization to organization, but most not-for-profits find success in garnering support from: constituents, board members, staff, current and lapsed donors, vendors, people generous to similar organizations, and affluent peers of organization members.

Constituents

Universities look to support from their alumni. Hospitals seek support from former patients. Symphonies raise funds from season subscribers. Churches raise funds from members of the congregation. Wildlife refuges receive donations from conservationists. Not-for-profit organizations should make an effort to record the names, addresses and phone numbers of their prime constituents—the people who use their services.

Perhaps the only not-for-profit organizations that cannot rely on financial support from their constituents are social service agencies that serve the poor.

Current and Former Board Members

The people who make policy and guide the not-for-profit organization are often the organization's best supporters. Chapter 1 stresses that those closest to the organization must set the pace. Not-for-profit organizations find

it helpful to stress the importance of this maxim. Gracious ways of encouraging current and former board members to give generously are discussed in Chapter 8.

Key Volunteers

People who volunteer for the organization are involved. This involvement gives volunteers an in-depth understanding of the nonprofit's services. The volunteers often know the most moving stories about the people the organization serves.

Some volunteers view financial contributions as a natural extension of their commitment to an organization. Others feel that their volunteer time is as much as they can afford to donate. The job of those responsible for fund raising is to encourage contributions from volunteers—but never make anyone feel uncomfortable if they cannot contribute.

Staff

Please don't overlook staff members as potential contributors. All staff members are familiar with the organization's services and programs. All staff members, by definition, are employed. The best prospects are people who are familiar with a not-for-profit's services and have the capacity to make a financial contribution. So, staff members meet the most fundamental criteria for consideration as prospects.

Staff contributions are among the most important contributions that can be received. Board members and other contributors are impressed when they become aware of generous staff contributions. Such donations bolster confidence in the philanthropic community. Donors know that if the staff is generous, the organization has inspired confidence in those most likely to know its weaknesses and strengths on an intimate basis.

Still, staff solicitations must be approached with sensitivity. As with volunteers, staff members must be comfortable with their decision to donate . . . or not to donate.

Current Donors

The most likely future supporters are current donors. One myth about fundraising is "We can't keep going back to the same people." Fundraisers

·ould be foolish to follow this advice. Professionals don't want to solicit ı̇e donor so frequently as to upset him or her. But 'donors who believe in ı̇e cause expect to be asked for contributions more often than once a year. Лost organizations tend to ask too few times, not too often.

.apsed Donors

\ donor who supported an organization in the past but has not contributed ·n the most recent 12- or 18-month period is generally considered a lapsed donor. Some fundraising professionals estimate that as many as 20 percent эf these lapsed donors can be persuaded to donate again. A thoughtful and highly personalized approach helps. Phone solicitations combined with mail appeals often work well. To be effective, development professionals will want to restate the case for support and handle any objections that might come up. Most of all, they can let the supporter know that his or her past contributions made a big difference and the people served by the or-·ganization miss that support and involvement.

Vendors

Businesses that sell goods and services to not-for-profit organizations often donate when asked.

Those Generous to Similar Organizations

A generous sponsor of one arts organization is often a good prospect for other arts institutions to approach. Likewise, people who support one envi-ronmental organization are frequently supporters of many other such causes.

Successful fundraisers find the names of generous philanthropists in their communities through symphony program books; hospital annual reports; university publications; on the walls of churches, libraries, hospitals, muse-ums, and private schools. Donor lists are easy to come by. Addresses and phone numbers take more work. However, dedicated volunteers often can help look up readily available information. As important, many board members have the names, addresses and phone numbers needed on their personal contact lists.

Fundraisers should take the time to discover information about people ˙˙˙˙˙ ˎˎ ˢⁱᵐⁱˡᵃʳ organizations and add that information to the fund-

raising software system. Record any information about their giving his-tory to other organizations. Find someone in the organization who knows the new prospect. Proactively nurture relationships with these potential supporters.

Affluent Individuals with Whom Someone in the Organization Has a Peer Relationship

When the subject of potential pace-setting donors comes up, volunteers often think about the wealthiest people they have ever heard of. Knowl-edge that someone is wealthy might be meaningless. The aim is to identify and nurture relationships with affluent people who might be expected to support the organization. As mentioned, the prospect's rationale for sup-porting a specific organization might be an interest in similar causes. Some-times the rationale for supporting an organization is merely a close relationship with a board member or major supporter.

People give to people. A variation of this point is to remember that a wealthy person might be a "suspect" at best. That person does not become a "prospect" until someone close to the organization with a peer relation-ship with the philanthropist is identified. Equally important, the person close to the organization must be willing to make the introduction.

PROSPECT RESEARCH

Some mature not-for-profit institutions have a sophisticated prospect re-search office. Some small emerging not-for-profit organizations have only one staff member to do everything including: service delivery, fundraising, public relations, and general administration. Whether the organization is a grassroots agency or a large institution, those who wish to raise money must focus on four key areas of prospect research:

1. The prospective supporter's relationship to the organization
2. The prospect's interests and hobbies, especially as they relate to the organization
3. Networking—who in the organization is close to the prospect
4. Capability—net worth, ability to donate, and challenging contribu-tion amounts to request

t the early stages of prospect research, fundraising professionals should identify as large a prospect pool as possible, capturing and recording the names of everyone who has a direct or indirect relationship to the organization. Board members and other key community leaders must be debriefed and asked whom to include on the master list of people to keep informed about the organization.

