



# 9 Fundraising Tips

for a

**SUCCESSFUL RAISE**



Most schools come to a point where they need to raise capital to make ends meet. One of the popular ways to do this is to have a fundraiser. This mini ebook shares 9 fundraising tips and advice for a successful raise. Whether you have started planning or are just beginning to think about fundraising for your school, you will find something useful in this guide. Before we divulge our fundraising tips and advice, let's take a look at why schools fundraise in the first place.

## **FUNDRAISING SECRETS SHARED HERE**



## **Why Fundraise?**

Schools choose to fundraise to meet capital needs for a specific cause. The cause may be to buy new books, to host a school dance, to hire a new teacher, or to fund a school trip. Suppose you need capital to meet an end that you can't otherwise afford within your school's budget. In that case, a fundraiser may be the solution you need. Raising capital is of course the primary reason to fundraise. However, there are secondary reasons to choose this method as the solution to your capital needs.

Fundraising allows you to build relationships with your community and supporters, whether that is by partnering to co-market each other's causes or by bringing supporters in to

volunteer at an event. Students also benefit by taking active roles such as selling, marketing, or reporting. This helps to build real-world skills as well as self-esteem and confidence.

## **Effort + Engagement = Success**

The key to successful fundraising is to give it your all. This isn't something you do on a whim and expect great results. Put in the effort- detailed plans, a partnership with a reputable fundraising company, and a well-thought out strategy are needed. Engage your students, parents, faculty, alum, and the greater community. Get your school's people involved in as many roles as possible. Effort plus engagement pave the path to success.

## **Fundraising Tips**

We have compiled a list of school fundraising tips to help ensure you have a successful raise.

### **1. Plan In-Depth**

We suggest beginning your [fundraising plan](#) at least two months in advance of your campaign. This allows time to work out the details of all phases including preparation, execution, follow-up, and evaluation. Your planning process should begin with a brainstorm about your current wants and needs. These will inform the rest of the process.

You can choose to plan as an individual, a team, or with a fundraising company. Our suggestion is to use a myriad of these options. For example, the individual responsible for raising funding may decide there is a need for a fundraiser and

assemble a team. This team may decide upon and then meet with a fundraising company to complete the in-depth campaign planning.

## 2. Form a Committee

As mentioned in the last section, it can be helpful to have a team or committee planning and executing the campaign. This committee handles all of the ins and outs of the campaign. They will discuss campaign methods, marketing strategies, volunteer recruitment, and campaign evaluation parameters among other things.

For best results, there should be a variety of skills and backgrounds on the committee. This brings a diverse range of ideas and inputs, leading to well-rounded decisions and therefore a more successful campaign.

### *Example Roles for Fundraising Committees*

Below are examples of important roles on a school fundraising committee:

- **Accountant:** The accountant handles budgeting and takes a lead in determining the financial goal of the campaign. They calculate projected and real profit margins. This person is detail-oriented, organized, and of course great with numbers.
- **Marketer:** This is someone who ideally has experience in marketing and advertising. This person is creative and thinks outside the box. They likely have experience working with design that can be applied to printing fliers and creating email/newsletter templates.

- **Networker:** The networker acts as a liaison to bring awareness of and support to the campaign. This may be a well-connected individual in the community or simply someone great at creating and maintaining relationships. This person is well-spoken, a strong writer, and likely very charismatic.
- **Operations:** This person handles the logistics of the fundraiser. They contact the vendors, secure a venue, manage product delivery, etc. They are responsible for planning and carrying out the actions needed to ensure a smooth campaign. This individual is self-motivated, organized, and a logical thinker. They are able to manage responsibilities for multiple things at once.
- **Manager:** The manager oversees the fundraiser and the committee. They lead the meetings and keep track of all decisions made. This is the person the committee members and volunteers report to. The manager and accountant work together to determine evaluation parameters. While the operations role manages the logistics of the campaign (the intricate details), the manager is responsible for the overall functioning of the campaign (the big picture). This individual is able to take a wide lens, is a great coach, and is comfortable taking a leadership role.

Please note that you may opt to not have one person as a leader, but rather have all positions on the committee equal to one another. In this case, the manager's title may change. However, it is still important to indicate who is in charge of what aspects of the raise. It is also helpful to have a designated individual moderating the meetings, even if that is a different person each session.



### 3. Focus on SMART Goal Setting

When setting your financial goal, you should be optimistic, yet realistic. This should be a number for participants to reach for and should encourage them to do their best. If the goal is set too low, participants won't be encouraged to push themselves and it is highly unlikely that number will be exceeded. If the goal is set too high, participants may doubt they can achieve it and therefore give up before even getting started.

Your goal should be carefully calculated instead of arbitrarily decided on. Taking the above into account in conjunction with the budget, you can determine the right financial goal for you.

#### *SMART Goal Formula*

To help set an ideal goal for your campaign, follow the SMART goal formula:

- **Specific:** Your goal should be specific, both in terms of a financial goal and an accompanying goal. An example might be \$7,500 and strengthen connections with our top ten volunteers.

