



Here are a few fundraising tips to help you plan and execute a successful event

1. Event

Pick an event that appeals to you. By tapping into your own interests and expertise, you may find you already have resources available to you.

2. Form your Committees

Forming a committee ensures your event will run smoothly. It is okay to ask for help! You will need to divide your tasks between committees to get everything done. Committee groups might include: planning, hosting, day of the event, theme/decorations, catering/food, advertising/marketing/social media, entertainment, etc.

3. Determine your Goals

First things first: know your target participants and goals. Who is your audience? What amount do you think you can raise? How will you get new participants besides your existing group?

- ✓ Set a fundraising goal and budget.
- ✓ Meet with your committee to discuss and plan your course of action.
- ✓ Don't do it all by yourself; meet with your volunteers to distribute tasks and set deadlines.

4. Solidify your Budget

Sticking to your budget is necessary to ensure that you actually raise money with your event. Don't be afraid to ask for donations and discounts! Expenses to consider:

- ✓ Venue cost
- ✓ Catering
- ✓ Printing of flyers, shirts, other promotional materials
- ✓ Decorations
- ✓ Trophies

5. Venue

Determine your date and venue; best to schedule six months in advance. Consider the following in your planning:

- ✓ Size
- ✓ Layout
- ✓ Cost
- ✓ Parking
- ✓ Sound/lighting
- ✓ Permits & licensing
- ✓ WIFI or cell service

6. Create a Schedule

This ensure that nothing goes undone. Start with a schedule that includes: who will delegate all of the necessary tasks to the committee, subcommittee, and individuals. Add details as you go.

7. Recruit Sponsors

Sponsors can help you cut event expenses, raise awareness and provide in-kind donations. Collaborating with sponsors can help you build business relationships in your community and receive a higher profit.

8. Brand your Event

Before you can advertise your event, understand the image you are projecting to your donors. Branding your event can create recognition between your organization and your donors and keep all of your communications consistent.

- ✓ Determine your theme
- ✓ Name your event
- ✓ Use proper logos (get permission if using vendors or others)
- ✓ Standardize colors, fonts, and images (if you need assistance see Guide Dogs of America guidelines)

9. Soliciting Donations/Sponsors

Think about the reason you are holding the fundraiser and why an individual/organization might want to donate/sponsor. Some reasons might be to support the community, advertising for their business, or support IAM. Therefore, contact your vendors and community businesses who would benefit from the advertising or companies you use personally, etc.

Some of your vendors in conjunction with the event may not be able to be a sponsor, but don't be afraid to ask for a discounted price or a prize for a raffle.

10. Arrange Entertainment

Determine your guest speakers and entertainment so you can highlight them in your marketing. Consider what else you want to highlight at your event: raffles, drawings, special food vendors, etc. This information should be included in your promotional materials.

11. Select Promotional Items

To bring in more revenue, you can sell promotional items. You can sell items in advance such as a t-shirt, patch, etc. Should you need help with design, Guide Dogs of America can assist, contact GDA and ask for the marketing department or see if you have a local source who is interested in donating their creative skills.

12. Ticket Pricing and Sales

Determine your price to attend the event. Be sure to think about the cost to participate, food, prizes, etc. Be reasonable, but don't go too low in your pricing it is a fundraiser!

Next, think about how you will sell your event tickets. Encourage supporters to purchase tickets in advance or RSVP so you can plan for the size of your crowd. This information regarding sales/RSVP will also be included on the marketing materials.

How are you handling admission? Are you providing an actual ticket or wristband? If not, how will you keep track of who has and has not paid?

13. Delegate your Volunteers and Staff

As you near the date of your event, ensure that a schedule is in place to take care of the event logistics. Recruit enough volunteers to manage all aspect of your event including:

- ✓ Set-up
- ✓ Help during the event
- ✓ Cleanup

14. Create a Follow-up Plan

Once the event ends, your work isn't over. You will to follow-up so that your supporters know how much you raised and that you appreciate their attendance and donations. Make sure you account for the following:

- ✓ Process payments; send funds to Guide Dogs of America with details, so everyone can get recognition of their support from our organization. It is important that they know their support is appreciated -- not just from you but from us too.
- ✓ Evaluate budget; analyze gross versus net and where you spent most funds and what made the most money
- ✓ Update supporters and let them know if you met your goals and how they played an important role
- ✓ Send thank you notes; you cannot say thank you enough to volunteers, donors, participants, etc.
- ✓ Make note of what went well and what can be improved

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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