As the master list is compiled, remember to get the names of decision makers at the corporations and foundations you wish to approach. To be effective, the fundraising database should include names of key contacts. People make decisions. No one succeeds in raising funds from General Motors by standing outside corporate headquarters yelling "Hey, General Motors, please make a contribution to this worthwhile cause." And yet numerous fundraising databases do not contain contact names.

As fundraisers develop more information about potential supporters they segment the list based on capacity to give. As stated earlier, donors who already have given at generous levels are the organization's best prospects. But segmentation is not based on giving history alone. A key aim is to identify wealthy people who have a relationship to your organization.

Next, the list must be divided into potential giving levels. Prospects have vastly differing giving capacities. More research time should be spent on those prospective donors at the very top levels—the major gift prospects.

Every organization has its own definition of a major gift. The institution with a $60 million goal might consider contributions of $1 million or more major gifts. The not-for-profit agency with a $100,000 fundraising goal might consider any donation of $1,000 or more to be a major gift. In general, fundraisers consider any gift of 1 to 1.5 percent of the goal to be a major gift.

It is especially important for small not-for-profit organizations to develop cost-effective prospect research methods. Larger institutions can afford personnel dedicated to prospect research because the stakes are so high. Stakes are high for smaller not-for-profit organizations as well, but funding is very limited for prospect research. So, the research has to be highly focused and not too time consuming, given the organization's other priorities. The following is a prospect research strategy that even the smallest not-for-profit organization can use. Although streamlined, this method yields extremely useful information.

PROSPECT RATINGS AND EVALUATIONS

Many not-for-profit organizations with relatively small fundraising staffs find it difficult to conduct effective prospect research. Presuming that unlimited resources for prospect research are *not* available, the following technique may be helpful to the research and major gift process.

First create a cover sheet, Prospect Rating Form, and key page (see Exhibits 6-1, 6-2, and 6-3). The cover sheet is a way to comfort volunteers who are supplying the information. It also provides an opportunity to summarize the case for support. The key explains how the volunteers are to fill in the columns on the prospect rating form.

Volunteers should be reminded to put their names at the very top of the first page in the space provided. The information is somewhat useless without knowing who supplied it. When dealing with the column about maximum capacity, it is helpful to say something like "If this were the prospect's favorite charity, perhaps their church or university, what might be the most they could contribute? Please do not fill in a number that represents what you expect the prospect to donate. Rather, focus on the

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EXHIBIT 6-1   SAMPLE COVER PAGE FOR RATINGS FORMS

PROSPECT RATINGS FORM

ABC Not-for-Profit has embarked on a Major Gift Initiative to strengthen all of our programs for the people we serve . . . while at the same time maintaining our reputation for financial stability and sound management. The information gathered on this form will help us refine our plans. The campaign can succeed only with the generous support of a limited number of pace-setting contributors.

The information derived from this and other ratings and evaluations activities will be kept confidential and treated with the utmost discretion. The final decision concerning the correct amount of contribution to request will be based on the prospective donor's capacity, philanthropic nature, and relationship to ABC Not-for-Profit. The correct choice of solicitor can be determined only with knowledge of the prospect's network of associates.

When rating capacity to give, keep in mind the prospect's total means rather than past giving patterns. In other words, please indicate the *maximum* potential.

Thank you for your help. Your opinions are valuable to us.

EXHIBIT 6-2　SAMPLE PROSPECT RATING FORM

Staff fills in 300–400 names prior to the Volunteer review

VOLUNTEER'S NAME_____

Donors & Prospects Name/Company	Maximum Capacity	Interest in Our Organization	Your Relationship	Willing to Visit?
Mr. Ronald P. Abelson				
Mr. Thomas N. Ackerly				
Dr. & Mrs. Arthur Q. Adelle				
Mr. & Mrs. Harry B. Allen III				
American Widgets, Inc.				
Mr. Stanley W. Ammson, Jr.				
Aphorism Industries Paul Epigram, President				
Mr. & Mrs. Robert O. Baxter				
Mrs. Evelyn T. Carter				
Harold Charles, Esq.				
Mr. & Mrs. Russell Clinett				
Mr. & Mrs. Steven Darnit, Jr.				
Mr. & Mrs. William Derby				
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Desstitute				

maximum amount the person could afford to contribute." It is also help-
ful to explain that a number of factors will help determine how much the
organization will request. In some cases—especially when the prospect has
a very close relationship to an organization and when the organization is

EXHIBIT 6-3　SAMPLE "KEY" PAGE

PLEASE USE THE FOLLOWING KEYS WHEN FILLING IN THE FORM

MAXIMUM CAPACITY
(Base Solely on Prospective Donor's Means)
Enter number 1 to 8 based on your best guess. Leave blank only if you have no
knowledge whatsoever.
1　$300,000 or more 3-year pledge (100k a year)
2　100,000 or more 3-year pledge (33k a year)
3　75,000 or more 3-year pledge (25k a year)
4　30,000 or more 3-year pledge (10k a year)
5　15,000 or more 3-year pledge (5k a year)
6　7,500 or more 3-year pledge (2.5k a year)
7　3,000 or more 3-year pledge (1k a year)
8　Less than $1,000 a year pledge potential

LEVEL OF INTEREST IN OUR ORGANIZATION—AND PHILANTHROPIC TENDENCY
Enter letter A through E based on your best guess. Leave blank if you have no
knowledge of prospect.
A　High level of interest in ABC Not-for-Profit
B　Moderate level of interest (probably donates or attends organization activities)
C　Low level of interest but with potential for cultivation (doesn't give or participate
　yet but is interested in the goals of the organization)
D　Little known interest in the goals of the organization but has demonstrable
　civic pride
E　No interest and no concern for community

YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO PROSPECT
Enter number 1 to 5 to indicate the phrase that best describes your relationship.
1　Best of friends, relative, or close business associate
2　Acquainted and friendly
3　Met once or twice
4　Never met
5　Hostile relationship

engaged in a visionary campaign—the request amount will be equal to the
maximum capacity. In other cases, the appropriate request amount may be
somewhat less than the maximum the prospect can afford.

