



## Partnering with your CEO - How to Develop a Highly Successful Partnership

Presentation to the Virginia Fund Raising Institute

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# Introduction



## Virginia Fundraising Consultants

Virginia Fundraising Consultants has over 30 years working in the nonprofit sector for clients in the arts, education, environmental preservation, public media, and social services. Our integrated approach covers everything from research and planning, to design and implementation.



Virginia Thumm  
VFC, President

## Virginia Thumm

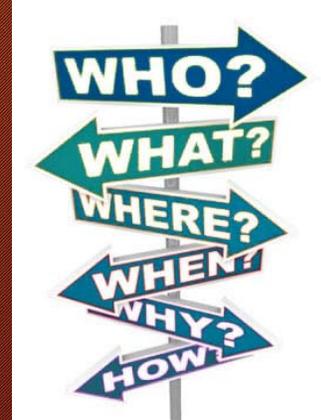
Virginia has worked in the non-profit sector for more than 30 years. A veteran of dozens of successful fundraising campaigns, she has personally solicited millions of dollars to enhance the missions of non-profits. A native of Norfolk, VA, Virginia has served as the Director of Development for:

- The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center
- Garden State Ballet
- Virginia Opera
- Virginia Symphony
- WHRO Public Media

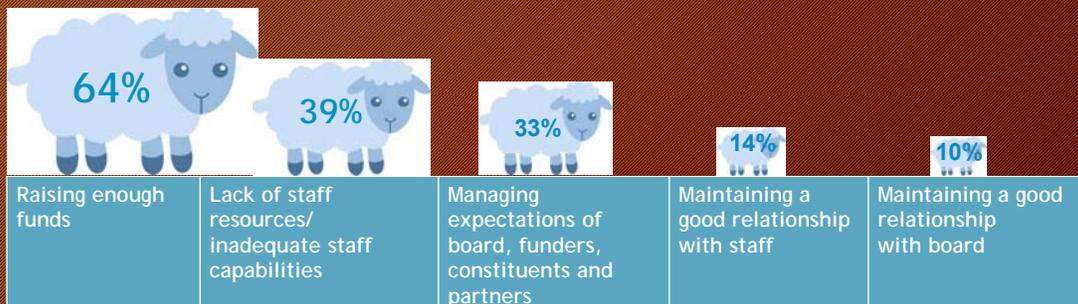
## Key Objectives



- What does the CEO need from a Director of Development?
- What does a DOD need from a CEO?
- What does a successful CEO/DOD partnership look like?
- Tools to implement to prepare for a successful solicitation



## What keeps Executive Directors up at night?



*Nonprofit Executive Directors & Leadership Challenges, Opportunities and Successes, Community Foundation of Sarasota County, page 7*



## What does a Development Director need from his/her CEO?



- Regular updates on the organization and its direction
- Access to the Board
- Dedicated time for meetings and donor interaction
- To be a visible member of the community
- To know, and be able to site in a compelling way, the organization's elevator speech and case for support
- An open mind



## The Role of the CEO in Fundraising



- Visionary
- Chief Spokesman
- Top Fundraiser and Relationship Manager



# The Types of Fundraising CEOs



## The Avoider



- Will say:
  1. We need more planning
  2. I need more information
  3. Prospect needs more cultivation
  4. Makes pre-emptive assumptions (that prospect won't give)
  5. Puts off making calls

❖ Solution: Build their confidence



## The Eager Beaver



- Will:

1. Want to make ask right away, without cultivation or research
2. Want to make ask before case for support fully thought out
3. Want to step in with inappropriate follow up that is too soon or too much

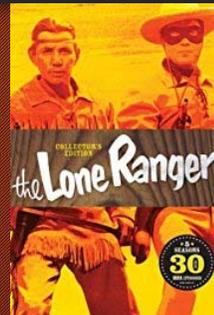
❖ Solution: Detailed planning/coaching

## The Lone Ranger (too confident)



- Will:

1. Keep you out of the loop
2. Fly by seat of his/her pants
3. Not accept advice
4. Shoot too high; has unrealistic expectations



❖ Solution: You may need to enlist more help—get Board member or other to be your ambassador. Education on best practices in fund raising techniques can also help.

