

Emerging trends in the United Kingdom



Sheila McCallum, head of DMI Online, attended the three-day Institute of Fundraising National Conference in London recently. She reports back on the current state of fundraising in the UK – and what's on the horizon.

INSIDE INFORMATION

Four ways to grow your donor income	2
Philanthropy in focus	3
Give your donors the 'real stuff'	4
Records broken in acquisition mailing for children's hospital	5
Winning websites: what are the real criteria?	5
How to create an appeal	6
Training and leadership of your most vital volunteers	7

With over 1 300 delegates and 225 speakers – covering every topic from communication and PR, volunteers, strategic planning, personal development, trust and major gifts to corporate, legacies and direct marketing – the three-day Institute of Fundraising National Convention in London in July promised to be an exciting and information-packed occasion.

Those who hoped to come away with 'the next big idea' in fundraising though, were doomed to disappointment. The fact is there is no big, new thing. Instead, delegates were exposed to a collection of ideas to refine and enhance existing fundraising efforts – as well as some early indications of where fundraising might be heading.

Basic techniques

Basic fundraising techniques have not changed much in the last decade. Direct mail is still widely used; legacies are very important; events are the mainstay for many organisations; driving traffic to the website remains a perennial issue. Branding, strategic planning and integrated campaigns are still the buzzwords.

Creativity is king

What did come out strongly at many of the sessions is the need for creative thinking – not only in the way we communicate with donors, but also in the way we do things within our organisations, our systems and procedures.

When it comes to getting the message out to prospective donors, it seems anything goes, with some organisations pushing boundaries to the limit. An anti-landmine campaign used a message printed on a sachet of tomato sauce. When the corner of the sachet is torn off, so is the foot of the person pictured on the pack, with the tomato sauce providing the 'blood'.

There are a wealth of new and creative ways of getting the message across – not only to potential donors, but also information relating to the organisation's core work. The days of 'one size fits all' mass communication are over.

Many organisations are encouraging community fundraising, where groups of

volunteers get together to launch their own fundraising initiatives. Others are coming up with innovative fun events to get younger people, especially, involved in the cause.

When it comes to targeting younger audiences, organisations are learning to go where the market is – if that is in pubs, then drinks coasters or posters in the men's room could be the best medium. Online, it means hanging out where the market hangs out, establishing some kind of presence on Facebook or YouTube.

Future of fundraising

One of the most interesting sessions, presented by Kevin Waudly of Cancer Research UK, explored trends that will impact on the way we raise funds in the future. Among these predictions were:

- IT will continue to shrink the world and accelerate time. More fundraising will move online.
- Traditional geographical communities will disperse further and we will increasingly use the Internet to join social communities of like-minded people.
- There will be further blurring between consumers and donors, with people choosing ethical products and those benefiting charity in preference to non-charity branded items.
- New generation cell phones in Britain already offer the facility to load cash onto the phone and use it to make purchases. Charities could soon be implanting micro-chips into posters, allowing passers-by to donate by simply swiping their phone over the poster.
- Avid consumerism will become more meaningless and people will begin to look to charities to add value to their lives, by allowing them to engage in social and environmental causes.
- As the number of charities competing for funds increases, many will partner together either to raise money or to deliver services.

Will South Africa follow these trends?

Probably. The world really is shrinking, with technology uniting us as a global community, in which ideas and expectations spread quickly. ■

Four ways to grow your donor income

The biggest question on every non-profit organisation's mind is invariably "How can we raise more money?" And the answer is surprisingly simple (although like anything worth doing, it requires application, dedication and discipline).

Here are four straightforward suggestions to help you increase your fundraising income:

1. Teach everyone on your staff to become donor-focused.

Donor loyalty and involvement starts with the way you react to each donation received. If donors feel wanted and appreciated, they are much more likely to stay with you and even to increase their support.

So every staff member should understand the importance of donors to your cause.

Starting with the all-important task of prompt, personal and sincere thanking, the secret to donor retention is building relationships – relationships which make donors clearly understand

how important they are to you.

Give them plenty of positive feedback and invite them to events that bring them closer to your organisation.