The column that deals with interest in the organization and philan-
thropic tendencies is self-explanatory based on the key. The staff might
wish to fill in information about a prospect's closeness to the organization
prior to having volunteers fill out the form.

Having created the forms, the next step is to have the staff or a dedicated volunteer fill in the names of 300 to 400 top "suspects." The list is composed of those thought to be likely prime prospects. Included are current generous donors; the largest local or national corporations likely to be approached; those who are generous to similar causes; wealthy individuals who have a relationship to a volunteer or board member; and other affluent constituents.

Now that the 300 to 400 names are filled in, the list should be taken to the board of directors or to a special committee composed of people who know the community, especially professionals who are knowledgeable about relative net worth of many of the prospects. To recruit such a committee look to bankers, real estate brokers, insurance agents, stock brokers, and attorneys. Also recruit people who have lived in your city a long time as well as community or national leaders. In short, recruit affluential and influential "movers and shakers" to serve on the rating committee.

Since keys are being used—numbers and letters rather than dollar amounts and specific information—many of the financial advisors find they can participate in the process without violating any ethical codes. If, for instance, a committee member put a "1" in the maximum capacity column, signifying that the donor is capable of making a $100,000 or more annual contribution, no specific information about the donor's net worth has been revealed. After all, the prospective donor might have a net worth of $6 million, $25 million, $60 million, or more. All that is known from the rating is that one committee member estimates that the prospect is capable of a contribution at the level indicated.

Anyone who has ever participated in a "talking" prospect rating meeting will recognize the benefit of using this silent method of forms and keys.

Traditional prospect rating sessions usually turn out like this. The meeting begins with an explanation of the importance of gathering information about prospective supporters. Everyone is assured that the information will be kept confidential. People are also told to please stay focused because there are numerous names to review. Now the fun begins. Mrs. Abercrombie is the first name discussed. Someone in the room knows her. All agree that she might well be capable of a $10,000 contribution, and surely Mabel will call on Mrs. Abercrombie. Next the committee discusses

Mr. and Mrs. John Bennett. Someone ... live on the hill. No one is sure. Next come Mr. and Mrs. James Bigheart. Mabel informs the committee that the Bighearts are getting a divorce. "No!" exclaim the committee members. Next follows a ten-minute discussion of what led to the divorce. The committee chair brings the committee's attention back to the list. The next name is Thomas Boswell. There is general agreement that Mr. Boswell had a good year and should be approached for a $20,000 contribution. Feeling confident, the chairman moves on to the next name, Thelma Carswell. At this point it is discovered that Mrs. Carswell is living with James Bigheart. The committee never gets back on track.

While this may be an exaggeration, it is safe to say that ratings committees rarely get through more than 25 to 50 names in an hour-and-a-half meeting. On the other hand, by using the forms in this book, a board of directors or committee can review up to 400 names in 20 minutes.

This 20-minute concentrated period is among the most important times in an organization's history. By staying focused—and by not being swayed by extraneous comments—an organization can quickly discover who on its list is most capable of generous gifts. Perhaps the most helpful information obtained through this process is the knowledge of which volunteers have close relationships to the organization's best prospects.

Once development planners know who has a positive relationship with potential supporters, they can recruit volunteer solicitors more readily. To broaden the knowledge about supporters, development officers also can phone or meet with the committee members who have the relationship with the supporter. Now is a good time to debrief the volunteers. The goal is not to gather titillating information; rather, it is to be sure to avoid embarrassment and approach prospects graciously. Thus it is best to gather some information in private rather than in group settings.

After the volunteers fill in the forms, the staff collects the forms, summarizes the committee's work, and creates the Compiled Prospect Rating Form (see Exhibit 6-4).

Once the committee's work has been summarized in the Compiled Prospect Rating Form, it becomes relatively easy to determine preliminary request amounts and volunteer assignments. There are a few commonsense ways of going about this.

EXHIBIT 6-4 COMPILED PROSPECT RATING FORM

Name/Company	Maximum Capacity	Interest in Organization	Your Relationship	Willing to Visit?
Mr. Ronald P. Abelson				
Mr. Thomas N. Ackerly	6(Carr) 5(Harrison)	B(Carr) C(Harrison)	2(Carr) 2(Harrison) 3(Hagard) 2(Mitchem) 2(Whitt)	
Dr. & Mrs. Arthur Q. Adelle	4(Carr) 3(Herring)	D(Herring)	2(Carr) 2(Hagard) 2(Herring)	
Mr. & Mrs. Harry B. Allen, III	7(Carr)		3(Carr) 3(Hagard)	
American Widgets, Inc.	2(Harrison)	C(Harrison)	2(Harrison) 3(Hagard)	
Mr. Stanley W. Ammson, Jr.	7(Liddy) 8(Mitchell) 8(Carr) 8(Harrison)	C(Liddy) C(Mitchell) C(Harrison)	2(Liddy) 2(Mitchell) 2(Carr) 2(Harrison) 3(Hagard) 2(Michel II)	Y(Mitchell) Y(Carr)
Aphorism Industries Paul Epigram, President	1(Liddy) 2(Carr) 2(Hagard)	B(Hagard) A(Liddy) A(Carr)	2(Hagard) 2(Liddy) 4(Carr)	
Mr. & Mrs. Robert O. Baxter				
Mrs. Evelyn T. Carter				
Harold Charles, Esq.				
Mr. & Mrs. Russell Clinett	8(Harrison)	C(Harrison)	2(Harrison) 3(Hagard)	
Mr. & Mrs. Steven Darnit, Jr				
Mr. & Mrs. William Derby				
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Desstitute	8(Liddy)	D(Liddy)	5(Liddy)	

