**Fundraising Tips: Lisa Peterman**

**1st Rule: Make them fund raisers, NOT fund spenders.**

* Try to get as many corporate sponsors as you can
* Try to get as many donations of items as you can

Example: Art Gala

1. Got an auctioneer who donated his services
2. Got corporate sponsors to pay for the venue
3. Got corporate sponsors to pay for the advertising
4. Decided on what food we wanted (heavy appetizers) and made up a grocery list
5. Divided the grocery list into 3 parts (1) got a rancher to donate the meat, (2) got 1 grocery store to donate ½ of the grocery list., (3) got another grocery store to donate the other ½ of the grocery list
6. Got the VFW ladies to volunteer (this could also be board members or volunteers) to take the recipes and the groceries and cook and deliver the food to the event
7. Got a corporate sponsor for a decorated cake from a local baker for dessert
8. Got a volunteer to serve cake at the cake table
9. Approached all the local artists to donate a piece of art, but had them set a minimum bid. Shared this information with the auctioneer so that he could try to drive the price past the minimum bid. The artist got the minimum bid and my agency got what was bid over the minimum.
10. Had a board member who could play piano, play on the piano provided at the venue.
11. Charged an entry fee for attending the event

**2nd Rule: Pay the Plumber!** Do not ask for free services from service folks. Pay people for the work that they do in or on your facility. Then later, you will feel more comfortable asking the Plumber or your Computer guru to sponsor your Golf Tournament. When I first started in this work, I would never get a call back from a plumber or electrician. I finally started asking them why? The truth was, they said that they dodged all calls from non-profits, because everyone was always asking for free services. So, now when I leave a message for a service person, I say, “Could someone please call me back, my agency needs XYZ fixed and I was hoping to get a service schedule and possibly an estimate on what this will cost”. Whatever you say, make sure they know that you plan on paying them and are not requesting a freebee.

* Get your corporate sponsorships from business that you do business with…this is a good time to see Banks, Lawyers, Insurance Agencies etc…businesses that are not able to donate a specific item or gift certificate.
* Get your door prizes and/or gift certificates from businesses where you shop
* Keep lists of business who are better for “door prizes” like downtown merchants and business who are better for corporate sponsorships like banks, realtors and insurance agents.
* Divide up lists of business in your town and have board, staff and volunteers take the ones that they specifically know and/or do business with on a personal level.

**3rd Rule: Build relationships in your community**.

* If you are an active member of your community, people will view you positively and be more likely to donate to your organization.
* Be cognizant of your reputation in your community
* Join clubs/groups like Rotary, Lions, Eagles, Soroptimist, PEO, Beta Sigma Phi etc. HOWEVER, if you join, you must become an active member. Chair a committee, work your way up into a leadership role and people will have more confidence in you. In every group there is the 80/20 rule. 80 percent don’t do anything and it is left to the remaining 20 percent to do everything. Whether you are part of the 80% or the 20%, people will notice and it WILL affect your reputation in your community.

**4th Rule: Make sure that your fundraisers fit within your mission statement and purpose.**

This should be self-explanatory, but you probably should not have any events that encourage objectifying women as sex-objects, such as a wet-T-shirt contest.

**FUNDRAISING IDEAS**

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Your staff are ‘non-exempt from overtime’ employees. If they spend more than 40 hours per week for your organization (working or fundraising) – you will need to pay them overtime. Always remind your board members about this and get them to donate their time to fundraising, rather than your staff. If your staff spends 8 hours at a Golf Tournament on a Saturday, then they must get 8 hours off of work to flex out during your work week. You and your board get to chose when a “work week” starts. It should be in your policy manual. If you don’t like it, change it.

My organization starts it’s work week at 5pm every Friday and ends every workweek at 4:59pm every Friday. That way, if they get a crisis call over the weekend, or help with a fund raiser over the weekend, they flex the time out (hour-for-hour) during the next week. If you do not pay an on-call stipend, I would suggest that your flex-time should be 1 and a half hours to every hour of over-time. In essence “time and a half” off, in lieu of “time and a half overtime pay”.

**Additionally, local service clubs** (Lions, Rotary, Eagles, Soroptimist, Optimist, Knights of Columbus, Kiwanis, VFW…etc may have members who are willing to donate their time to help you on a particular day, at a particular time. Contact the current Club’s President (Your Chamber of Commerce may know who these people are) and ask… Example: “Would you ask your members if 5 Rotarians would be willing to donate 1-2 hours of their time to take tickets at the door for XYZ event on XYZ date?”