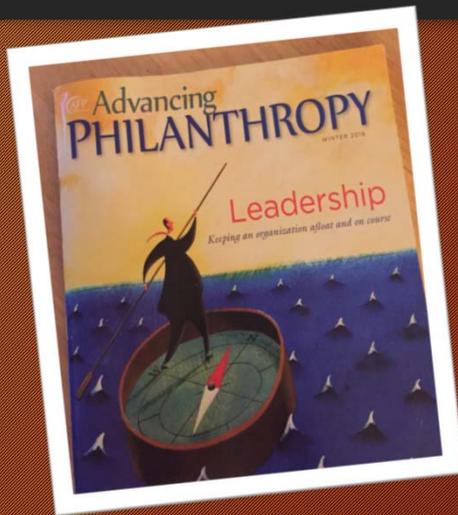
## The Non-closer



- Will:
  1. Be great at telling story, but doesn't get to the ask
  2. Keep talking, and won't give donor time to respond or ask questions
  3. Downplay the ask—keeps talking and says things like "but we would be happy with any amount you want to give."

❖ Solution: You may need to do the ask. Give some constructive feedback and define the roles you each will assume.

## Leading from the Middle



"Fundraisers do not lead from the top or the bottom. They lead from the middle, or *within*."

## Communication is Key!



- Regular one-on-one meetings
- Reports that motivate!
  - Donor Interactions
- Being the CEO's eyes and ears
- Background/research
  - Donor profiles - with pictures!
- Prep for events, meetings, etc.
- How often to nudge/remind? Be "Politely Persistent"



## Guiding Your CEO Through A Successful Ask



## Defining Roles in solicitations



- Background notes
  - Donor history
  - Donor likes and inclinations
  - How much to ask for
- Scripting
  - Who will make the ask?
- Get the "rights" in place
  - Right time, right amount, right project
- The importance of listening to each other, as well as the donor
- Debrief session



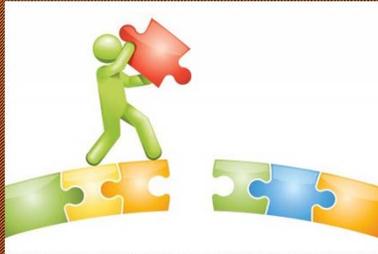
## Before the 'Ask'



- Inject confidence
- Provide comprehensive background on the donor, including what should be asked for, how ask should be framed, amount of ask, and why you believe donor will say yes (help CEO see success)
- If CEO is new to fundraising, begin with a sure win, or thank you calls
- Script
- Role Playing



# During the Ask



- Be relaxed and comfortable
- Listen to what your partner is saying
  - Fill in the gaps
  - Clarify concepts or misstatements (if you know the donor feels a particular way, try to mirror their values)
  - Make mental notes for recap after the meeting
- Don't directly contradict
- Determine ahead of time who will make the ask. With those new to fundraising, have them make the case, and you do the ask

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## Sample Prospect Profile Form

Organizational:	Date of Profile:
Prospect Name:	
ID #:	
Affiliation to Org:	Donor, friend, volunteer, staff, etc.
Interest Area (If Known):	Area of philanthropic interest or interests
Biographical:	
Home Address:	Address: Phone: Email:
Business Address:	Address: Phone: Email:
Giving Summary:	Last Gift: Last Gift Date: Largest Gift: Largest Gift Date: Total Giving: Total # of Gifts: Program(s) or Project(s) Supported:
Interests and Hobbies:	
Birthdate:	
Education:	Name of college, program, degree, etc.
Family:	Spouse: Children: (If ages, names) Other:
Community Affiliations:	Organizational affiliations, friends, civic interests, boards, honors and awards

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Charitable Contributions:	Known contributions to other organizations (include recipient and amount or range if known)
Financial:	
Earnings Estimate:	
Real Estate Holdings:	
Publicly Recorded Stock Holdings:	
Other Assets:	Boats, planes, business interests, etc.
Capacity Rating:	Estimate of largest gift possible over five year
Assignment:	Name of prospect manager assigned to prospect
Contact History:	Date & type of contact (visits, phone calls, events)
Stage:	Identification, Discovery, Cultivation, Solicitation, Stewardship
Expected Solicitation Amount:	The amount you will ask for this solicitation cycle
Notes & Comments:	

Confidential Report:  
The information contained in this profile has been compiled from relevant public and internal sources and is believed to be accurate and current as of the date indicated. This document is not intended for distribution and is highly confidential.

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## After the Ask



- Give positive feedback
- Provide constructive criticism
  - Like children and animals feedback needs to be giving soon after the event
  - Be positive, complement first
- Make sure CEO sends thank you immediately
- Plan follow up actions
- Provide weekly call sheets
- Keep prodding - be "politely persistent"



## Smoothing the Waters - What to do when things get rocky



Or, when bad solicitations happen to good fundraisers

- Try to get everyone back on the same page
- Don't ignore the problem
- Develop a follow up strategy



## The Makings of a Star



- Make it easy and enjoyable
- Think like a political handler
- Give positive feedback



## Q & A



## Contact Info



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