Determining the "Ideal" Volunteer Solicitor

Using the forms and the compiled information, this step-by-step approach to choosing the volunteer solicitor can be followed:

1. When only one volunteer fills in the "Willing-to-Visit?" column for ---ific prospect, the assignment becomes automatic.

2. When two or more volunteers fill in that column, recruit the volunteer who rated the prospect's giving capacity higher. That volunteer will be more comfortable requesting a more generous contribution.

3. If two or more volunteers filled in the "Willing-to-Visit?" column and several rated the giving capacity equally high, choose the volunteer who knows the prospective supporter better.

     (One note of caution: If the volunteer places a "1" in the "Your Relationship" column, that means that the prospective supporter is the volunteer's best friend or a family member. This is *not* the ideal volunteer solicitor. It is possible to be too close to the prospect for a comfortable solicitation. Volunteers who place a "2" in this column generally make the very best volunteer solicitors. Again, seek people with peer relationships with the prospective supporters.)

4. If all factors are equal, assign the prospect to the volunteer with fewer assignments. The volunteer with many people to visit may not be able to make all the face-to-face solicitations. And the volunteer with few names has a smaller psychological hurdle to overcome in beginning to make the visits.

Ideally, when this process is through, each volunteer will have three to five prospective supporters to visit. Also remember that, to the extent possible, team visits are to be encouraged. The most effective solicitations involve a key staff member and a dedicated volunteer calling on a generous prospect or generous couple.

Often the "ideal" volunteer solicitor for a particular prospect was not part of the team that filled in the prospect ratings forms. In such cases speak with one of the people on the ratings team who knows the prospective supporter. The team member can tell you who knows the prospect well. The volunteer could be asked: "Who are some of Mr. Prospect's good friends? Who on our team is close to Mr. Prospect? Who believes in our cause that has the right 'chemistry' to approach Mr. Prospect for a contribution to our cause?"

Once the ideal solicitor has been determined, the next concern is how best to recruit him or her. Assuming that the volunteer is already a believer in the organization, a gracious yet direct approach is appropriate. Someone with a peer relationship with the prospective volunteer solicitor calls and makes an in-person appointment. Use the appointment to strengthen your

bond with the volunteer. Ask if the volunteer would be comfortable in a personal solicitation setting. Help these volunteers find their comfort levels. Some will be comfortable allowing their name to be used when seeking an appointment with the prospective donor. Others are willing to go on the call but will want a staff member or fellow volunteer to ask for the contribution. Still others are willing to make an appointment, go on the visit, and ask for a contribution at the predetermined level.

Determining the Capacity to Give

Using the Compiled Prospect Rating Form (Exhibit 6-4), it is easy to follow the steps for choosing the volunteer solicitor. A more difficult task is determining the appropriate request amount. Mastering this art is one of the keys to fundraising success. The aim is to determine a challenging, yet appropriate, gift amount or gift range to request *prior to* any solicitation visit with a prospective supporter.

What first must be considered is how much the prospect can afford to give. (The development professional and the team members may wish to discuss ways of judging giving capacity before committee members fill out the Prospect Rating Form.) Later what to request and what to expect can be discussed. Capacity to give is one matter. Willingness to give is quite another.

When considering capacity, remember that many people tithe and contribute 10 percent of their earnings to their church or charity. Independent Sector, an advocacy coalition for the nonprofit sector through its "Give Five" campaign, encourages people throughout the United States to donate 5 percent of their earnings to charity and to donate at least five hours to the not-for-profit sector each week. Many figures indicate that Americans tend to donate between 1.5 and 2.5 percent of their annual income to charity. Other studies indicate that Americans tend to donate one-fifth of what they can afford to donate. Stated another way, most Americans can afford to give five times as much as they currently are giving without substantially changing their lifestyle.

From this information it might be assumed that a prospect with a family income of approximately $100,000 might be capable of donating anywhere from $7,500 ($100,000 × 1.5% × 5) to $12,500 ($100,000 × 2.5% × 5) to a not-for-profit organization. However, people tend to give not more than $1,500 ($100,000 × 1.5%) to $2,500 ($100,000 × 2.5%). So, what should be requested? Are gifts asked for at the levels the people currently are giving? Does one ask for as much as they can afford? Or are there times when what seems to be more than the gift levels being discussed are asked for?

So far the focus has been on annual income and annual contribution amounts. However, many people find it possible to make much larger contributions to campaigns that encourage multiyear pledges. Additionally, committed donors frequently make contributions from their assets. They believe so much in the cause that they donate generously from their life savings or from their inheritances.

When discussing capacity to give, annual income *and* assets must be considered. The prospective donor's net worth is a better indicator of giving capacity than his or her current earning level. Not-for-profit organizations sometimes receive six- and seven-figure contributions from supporters with modest careers. In one case, a retired schoolteacher donated $250,000. The not-for-profit organization had discovered that the teacher had inherited a large block of stock in a successful company. The legacy allowed the inheritor to do what she loved best—teach.