- **Measurable:** Goals should be concrete and not abstract. In the example above 'strengthen connections with our top ten volunteers', you will need additional parameters to define this. This may be hosting a thank-you ceremony at the end of your fundraising event, or personally connecting with each volunteer who registered in your product fundraiser.
- **Achievable:** As discussed above, goals should be achievable. If the goal is set too high, it can feel defeating when not reached. Participants may feel doubtful or hopeless and not give their all to the campaign. Choose a goal you can reach with effort.
- **Relevant:** The goal should be related to your overall cause. For example, if you are raising money for the school dance, you shouldn't add in an additional \$1,000 to the goal to cover new books needed. Save this for another campaign.
- **Time-Bound:** Your goal should be time-bound. For example, we strive to raise \$3,000 in candy bar sales in two weeks- 10/1-10/14. Set an end date or parameter for your raise while goal setting.

## 4. Prepare Your Pitch

No matter what type of fundraiser you choose to host, you will need to [prepare your pitch](#). Your pitch shares your story with potential donors. Include a little about your school and your mission, talk about your cause and what funds will specifically be used for, share your fundraising method, and how potential donors can get involved (purchasing product, attending an event, volunteering, etc.).

### *Example Pitches*

Below are two example pitches. The first is for an event

fundraiser and may be printed on a flier or included in an email. The second is for a product fundraiser and may be used in in-person selling.

- *'Tyson Elementary School strives to provide stellar education to children grades 1-4. Our current budget restricts us from purchasing new science books. Science is an ever-advancing subject, and we desire to provide our students with the most up-to-date information. Funds will be used to purchase 3,000 new 'Brand/Title' books. Support our cause by attending our read-a-thon on October 1st at the Tyson public library. Event tickets can be purchased on the school website or in person on the day of the event. Contact us by email if you would like to volunteer or donate snacks and beverages.'*
- *'Hello, my name is Suzy and I attend J. Miller High School. We are selling popcorn to raise funds for our senior trip to the Museum of Science and Industry this spring. I have six flavor varieties to choose from, including regular, sweet, and savory options. Would you like to take a look at my brochure and help my senior class reach our goal?'*

## **5. Offer Add-Ons**

When selling products, always offer an add-on. For example, if you are hosting a gift wrap sale, offer small gifts as well. Be sure to mention these when you make a sale. For example:

*'Thank you so much for purchasing gift wrap to support our raise to buy new books. We are selling small gifts such as candy and decorative paperweights to go with your gift wrap items. Would you like to take a look at the catalog?'*

This method helps boost sales by taking one purchase and potentially turning it into two!



## 6. Market Your Raise

We know that advertising is important as there is an entire role on the fundraising committee dedicated to just this! Marketing your campaign is crucial to success. People need to know about your sale, event, or donation page in order to participate. There are many ways to [market your raise](#). Use your creativity to create media that catches your eye and instills a lasting memory.

### *Marketing Ideas*

Below is a list of ideas for marketing your school fundraiser:

- Send flyers home
- Post flyers around town and at local businesses
- Run an ad in the local newspaper
- Have an announcement on the local radio station
- Ask local businesses to sponsor the event
- Word of mouth
- Send out an email blast
- Talk about it on your website
- Post it on your social media
- Ask your supporters to post on their social media



## 7. Offer Incentives

**Incentivize participants** to participate in your fundraising efforts. What participation consists of will differ depending on your fundraising method. For example, a peer-to-peer fundraising program requires participants to register their own fundraising page. A product fundraiser requires participants to sell as much product as they can. Incentives may also be given to encourage participants to share an announcement and updates about the campaign on their social media websites.

### *Example Incentive programs*

Below are a few examples of incentive programs you can choose from for your next fundraiser:

- **Raffle:** Students can earn a raffle ticket for meeting a sales goal or registering a donation page. You can also use this method to encourage donors to buy-in by offering an entry for a prize at the end of the campaign.
- **School dance or field trip:** Offer a big event if a certain sales goal or a percentage of students register a donation page.
- **No homework day:** Students have one day where no homework is assigned for reaching a campaign goal.
- **Movie day:** Students earn a movie day for reaching a goal.
- **Prizes:** All students who reach a preset goal win a prize for their efforts.

## 8. Following Up

Follow up with your donors and participants when the fundraiser ends. Thank everyone for their efforts, volunteer time, and donations. This shows your gratitude and confirms

the importance of their ongoing support. Not only is this a kind thing to do, but it encourages further participation in your next campaign.

Consider sending an email, a thank you card, or making a phone call to thank participants. Don't go generic! If possible, customize each thank you so the reader knows it was written just for them.

## 9. Evaluate

After your fundraiser ends, the committee should evaluate overall performance. Did your campaign go smoothly? Did everyone involved fulfill their duties? Were participants satisfied with the experience? Did you reach your goals- financial and other? Find out where you exceeded and where you fell short. Use this information to inform your planning process for your next school fundraiser.



## Steps to Follow

Big Fundraising Ideas has laid out a five-step program to successfully launch your fundraiser. The steps are as follows:

1. *Determine your cause:* Determine why you need to have a fundraiser and what funds will specifically be used for.
2. *Set your financial goal:* Determine your budget and how much of your total cost needs to be raised in this campaign.
3. *Choose your fundraising partner:* Pick the right company for your wants and needs to help manage your fundraiser from beginning to end.
4. *Choose your campaign method:* There are many campaign options to choose from. This ranges from online to in person and from product fundraising to hosting an event.
5. *Market your campaign:* Get the word out to both sellers and buyers/attendees. The more people who know about your raise, the more likely you are to succeed.

Following the steps and tips above is the best way to guarantee a profitable raise. Feeling ready to get started? Choose your fundraiser today [here](#). Still unsure? Check out our [FAQs](#) to learn more or [subscribe to our free monthly newsletter](#) for fundraising news, tips, and more.