

I DON'T WANT TO BE A FUNDRAISER

I am a licensed professional social worker, an educator, a librarian, a therapist, a physician, or other caring professional. I am trained in the helping and healing arts. Yes, my organization does need more money to meet the needs of our clients and fulfill our mission, but getting money is someone else's responsibility. I don't want to be a fundraiser."

Yet all across the country and almost without regard to the specific discipline, successful professionals do take the time and effort to build trust with their clients and take them slowly, one step at a time, to the next stage of personal healing, education, or growth. Their success depends on clients actually listening to their advice and then taking action. Fundraising involves these same skills.

But I never agreed to do any fundraising

"I am a research psychologist, an environmental scientist, or a marine biologist. Yes, we never get enough money to do the research we should be doing, but getting money is someone else's responsibility. I don't want to be a fundraiser."

The academic rule for professors truly is "publish or perish." Most of academic research is done with grant funding. Successful university research scientists depend on grants to fund their research. While some universities have grant writers, the most successful research grants are actually written at least in part by the scientists themselves and researchers meet directly with their funders. To survive, research scientists have become fundraisers.

My call is from God

"I have given my life to ministry and to service. I have been called to preach the message of my God. Yes, my church needs money to pay for utilities and for the food we give away to the poor, but raising money should be someone else's responsibility. I don't want to be a fundraiser."

Unless the religious leaders tell their flocks that they need to feed the poor and the poor in spirit, their flocks will not give generously. Sermons alone rarely produce enough income to meet the needs of local congregations. Mother Teresa, one of our modern saints, spent her time living with and ministering to the poor. But she learned how to tell others of serious unmet needs. She loved deeply, cared deeply, and in so doing became a saint and fundraiser.

Fear grips me

"I am afraid to ask other people for money. I feel guilty. I really do care deeply about my faith-based or non-profit organization. Yes, it is true that we do not have enough money to meet the needs of those we serve. We don't pay a living wage, we don't have enough money to make major building repairs, but getting money is someone else's responsibility. I don't want to be a fundraiser."

As children we had many fears. We might have been afraid of the dark, or of the doctor. We might have been afraid that we'd fall off and get hurt when we were learning how to ride a bike. We were also very afraid of what would happen when we experienced our first kiss. We overcame these fears. If we can overcome our childhood fears, we can also overcome the fear of fundraising. There is indescribable joy achieved by facing and thus conquering our fears.

Board members just provide oversight

“We give guidance to the staff; we don't do fundraising. Yes, our non-profit organization, just like so many others, struggles day-to-day to meet expenses, but getting money is someone else's responsibility. I don't want to be a fundraiser.”

The paid staff of even the best non-profit and faith-based organization cannot raise funds without the help of the board. Are your board members ashamed of your organization? Are they instead proud that the organization does so much good? Fundraising simply calls for them to brag. Brag about success, brag about future plans, and brag about the organization's plans to do even more. Individual board members who have been taught to brag—and who tell their stories of why they support their cause—have all the skills and courage they need to ask for money.

If I help you, I'll have to do it for others

“Who knows: if I ask my friends to give to our organization, they may ask me to give to their organization. Yes, I know we really do need more money to fulfill our Mighty Mission, but getting money is someone else's responsibility. I don't want to be a fundraiser.”

If you know of multiple wonderful and dynamic faith-based or non-profit organizations that have significant financial needs, you can help them in addition to your own organization. All too often, those who work in these fine organizations have come to accept and to live a corporate philosophy of scarcity. If the needs are great and you refuse to give or ask others to give, do you really care deeply? You will never be expected to give more than you can afford. Nor, after you have begun to become a fundraiser, should you ask others to sacrifice their day-to-day needs. Generating donated funds builds momentum. From what appeared to be scarcity can come instead an overwhelming abundance. Learning to be a part of your organization's fundraising success is far more fun and much less painful than dealing with its bankruptcy or even with its mediocre success.

Fundraising is someone else's responsibility

“Don't ask me to do fundraising. I am too important. I am too proud. I am too busy. I might be rejected. I am afraid. Yes, the organization I care about does not have enough money to meet its current needs and to fulfill its future, but getting enough money is someone else's responsibility. I don't want to be a fundraiser.”

What if you don't help your organization raise money? Will legitimate and compelling needs go unmet? Will the poor, the hungry, and the lost souls be forever in peril because “fundraising is someone else's responsibility?”

Are your fears too strong? Is your professional pride too strong? Is your ministry too important? Are you too important?

Get over it—your organization needs YOU to ask others for money NOW... and this book will show you how to effectively invite others to invest in the causes you mutually care about.

NOTE:

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