Here are some general guidelines that can help determine *capacity* to give:

- A person with a net worth of $40 million can afford to donate $2 million without changing his or her lifestyle.

- A person with a net worth of $25 million or more can afford to donate $1 million.

- A person known to have contributed $5,000 to a political candidate can afford to donate $100,000 to a multiyear capital campaign (20 times the political donation amount).

- Most donors can afford to donate at least five times as much as they are currently giving. If the donor's name appears on another organization's donor listing, it can be expected that he or she can donate at least five times the amount being donated to that organization. In other words, if a donor is giving your organization $100 a year, it can be assumed that he or she can donate $500 a year; however, if the donor has donated $1,000 to another organization, it is reasonable to believe that he or she might be able to donate at least $5,000 to a cause.

- Committed supporters often can afford to donate an amount equal to 10 percent of their annual incomes. At times, they may be able to donate even more. Such pace-setting leadership gifts are given from the donor's assets rather than from current income.

- Committed supporters often can afford to donate an amount equal to three weeks of their salary.

- When planning a capital campaign with a three-year pledge period, current donors to your organization often can afford to donate an amount equal to 20 times their annual gift. Thus a $500-a-year donor might be asked to consider a three-year pledge of $10,000 to the capital campaign.

The ratings team can help determine how much a prospective supporter can afford to donate. However, to ascertain the true upper limits of capacity, committee members must themselves be generous people. The sad truth is that miserly people cannot imagine others donating generously. So, all the talk at the committee about how to rate maximum capacity falls on unreceptive ears. *Generous* people with knowledge of the community provide the best assessment of giving capacity.

Help refine the information by looking at the organization's records. Determine the largest amount the donor has given, then multiply that amount by at least five to determine his or her capacity. As already mentioned, committed supporters frequently can afford as much as 20 times their annual giving. By gathering information about salary ranges in your area, development professionals can get a good sense of the donors' annual giving. Also, don't forget reference materials. For example, corporate annual reports or the SEC 8-K reports contain information about executive remuneration and stock control.

Determining the Request Amount

Once information about capacity to give has been gathered, the next step is determining the appropriate amount to request.

Consider this most important premise: *When deciding how much to ask for, it is far better to err on the high side than to ask for too little.*

People aren't insulted to be asked for a larger gift than they feel they can afford. In fact, many people find it flattering that they are thought affluent

There are two things worse than asking too little. The first is not being specific in the request. As mentioned, frequently donors have no way of knowing if $50 or $500,000 is needed. Such important issues must not be left unresolved. Offer the donor an opportunity to make a significant investment in your cause.

The second—and most fatal—mistake is to not ask at all.

So, decide to always request a specific gift amount or gift range. Use the information obtained on the Prospect Rating Forms and the Compiled Prospect Rating Form to help determine the *appropriate* request amount.

Here are the general guidelines for determining the request amount:

- If the prospective donor has a close relationship to the organization, and it is engaged in a visionary campaign with a large goal, request an amount equal to the donor's maximum capacity.

  These donors are the 1-As on the rating forms. Volunteers put a "1" in the maximum capacity column, indicating extraordinary affluence. They or staff also put an "A" in the relationship to the organization column, indicating a close connection to the organization. The 1-As are those closest with most assets—the organization's very best prospects.

  Imagine conducting a $6 million capital campaign. A leadership donation of $1 million is needed. By all means, graciously request that sum from someone who has bonded with the organization who can afford to donate the pace-setting investment.

- If the donor has a close relationship to your organization, and it is engaged in an annual campaign or other routine fundraising effort, request an amount equal to the organization's largest giving club or gift level.

  Imagine conducting a $400,000 annual campaign. Perhaps the top giving level is the $50,000 Founders Circle. Even if one of the closest supporters can afford a $1 million contribution, he or she can't be asked for that every time. In such a case, request the $50,000 contribution. Of course the relationship should be developed further with the supporter informed about the not-for-profit's visionary plans for the future.

- If the donor is not already closely associated with the organization, intensify the relationship nurturing activities and wait to request a

higher level gift. If the campaign has a pressing deadline and momentum is needed, consider requesting an amount one or two levels below the prospective donor's capacity.

- If the prospective supporter is a foundation, request an amount in its general or average gift range—preferably an amount closely tied to a realistic project budget. If the foundation sometimes donates amounts greater than its average gift range, form a relationship with the giving officers and seek their help in securing grants at the higher levels.

- If a strong volunteer with a peer relationship with the prospective supporter has been recruited, ask for the maximum amount that the volunteer is comfortable requesting. Encourage such volunteers to "think big." Even when prospective supporters have not yet developed a close relationship to an organization, they can be encouraged to donate at their maximum capacity levels if they have a strong relationship with the community leader who asks for the contribution.

KNOW THE PROSPECTIVE DONOR AS A PERSON

Speaking of suspects, prospects, ratings, and evaluation sounds somewhat analytical—maybe even clinical. All that fundraising jargon is helpful when describing the "nuts and bolts" of the research process. However, it really misses the heart of the issue. We must know our supporters as people. We must understand their likes, dislikes, and philanthropic motivations. We must know what each prospective supporter cares about.

A lot has been written and said about sources of information. Professional prospect researchers know how to access a great deal of library and on-line information. An alternative available to all not-for-profits is to develop a small network of people who can be relied on for background information. Community leaders who are long-term residents of the region tend to know a great deal about prospective supporters. With this in mind, the prospect researchers' best tool is the telephone. The amount of prospect information three to five plugged in confidants can provide is amazing.