2. Take a good look at your 'brand'.

The 'for profit' sector long ago recognised the importance and the value of branding – but the not-for-profit sector is only gradually waking up to it now.

An easily recognisable and well understood brand builds confidence and trust in the minds of donors and encourages more people to support you.

Don't fall into the trap of thinking that branding is just all about your logo – it goes much further than that and, for non-profit organisations in particular, it clearly states what you do. Some good examples are:

WWF with their panda logo and 'for a living planet' slogan that is recognised everywhere.

The American Red Cross with their slogan 'Together we can save a life'.

Sadly there are few South African non-profits with really strong branding but hopefully that is about to change as the importance of branding is recognised.

Donors and potential donors must be able to recognise your organisation immediately.

Once you have your branding right and your staff are all donor-centred, you are ready to move on to the third way of increasing income from donors:

3. Asking more often and for larger amounts.

You've often heard people talking about 'donor fatigue'. Well I happen to believe that donor fatigue doesn't exist (except perhaps as an excuse for fundraising failure).

The reasons donors stop giving are far more often related to not feeling appreciated than to over-solicitation. So take a look at your fundraising 'mix' and see what might be missing. Do you have a full direct mail programme with a Monthly Donor 'Club' and a Major Donor 'Club'?

What about corporate gifts, sponsorship, cause-related marketing partnerships, a 'gifts in kind' programme, a bequest promotion effort and key special events that grow awareness of your organisation and your supporter base?

Not every organisation is ready for all of these initiatives – but you should be thinking carefully about which of them you could add to your annual programme.

4. Grow your donor base.

Way back in the 1980s my old friend John Groman, one of the founders of Epsilon, a top US fundraising firm, told South African fundraisers that there were only three ways to grow your fundraising income:

- 1) More donors
- 2) More donations and
- 3) More dollars (larger donations).

Today this basic premise still holds true. Let's look at how you can increase the size of your donor base.

Have key staff members come together to 'brainstorm' new ideas for growing your supporter base.

If you're using direct mail, test new donor acquisition lists, package designs, premiums and appeal themes. Get your Chairman (or CEO) to invite groups of corporate donor representatives to a lunch or a cocktail session so that they can get to know your organisation better.

Hold a special event or open day and get the names and addresses, e-mail addresses and telephone numbers of all attendees to add to your prospect list. Get each of your board members to invite five friends to visit your premises for a 'Tea and Tour'.

Raising more money will always be a challenge but it need never be insurmountable for a worthwhile cause.

A little bit of innovation can spark new enthusiasm – and positive changes to your organisation's image and to your fundraising programme is often all it takes to get your board members and staff to become 'donor-centric'.

And that is the real secret to fundraising success. ■



Terry A Murray is former chairman of Downes Murray International and recently retired president of DVA Navion South Africa.

"I happen to believe that donor fatigue doesn't exist (except perhaps as an excuse for fundraising failure)."

Milestone Thinking

On-target observations in brief

If there's a hard and fast rule in direct mail, it's that the most urgent, specific, emotional, and involving appeal still won't work if it's mailed to the wrong person.

*With acknowledgement to
Mal Warwick's Newsletter
July 2007
www.malwarwick.com*

If you cannot do great things, do small things in a great way.
Napoleon Hill

The onus of responsibility for donor drop-out is on the shoulders of the nonprofit because that's where it belongs. Donor drop-out is ultimately not about donors disappearing. It is about nonprofits not consciously and actively working to build, deepen and sustain the donor relationship to keep donors giving more, giving more often, and giving longer.

*With acknowledgement to
The NonProfit Times
April 15, 2007*

... the best thing you can do is embrace multi-channel, integrated marketing. The value proposition is unquestionably strong – the whole of a marketing initiative can be greater than the sum of its multi-channel parts if those parts work tightly together to assist one another ... consider integrating radio, print, telephone and the Internet with your direct mail.

*With acknowledgement to
The NonProfit Times
June 15, 2007*

We get most of the money out there because there is no point in sitting on it ... I don't see the point of having a nest egg.