**Raffles**

* Print/make your own tickets
* Or get a corporate sponsor to pay for printing tickets – put their business name on the tickets
* Get something donated to raffle off – these can be items like quilts or furniture, or they can be experiences like trips or a day of free golf at your local course.
* Set up tables with the raffle item, (or pictures of the item/experience) and tickets – set tables up at high traffic areas like grocery stores – anywhere anyone will let you.
* Use Volunteers and/or board members (and staff if you must) with rotating shifts at the tables

**Event Ideas:**

**Tournaments:** First ask yourself, what it is that people do in a particular community during their leisure time? Is it: Golf? Bowling? Corn Hole? Archery? Darts? Billards? Poker? Bingo? Target Shooting? You can customize fundraisers for various cities or towns in your county. For instance: Golf is big in both Cody and Powell, but Darts are HUGE in Powell and non-existent in Cody.

**Tournament example:** Strike Against Violence Bowling Tournament

1. Find out the bowling fees so that you can get this amount donated from just one corporate sponsor. Include the costs for any printed materials (posters around town) and the trophies for the winners. You will need four 1st place trophies and 4 second place trophies.
2. If you have a reluctant bowling alley owner…tell them that you hope to form teams of people who are not regular bowlers and that it may encourage future traffic for their business.
3. If your bowling alley has 10 lanes…. get 10 corporate sponsors to sponsor a lane for $200 each, so that a team of employees from their business can come and bowl for free and have a fun day on them. 10 lanes, with teams of 4 = 40 people x $50 per person = $2,000
4. Let the bowling alley sell their concessions to attendees (no need to plan for food)

**1 DAY = $2,000 FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION.**

**If you want to make more, charge more, or have a 2-day tournament.**

**Galas/Dinners:**

As in the earlier Art Gala example…get as many corporate sponsors as possible. Getting the catering donated is key. It is nearly impossible to make money with a fundraiser if you have to pay the caterer.

**Craft Fairs:**

1. Find the crafters in your area. Contact all the church ladies you know, local arts & craft supply stores
2. Find out what booth space is going for in your area (know your competition)
3. Find the right space – location is key
4. Find corporate sponsors for the venue, advertising
5. Organize the event around a holiday like Thanksgiving/Christmas
6. Have your board run the concession stand…get them to donate the hotdogs, chili and fritos etc. Get a local store to donate cases of soda and water, coffee and hot cocoa packets etc.
7. Charge a nominal admission $1 or $2 a person – children under 10 free
8. Save 1 booth for your organization with your pamphlets. Entice people to your booth with a raffle and/or door prizes.
* **Christmas Raffle Idea:** Have your board and crisis line volunteers all donate a toy or game in a certain age range say 8-10. Then have a volunteer make a 6-foot Christmas stocking with a fun Christmas material back and a netted front…so that the toys/games can be seen. Then raffle it off.

**Note:** you can also just participate in a local craft fair by getting a corporate sponsor for your booth (put a sign up at your booth to acknowledge your donor). **DO NOT ask the craft fair organizers for a free booth “because you are a non-profit”.** Whoever is organizing the craft fair is also trying to make money for their cause. If they gave a free booth to every non-profit that asked they would make $0 dollars. Get a sponsor. Then get something donated to sell or raffle. Quilts or wreaths make good holiday raffles.

**Vendor Fairs:**

1. Too many craft fairs in your area? Try a vendor fair and rent booth space to all the Tupperware, MaryKay, Avon, Pampered Chef, Norwex etc people you can find. Bill it as a chance to start early Christmas shopping.

**Mary Kay and other Vendor ladies are your friend:** As vision is to the Lions Club and Polio is to Rotary, domestic violence is to Mary Kay. Many Mary Kay ladies can host a Mary Kay party and donate proceeds to your organization. However, many of these vendors may be willing to do the same such as Avon and Pampered Chef.

**On-Line Auctions:** find a free or low-cost auctions site such as Better World or Your Charity Auction. Take the technical assistance training and ask all the questions regarding costs.

You can gather donated items from your community to auction. However, you can also get curated items such as tickets to sporting events or experiences like trips to the Bahamas from the On-line Auction people themselves. The travel agency organizing the event gets the minimum bid, the auction site people take a cut and your agency gets the rest. So as many items as you can get donated locally, the better, because that 100% funds to your organizations, minus any credit card fees taken by the auction site people. So do your homework on these before you commit.