After getting information through telephone contacts, the next step is additional research with corporate reports. The annual report gives a broad overview of the corporation's business and economic condition. The 10-K

report is a detailed annual financial report that also shows salaries and other compensation for principal officers. The proxy statement gives detailed information on executive compensation and control of stock. The 8-K report details sales of large blocks of stock.

A plethora of information about foundations is available at each state's foundation center. Look at foundation reports, *The Grants Index*, and a variety of foundation directories.

Information on individuals can be found in *Who's Who in America* and with various electronic databases available on-line. Several consulting firms also offer electronic screening services that enable not-for-profit institutions to identify prime prospective supporters who are already on the in-house list but who have not yet given at leadership levels.

One final point before leaving this discussion of prospect research. All of the prospect research in the world is of no value if it does not directly support the solicitation process. During a tour of the administrative offices of a not-for-profit institution on the West Coast, this author was shown a large room with file cabinets filled with prospect research information. In response to a positive comment about the organization's prospect research, the tour guide said, "We don't do much prospect research anymore. For years we collected and stored a lot of information about wealthy people. But no one from the development office ever seemed to use this information, so we stopped collecting it."

In summary, focus on the key information that will help determine the challenging yet appropriate amount to request, the right solicitor to go on the call, and the project the prospective donor would be most likely to support. And see that the volunteers and staff members making the visits use the prospect research information.

$4 Million Gift Pyramid

Number of Gifts Required	Investment Level Three-Year Pledge Period	Annual Amount	Value
1	1,000,000	333,334	1,000,000
1	500,000	166,667	500,000/1,500,00
2	250,000	83,334	500,000/2,000,000
2	125,000	41,667	250,000/2,250,000
3	100,000	33,334	300,000/2,550,000
4	75,000	25,000	300,000/2,850,000
5	50,000	16,667	250,000/3,100,000
10	25,000	8,334	250,000/3,350,000
25	10,000	3,334	250,000/3,600,000
40	5,000	1,667	200,000/3,800,000
50	2,500	834	125,000/3,925,000
75	1,000	334	75,000/4,000,000

Standard of Investments Necessary to Achieve $4 Million Goal

Fundraising Governance

I. **Board of Directors**
  - Ensure adequate resources (personal involvement in fundraising)
  - Determine organizational mission, purpose and strategic objectives
  - Select and support the executive director, review his/her performance and establish personnel policies
  - Ensure effective management and planning
  - Ensure effective fiscal management and legally compliant operations
  - Organize the board so that it works effectively
  - Approve budgets and determine and monitor the organization's programs and services
  - Select and orient new board members
  - Enhance the organization's public image
  - Evaluate the board's own performance

2. **Executive Director**
  - Determine organizational mission, purpose and strategic objectives
  - Ensure adequate resources and staff to carry out programs and fundraising
  - Oversee fundraising function
  - Monitor fundraising performance
  - Personal involvement in fundraising

3. **Development Director**
  - Draft fundraising plan that accomplishes organization's strategic objectives
  - Determine fundraising techniques
  - Organize and carry-out fundraising plans
  - Monitor and report on fundraising performance
  - Lead staff and volunteer involvement in fundraising functions

4. **Marketing Director**
  - Support fundraising function through outreach efforts in community
  - Build visibility and donor base for the organization
  - Active involvement in fundraising effort

5. **Volunteer Director**
  - Support fundraising function through availability and involvement of volunteer resources
  - Active involvement in fundraising effort

6. **Staff**
  - Active involvement in fundraising effort

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Assessing Fund-Raising Effectiveness:

Questions to Start With

Assessment of a fund-raising program is the first step in improving fund-raising effectiveness. In many cases, a good assessment will provide specific direction for how a program can be improved. In other cases, how to improve a program may not be so obvious. Since a full-scale program assessment and improvement model is beyond the limits of this book, we have provided references for further reading on most topics.

The following lists of questions are designed to facilitate and stimulate reflection about the qualitative aspects of a fund-raising program. The lists do not include questions regarding critical financial and technical aspects of a program.

The President / Executive Director/CEO

1. Does the president provide strong leadership for fund-raising efforts?
2. Does the president see fund raising as a major responsibility of his or her position?
3. Does the president encourage and facilitate the setting of institutionwide priorities for fund raising?
4. Does he or she effectively articulate the institution's mission and case for support to all constituents, internal and external?
5. Is the president enthusiastic about fund raising?
6. How extensive is the president's actual fund-raising experience?

7. Does he or she effectively rely on the fund-raising expertise of the chief development officer and staff members?
8. How much time does the president spend on fund-raising activities? Is this amount of time sufficient?
9. How does the president's participation in fund raising affect the fund-raising staff?
10. Are the president's goals for the institution clear to the fund-raising staff?
11. Is the president an effective fund raiser? Does he or she ask for gifts directly?

(For information about the president and fund raising, see Adams, 1989; Association of American Colleges, 1975; Davenport, 1989; Fisher and Quehl, 1989; Rowland, 1986a, 1986b.)

Trustees

1. Are trustees donors?
2. Do trustees participate in the identification and solicitation of donors?
3. Do trustees demonstrate a clear understanding of the importance of fund raising in their policy making?
4. Are the president and chief development officer trying to nurture and expand trustees' involvement in fund raising?

(For information about trustees, see Pocock, 1989.)