We're a charity ... people are dying and need help now.

*Sir Elton John discussing the Elton John AIDS Foundation
quoted in
The Chronicle of Philanthropy
November 9, 2006*

In every adversity there lies the seed of an equivalent advantage. In every defeat is a lesson showing you how to win the victory next time.

Robert Collier



Helping to make dreams come true

The Reach for a Dream Foundation brings hope and healing to countless young South Africans fighting life-threatening illnesses – by encouraging them to believe in the power of dreams – and making their dreams come true.

And in this way children have the chance to experience the life which they yearn for.

The positive effect of the 'dream come true' lingers on, and children often respond better to their medication.

Dreams that come true are diverse – going to show that there's a powerful dreamer in every child.

Often it's fulfilling a simple wish like going fishing with Dad – or meeting former President Nelson Mandela, swimming with dolphins or flying in a plane.

Since fulfilling the first dream back in 1988, more than 6300 children, between the ages of three and 18, have had their dreams come true. That's more than 527 dreams every month!

For children living with life-threatening illnesses, Reach for a Dream brings hope, joy and the encouragement every child needs to dream big.

For more information visit www.reachfordream.org.za, or telephone Kerry on 031 566 2220 or e-mail kerry@reachfordream.org.za

(Readers are invited to submit photographs, together with a brief overview of their organisation's work, for inclusion in this regular feature. ■

'If you can dream it, you can do it' – the words of Walt Disney live on in the work of The Reach for a Dream Foundation, which helps to make sick children's dreams come true, every day.

FUNDRAISING FORUM

Fundraising Forum is a regular newsletter dedicated to the enhancement of management, fundraising techniques and the promotion of community service, welfare and not-for-profit organisations of all kinds.

It is published by Downes Murray International and circulated, free of charge, to anyone with an interest in the growth and improvement of the non-profit sector and those served by it. In addition to regular features written by Downes Murray International staff, there are extracts from worldwide fundraising publications which are reprinted with acknowledgement to the publishers.

We welcome submissions for publication from all writers involved in not-for-profit work.

Visit www.dmi.co.za

Give your donors the 'real stuff'

Copywriter Denise Murray says it's time to 'get real' when communicating with your donors.

At South Africa's first ever fundraising convention in 1990, keynote speaker, Michael Downes from Australia, had delegates in tears as he recounted part of a children's story – *The Velveteen Rabbit*, by Margery Williams.

The conversation Michael quoted takes place between two toys:

'What is *real*?' asked the Rabbit one day, when they were lying side by side near the nursery fender, before Nana came to tidy the room. 'Does it mean having things that buzz inside you and a stick-out handle?'

'*Real* isn't how you are made,' said the Skin Horse. 'It's a thing that happens to you.

When a child loves you for a long, long time, not just to play with, but *really* loves you, then you become *real*.'

'Does it hurt?' asked the Rabbit? 'Sometimes,' said the Skin Horse, for he was always truthful. 'When you are *real* you don't mind being hurt.'

'Does it happen all at once, like being wound up,' he asked, 'or bit by bit?'

'It doesn't happen all at once,' said the Skin Horse. 'You become. It takes a long time. That's why it doesn't often happen to people who break easily, or have sharp edges, or who have to be carefully kept. Generally, by the time you are *real*, most of your hair has been loved off, and your eyes drop out and you get loose in the joints

and very shabby. But these things don't matter at all, because once you are *real* you can't be ugly, except to people who don't understand.'

Genuine

In fundraising, I've learnt that 'real' = money. 'Real' is the genuine suffering on

the part of people or other living creatures that your organisation is trying to help. 'Real' is the difference that a generous contribution will make.

And 'real' also applies to your donors. Because many of them are likely to be at an age and stage where most of their hair has been

loved off, their eyes aren't what they used to be, and they're a bit wobbly in the joints. But because they've lived life, they can identify 'real' at thirty paces!

So why not make your next appeal letter or newsletter a 'real' all-rounder?

Talk about the need the way it is.

Speak as you stand with your shoes covered in ash when you describe the devastation of a fire in which dozens of families have lost everything.