You set the dates of the auction (usually 1 month) and then wait for the funds to arrive after the auction closes. The winners will be contacted for the curated items that they won. The local items can be kept at the local merchant’s business with a sign saying “bid on me” and the winners can claim their prize at the merchant’s location. So, you will not need to store all the items at your facility. All payments are made on-line.

**GET A DYING EVENT DONATED TO YOU!**

Many times, various clubs have had an event, that for them, has run its course. If you see an event and hear from members, that they are thinking of ending their craft fair or their golf tournament or bingo night or whatever event. Offer to provide assistance to the event and volunteer your time to see how it is done. If you know a group will be ending an event, ask if your organization could take it over. Make a BIG deal with the press that this group graciously donated the event you your organization.

In Cody, the Buffalo Bill Birthday Ball was a fundraiser for our local Optimist Club. When the Optimist club disbanded, they “donated” the event to the Knights of Columbus.

In Cody, the annual Holiday Craft Fair was a fundraiser for the Cody Chamber of Commerce. When they decided to call it quits and move on to bigger things, they donated the Craft Fair to my agency, Crisis Intervention Services. CIS has held the event now for close to 30 years.

**How many events do you need in a year?**

It depends a lot on you and/or your board’s capacity to find and motivate volunteers. My organization does 2 events (golf tournament and craft fair) and 2 mailed letters from my board of directors to the public at Christmas and Mother’s Day. However, we are currently adding an on-line auction for a specific capital campaign for our Cody facility.

**KEEP A HISTORY OF YOUR FUNDRAISING (For Board members, for grant writing, for your own information):** With a history that you can show to the Division of Victim Services or other major grantors, you can be more confident when you budget “other funds” by taking using a 5-year average of what you normally get. So, CIS garnered $265,610 dollars from 2018 to 2020. Divided by 5 years is an average of $53,122 per year. So when I write the 2025/2026 Biennium request, it would be a safe bet for me to put around $53,122 into my “other funds” budget category along with my 5-year average of funding from City and County grant sources. I use the latest 5 year’s chart in most of my grants.

Here is a 15-year history of CIS fundraising efforts:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Event** | **Proceeds** **FY 2008** | **Proceeds****FY 2009** | **Proceeds****FY 2010** | **Proceeds****FY 2011** | **Proceeds****FY 2012** |
| Golf Tournament | $11,500 | $14,046 | $ 8,591 | $ 6,416 | $ 6,895 |
| Craft Fair | $6,000 | $10,424 | $10,302 | $10,999 | $11,589 |
| Board Letter | $16,100 | $14,256 | $ 7,340 | $10,637 | $16,667 |
| Donations | $10,000 | $13,890 | $10,111 | $10,871 | $ 12,323  |
| **Totals** | **$43,600** | **$38,360** | **$33,644** | **$38,923** | **$47,474** |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Event** | **Proceeds** **FY 2013** | **Proceeds****FY 2014** | **Proceeds****FY 2015** | **Proceeds****FY 2016** | **Proceeds****FY 2017** |
| Golf Tournament | $5,826 | $6,098 | $ 8,440 | $8,222 | $,10,191 |
| Craft Fair | $11,493 | $11,157 | $12,213 | $11,117 | $11,529 |
| Board Letter | $8,295 | $9,941 | $15,224 | $10,276 | $8,622 |
| Donations | $24,799 | $10,059 | $28,183 | $26,435 | $20,744 |
| **Totals** | **$50,413** | **$37,255** | **$64,059** | **$56,050\*** | **$51,086** |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Event** | **Proceeds** **FY 2018** | **Proceeds****FY 2019** | **Proceeds****FY 2020** | **Proceeds****FY 2021** | **Proceeds****FY 2022** |
| Golf Tournament | $5,761 | $9,345 | $ 11,500 | $13,680 | $13,895 |
| Craft Fair | $11,323 | $11,771 | $11,528\* | $11,330 | $10,200 |
| Board Letter | $6,085 | $8,945 | $7,384 | $11,514 | $15,045 |
| Donations | $29,443 | $30,905 | $10,526 | $14,076 | $21,354 |
| **Totals** | **$52,612** | **$60,966** | **$40,938** | **$50,600** | **$60,494** |

\*Donations that CIS received for the Craft Fair when it was cancelled due to COVID.