Resource Allocation and Acceptance of Fund Raising

1. Are the resources allocated for fund raising sufficient for meeting fund-raising goals?
2. Is the need for fund raising widely understood and accepted on campus?
3. Who are the people on campus who have a clear understanding of the need for fund raising? Who are the people lacking in this understanding?
4. Are efforts under way to develop and enhance understanding of fund-raising goals, efforts, and costs across campus?

5. How will increased understanding among internal constituents facilitate fund-raising efforts at this institution?

Niche and Image

1. What are the unique contributions of this institution to the higher education community?
2. How widespread, internally and externally, is the shared understanding of what this institution stands for?
3. What are the implications and consequences for fund raising of the institution's being in this particular niche? What obvious but overlooked donor constituencies emerge? What particular fund-raising approaches are especially indicated? Should any specific fund-raising approaches definitely be avoided?
4. Are fund-raising efforts and resources focused and differentiated to reflect the institution's particular character and needs?
5. Are efforts under way at the institutional level to enhance and communicate an attractive image?
6. How well defined and well communicated is the institution's image?
7. Are fund raisers articulate and accurate in communicating the institution's niche and image?

(For information on institutional niche and image, see Kotler and Fox, 1975.)

Fund-Raising Priorities and Policies

1. Have institutional priorities for fund raising been set and widely communicated?
2. Is there broad consensus that these priorities are the right ones for the institution at this time?
3. Do fund-raising priorities reflect the overall institutional mission and goals?
4. Are expectations for fund-raising results neither overly grand nor too limited? Do these expectations accurately reflect the institution's potential for fund raising?

5. How do institutional fund-raising priorities provide direction and focus for fund-raising planning and efforts?
6. How are competing interests regarding proposal submissions handled?
7. Are proposal submission policies well defined and well understood by units with potentially competing interests?
8. Have formal agreements and understandings been negotiated with funding organizations that restrict proposal submissions?
9. Have proposal submission policies been clarified with outside funding organizations?
10. How are proposal submission policies and guidelines communicated to faculty members and all other people with fund-raising interests?

(For information on institutional priorities, see Whetten and Cameron, 1985.)

Chief Development Officer

1. Does the chief development officer understand and value higher education?
2. Is the chief development officer an articulate representative of his or her institution and the fund-raising field?
3. Does the chief development officer convey not only understanding of but also respect for the philanthropic process?
4. Does the chief development officer have high professional standards for himself or herself and the staff?
5. Is the chief development officer committed to fund-raising programs designed for the long-term benefit of the institution?
6. To what extent does the chief development officer emphasize fund-raising programs that reflect the distinct character and needs of the institution?
7. Does the chief development officer function at an executive level as a college/university officer?
8. Does the chief development officer have fund-raising expertise and direct fund-raising responsibilities?

9. Does the chief development officer effectively control or delegate internal management duties?
10. Does the chief development officer function as a mentor to new staff members?
11. Does the chief development officer function as an entrepreneur?
12. Are the chief development officer's abilities and skills the right "fit" for the institution? In what areas does he or she excel? What areas does he or she need to strengthen?
13. Is the chief development officer's overall fund-raising philosophy consistent with the institution's current needs and character?
14. Is the chief development officer an effective leader?

Centralized Fund-Raising Programs

1. Are there a central office and staff to reflect the institution's commitment to institutionwide fund-raising priorities? How does the central office support college or unit fund-raising efforts?
2. What is the organizational structure of fund raising at the institution, and how does the structure reflect institutional character and fund-raising needs?
3. Is the present organizational structure the appropriate one for this institution?
4. Who supports the structure? Who wants to see the structure changed?
5. What problems could be resolved with a change in organizational structure? What new problems would result? What case can be made for a change in the organizational structure?
6. Regardless of organizational structure, how are problems involving communication, coordination, and negotiation of competing interests handled?

(For information on organizational structure, see Desmond and Ryan, 1985; Hall, 1990; Sandberg, 1985.)

Successful Fund-Raising History

1. What is the history of fund raising in this institution? How does this history affect today's program decisions and program character?
2. What is the institution's level of maturity in fund raising? How will current fund-raising efforts increase the level of maturity?
3. What fund-raising programs already under way are serving the institution well? What programs need to be improved? What new programs need to be developed?
4. Are formal programs or efforts under way to solicit gifts from all major donor groups (alumni, nonalumni, corporations, and foundations) and to solicit all major types of gifts (annual, capital, major, and planned)?
5. How well does the mix of programs at this institution reflect institutional priorities and assets? What program areas need to be improved or abandoned?
6. Have there been previous major campaigns? At present, is the institution planning a campaign, actually involved in one, or between campaigns?
7. What external and internal indicators are used to determine when the institution is ready to undertake a major campaign?
8. Is there an understanding on campus of the difference between a campaign to meet specific needs and purposes and a campaign to change the level and scope of fund raising?
9. What is the history of major campaigns at this institution? What have these prior campaigns, successful or unsuccessful, taught the institutional community about fund raising for this institution?
10. What outside professional services are being used or being considered? What is the rationale for using outside services?
11. How are outside services selected?
12. Are these services meeting institutional needs?
13. How are results and costs associated with purchased services evaluated?

14. How do services provided by outside firms reflect the institution's character and values?

(For information on campaigns, see Bornstein, 1989; Davis, 1986; Dove, 1988; Dunn and Adam, 1989; Gurin, 1986; McIntosh, 1986; and Stehle, 1990.)

