



**United Way
of Greater Mercer County**

**Fundraising During a Pandemic: Lessons Learned From the Recession,
Sandy & Other Crises**

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OVERVIEW

- Presentation Based on Past Best Practices
 - Tactics for donor communication, emergency campaigns, & managing virtual events
 - Strategies for longer-term donor engagement
- Q&A and Group Discussion



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IMMEDIATE TACTICS

- Communication
 - Yes, written pieces likely won't be read, but are necessary
 - Key messaging: empathy & you are "one of us"
 - Combination of data & storytelling
 - Utilize email blasts with embedded video
 - Involve program staff: your frontline people
 - Describe your vulnerable populations
- Large sponsor & donor management
 - "Credit" toward future support
 - Supplemental support (especially if donor has a DAF or foundation)
 - Leverage & matching
 - "Asks"
 - Phone, Zoom & FaceTime



TACTICS, CONT.

- Small Donor Management

- Focus on current donors
- You should keep asking, but timing is everything
- Text messaging & social media
- Recognize the scope/complexity of the crisis, but stress that “your gift *will* make a difference” (“Your \$100 can pay for....”)

- Case for Support

- Your unique value proposition
 - How you are uniquely addressing client & community needs
 - Address social disparities & the most vulnerable: op-eds & blog posts
- Expressing urgency but not panic
 - You have serious need, but are not in immediate jeopardy
- Demonstrating good citizenship
 - E.g. become a meals distribution site



TACTICS, CONT.

- Board member deployment
 - As fiduciaries, board members are obligated to help you preserve/gain revenue
 - Board/staff steering committee
 - Cannot stress this enough! Staff cannot do this alone
 - Initially “require” phone calls everyday, especially related to canceled events (provide talking points)
 - Special board campaign
 - Budget discussion: if/how reserves should be used to bolster fundraising. (It might be a good time to hire....)



VIRTUAL EVENTS

- Zoom & YouTube events
 - Combined events
 - Value of videos & testimony
 - Feature list of virtual supporters. Update daily
- Table captain & other “competitions”
 - Adopt-a-program
- Roll-up gifts
 - No baby-sitters, no salon visits, no Ubers, no parking...
- On-line auctions
 - Post-pandemic fun
 - Roll-out slowly. Add gifts everyday



POST-IMMEDIATE STRATEGIES

(FOR THE SHORT-TERM, LONG-TERM IS TOO HARD TO PREDICT....)

- Stewardship
 - Service provision updates
 - More storytelling & data
 - All communication platforms
 - Segmentation, if possible
 - Offer services (& continued empathy)
 - Fundraising updates
 - Major donor assessments



STRATEGIES, CONT.

- Diversification
 - If resources allow, begin new prospect identification, cultivation, & solicitation. (Ask institutional donors to recommend you to peers)
 - Renew lapsed donors
- Institutional Donor Management
 - Most grant-makers want to help. Some have established emergency funds
 - Start communicating when you're ready
 - Combined emergency grant proposals
 - Provide “good” corporate citizen acknowledgement to corporate supporters



ADDITIONAL IDEAS & MORE

- These ideas served as a platform for brainstorming & problem solving
- Let's move on to discussion/Q&A
- How to reach me:

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