



Connecticut Foodshare

Our Community, Our Food Bank

Fundraising 101:

Strategies for organizations of any size



Agenda

- Introductions
- Honing your “why”
- Understanding your audience
- Building communication and solicitation strategies that match your organization’s capacity
- Maximizing year-end giving
- Sending meaningful thank you messages that encourage repeat gifts
- Connecticut Foodshare Resources



Introductions

- Introduce yourselves in the chat!
- Kathryn Mastandrea, Senior Director of Strategic Giving
- On staff since 2020
- 15+ year background in non-profit fundraising
- Mom of two daughters
- Voracious reader
- Aspiring writer
- Sometimes yogi

Honing your "why"

- Take a few moments for a few deep breaths.
- Take 3 minutes to think about why you are involved with the organization you are representing today.





Honing your "why"

- Allows you to connect authentically with others, and that connection, is the foundation of fundraising.
- Fundraising is a gift: it is a gift to the organization and the people it serves, but it is also a gift to the donor because it allows them to be a part of something bigger than themselves.



Honing your "why"

- WHO are you?
 - WHO do you serve?
 - WHAT does your organization need?
 - WHY do you need it?
 - WHERE do you serve the community?
 - WHEN do you do it?
 - HOW are you changing lives?
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- What do donors get to be a part of if they join you?



Understanding your audience

- Volunteers
- Community members
- Community leaders
- Guests you serve
- Current donors
- Past donors



Understanding your audience

- How do these different groups interact with your organization?
- Which parts of your organization’s “why” will resonate with each group?



Understanding your audience

- Volunteers
 - Highly connected through personal experiences
- Community members
 - May know some about your organization but not all
- Community leaders
 - Can amplify your stories through their channels
- Guests you serve
 - Can provide testimony, must secure permission first
- Current donors
 - Have a personal vested interest in the success of the organization
- Past donors
 - Had a connection at one point but have since stopped supporting



Building communication and solicitation strategies that match your organization's capacity

How do you currently communicate with these different groups, if at all?

How frequently are you communicating?

- Organizational emails
- Social media accounts
- House of worship bulletins
- Physical bulletin boards/outdoor signage
- Hard-copy mailers



Building communication and solicitation strategies that match your organization's capacity

There are different kinds of communications:

- Informational
 - Newsletters
 - Event invitations
 - Volunteer/other involvement opportunities
- Solicitation
 - If solicitation, what are you asking for (call to action)?
- Stewardship
 - Thank you messages
 - Success stories



Building communication and solicitation strategies that match your organization's capacity

Recipe for a strong solicitation

- Warm welcome, personalized where possible
 - Quick thank you
 - Story/need
 - Why you need it
 - Ask
 - How their support will impact the need
 - Thank you
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- And in everything, be asset based!



Building communication and solicitation strategies that match your organization's capacity

Social Media

- Zero cost
- Allows to reach a wide audience (you don't need a database or donor info)
- Stakeholders can share communication
- Use “events” to generate interest
- Can be very sophisticated but doesn't need to be!



Maximizing year-end giving

September

Hunger Action Month

October

Holiday prep

November

Thanksgiving: Nov 28

December

Giving Tuesday: Dec 2

Hanukkah: Dec14-22

Christmas: Dec 25

NYE: December 31



Maximizing Year-End Giving

- Better to do something small than to do nothing at all
- Lean into the holiday emotionality
- Play up the year-end deadline
- Reinforce messaging over multiple communications
- Stories, stories, stories, pictures, pictures, pictures



Sending meaningful thank you messages that encourage repeat gifts

- As a non-profit, you have an OBLIGATION to distribute a written acknowledgement letter for any gift over \$250 to include:
 - Date the donation was received
 - Amount of donation
 - Statement indicating whether the organization provided any goods or services in return for the donation such as, “No goods or services were received in return of this gift”
 - Statement that the non-profit is a charity recognized as tax exempt by the IRS under Section 501(c)(3).



Sending meaningful thank you messages that encourage repeat gifts

As a non-profit, you have the OPPORTUNITY to use your acknowledgement to build a long-term relationship with your donor:

- Say “thank you” or a variation at least 3 times (ex: thank you, we are grateful for you, our we couldn’t do it without you)
- Show how this gift made a difference for your organization
- Give an example of a guest was served or a resourced purchased through their generosity
- If a first time donor, welcome them into your org’s community
- If a repeat donor, thank them for being a champion of your organization
- Photos can be very effective!



Sending meaningful thank you messages that encourage repeat gifts

Don't stop with the thank you!

- Continue to communicate, as your capacity permits.
- Compassion fatigue is real. If the next piece a donor receives from you is another solicitation, they may not be inclined to give again.
- Celebrate your successes with your donors!



Connecticut Foodshare Resources

- Your Network Representative
- [Grants and other Resources](#)
- In-Person Sessions facilitated by Garrett:

These interactive Workshops will be an opportunity for representatives from partner agencies to gather to complete projects with concrete takeaways to improve your fundraising efforts.

In the Set-up for Effective Fundraising Workshop, participants will establish digital platforms to accept donations and craft a basic fundraising strategy. In the Fundraising Using Social Media Workshop, participants will polish their social media presence, hone design skills, and make a plan to run a creative fundraising campaign.

To learn more about these opportunities, you can look under the 'Webinar' tab under the CTFS website. All the upcoming Workshops are listed with a sign-up link.