Entrepreneurial Fund Raising

1. In what ways are fund-raising programs entrepreneurial for this institution?
2. Who takes risks in fund raising? Who supports risk taking?
3. What fund-raising efforts that do not conform to conventional wisdom about fund-raising success are effective in this institution?
4. What entrepreneurial fund-raising approaches can be developed for this institution?

(For information on entrepreneurial fund raising, see Taylor, 1986.)

Volunteers

1. Do volunteers play a large part in the fund-raising program?
2. Does this institution use volunteers extensively in capacities other than fund raising?
3. Are there volunteers already active on behalf of the institution in other areas who can be recruited for fund raising?
4. Is developing or enhancing a strong volunteer cadre for fund raising feasible for this institution? Would developing such a cadre be worth the effort?

(For more on the role of volunteers, see Goodale, 1987.)

Emphasis on Management

1. Do the people in charge of fund-raising have professional management skills and abilities?
2. Is management of the fund-raising process taken seriously, or is management considered a "necessary evil," something

3. How are the fund-raising and management responsibilities balanced?
4. What are the management strengths in this fund-raising effort? How can they be enhanced?
5. What are the management shortcomings in this fund-raising effort? How can they be improved?
6. What is the management style in the development office? How does this style reflect management style throughout the institution?
7. Is teamwork valued and supported in this institution or is the emphasis on individual performance?

(For information on management of fund raising, see Bennett, 1987; Soifer, 1989; Sorensen, 1986; Tuckman and Johnson, 1987; Young, 1987.)

Information and Communication Systems

1. How effective are the systems to collect, store, retrieve, and disseminate information?
2. Is information about donors and prospects, activities under way, and progress toward goals readily available and widely shared?
3. Are clear expectations and directives available to all fund-raising staff members? Do all fund-raising staff members have sufficient information about expectations and progress of other staff members?
4. What procedures or policies support and enhance communication between all fund-raising staff members, between the fund-raising staff and other institutional units, and between the fund-raising staff and external constituents?

Planning, Goal Setting, and Evaluation

1. What is the strategic mission of the development office? Does this mission fully reflect the institution's fund-raising potential?
2. Are fund-raising program plans oriented toward a market approach rather than an approach based on the insti-

3. Are goals set for fund raising? How specific and concrete are these goals? How measurable are these goals?
4. Are fund-raising goals concrete and specific with respect to activities and dollars raised, based on percentage increases, or are the goals conceptual?
5. Is the planning done appropriate for this institution?
6. Is fund-raising planning formal or informal? deliberate or intuitive? autocratic or participative? Should the way planning is now done be changed to better support fund-raising goals and expectations?
7. Who participates in fund-raising planning? How much input do institutional leaders, external constituents, and fund-raising staff members have in planning and goal setting?
8. How is fund raising evaluated?
9. How are goals determined? How are percentage increases determined?
10. How are economic conditions, past fund-raising history, and overall fund-raising potential considered in fund-raising goals?
11. Which other higher education institutions are appropriate fund-raising peers for this institution? What can be learned from the experiences of these other institutions?

(For information on planning, goal setting, and evaluation see Dunn, Terkla, and Adam, 1986; Frantzreb, 1986; Loessin and Duronio, 1990; Loessin, Duronio, and Borton, 1988; Nahm, 1986; Whaley, 1986.)

Staff Development, Training, and Evaluation

1. Is staff turnover a problem? If so, why? How can problems leading to high turnover be resolved?
2. How well do the values and attitudes of staff members reflect the institution's character and needs?
3. Do staff members attend either in-house or outside training and professional development programs?
4. How is staff communication facilitated?
5. How is staff performance evaluated and rewarded?

Staff Commitment to Institution

1. Do staff members have strong personal ties to the institution? How do these personal ties enhance fund raising?
2. What are fund-raising staff committed to: the institution? the fund-raising field? fund-raising ideals and values? personal success and achievement? How do these commitments enhance fund raising?
3. How can staff commitment more supportive of institutional goals and values be developed?

(For more information on issues concerning fund-raising staff members, see Boardman, 1989; Carbone, 1987; Carter, 1989; Clewis and Panting, 1989; Levine, 1989; Moran and Volkwein, 1988; Turk, 1986.)

Constituent Relations

1. Are fund-raising efforts designed to respond to the needs and interests of donors?
2. How are donors cultivated, solicited, acknowledged, and recognized?
3. What efforts are under way to keep donors informed and involved in the life of the institution?
4. How do alumni relations programs facilitate fund raising?
5. Does the institution have a distinctive role in or relationship with the community or region that is fully utilized for fund raising?
6. Is there an internal campaign to solicit faculty and staff members?
7. How does the fund-raising staff develop and maintain close relationships with deans and faculty members and educate internal constituents about fund raising?

(For information on constituent relations, see Leed, 1987; Melchiori, 1988; Trachtman, 1987.)

Reviewing these questions should not only provide an overall view of the fund-raising program under consideration but should also clearly identify major strengths and weaknesses

in the program, as well as the more obvious and feasible areas for improvement. The results of the research reported in this book indicate strongly that successful fund-raising programs do not have outstanding characteristics in all areas. Instead, successful fund-raising programs have been designed to fully utilize and build on current institutional strengths. No institution that continues to survive is excluded from the possibility of improving its performance in fund raising, provided that human, financial, and material resources are used wisely. Sustained growth and good performance in fund raising are neither a matter of luck nor even a matter of past history. Success in fund raising is, more than anything else, the end result of people asking other people for gifts. The assessment questions should give some indicators about how that basic process of people asking other people for gifts can be strengthened and improved. Good luck!