



Criteria for Success™

Everything an organization does to prepare for and implement a capital campaign will be judged via certain “**Criteria for Success**”:

A Case that is Valid, Realistic and Universally Accepted

The case for the campaign needs to be made in terms of factual data that will validate it. It must be realistically presented as though seen through the eyes of the prospective donor. And it must have universal appeal by demonstrating potential benefits to the majority, if not all, of the stakeholders.

Commitment by the Organization Leadership

Prior to asking others for a commitment to the project, the Board must themselves demonstrate their own commitment. They must be willing to give of both their time and financial resources. They will set the tone of the campaign by creating the example that others will follow.

Involvement by the Community Leadership

More depends upon “who” asks for the donation than the size of the donation requested. Therefore, if the proposed campaign is to succeed, prospective donors must be approached by their peers for their gifts. Your organization must be able to recruit those persons who are both influential and affluent to fill the leadership roles in the campaign.

Strategy (including proper cultivation) to Obtain “Lead” Gifts

Large meaningful gifts must be secured if a campaign is to succeed. In fact, the key to success is often the ability to secure a “lead gift,” a gift that is equal to or larger than 10% to 15% of the overall goal. In addition, the campaign will look for the top 10 to 15 gifts to equal 50% of the goal. In some cases, this will take cultivation, which may require involvement in the planning stages of the project by those individuals with the ability to make large pledges.

Proper Planning

Prior to launching a campaign, the organization must demonstrate a long-range plan to the community. This plan must include a mission statement, a clear vision and priority goals. It must present objectives and action steps that reflect how the plan will be implemented. The plan must demonstrate that the organization has considered how it will meet its future commitments.

Proper Timing

The timing for a campaign must be taken into account. The campaign must be the center of attention for the staff, volunteers, members and other prospective donors. There should be no other efforts by your organization “competing” with the campaign as they may diminish both the effort and the financial resources.