Squelch through the mud and feel chilled to the bone alongside flood victims. Describe the gut-wrenching grief and loss felt by a father and breadwinner suddenly blinded; and the gnawing in the stomach of a small child who hasn't eaten for days.

Put on the threadbare rags of a destitute and despairing homeless person. Shout out for the creatures of our planet who can't speak for themselves.

Photographs

Use 'real' photographs of people and circumstances. Share their spoken words.

Help your donor feel, 'There by for the grace of God, go I!' Because any one of us could find ourselves in a dire situation one day, and in need of a helping hand.

Then describe to your donor how he or she can 'really' help you fix the situation - with their gift. Making a difference makes people feel good. There's a special joy in being a 'hero' in someone's life, in no matter how small a way, especially in a world that needs more heroes.

And finally, pay your donors the compliment of acknowledging that they are 'real'.

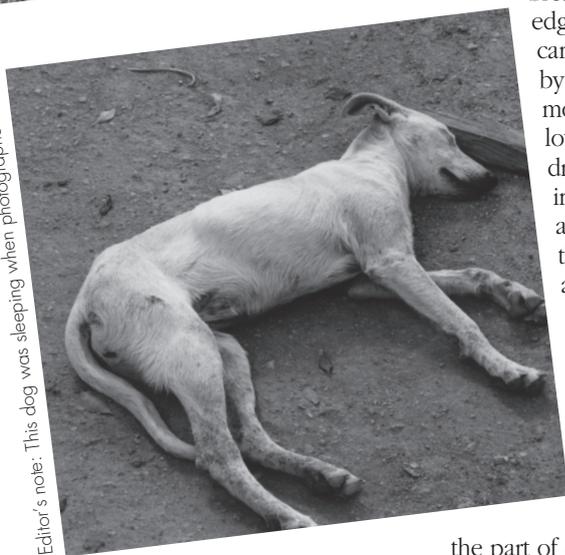
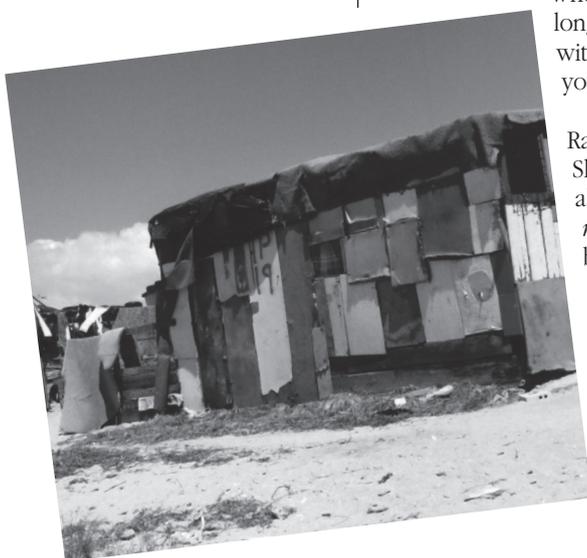
They will respond, and keep responding - for that very reason. And they'll be willing to let you love a little more of their hair off - in your appreciative thanking.

Too often, briefs for appeal themes and newsletter articles are conceptual, cerebral or simply dry, dull and boring. That doesn't mean to say that funds aren't needed for these things. It is. But the money won't come rolling in till you find a way of making that need 'real'.

So when your next direct mail fundraising package is due, do your organisation a favour - give your copywriter, and your donors the 'real stuff'. You'll enjoy the payback, and so will they.

And if you're willing to take the risk - don't lose any opportunity to have a little of your own hair loved off too!

Denise Murray is a Cape Town-based copywriter, who has been writing appeal copy for more than 25 years. E-mail deemurray@iafrica.com



Editor's note: This dog was sleeping when photographed.

'Real' photographs of your work - and human conditions - bring your needs to life in the minds of donors.

Winning websites: what are the real criteria?

When you evaluate your organisation's website, the tendency is to focus on the look of the site, and making sure the text contains every bit of information about your mission, vision and work.

But a brilliant design and content mean nothing if nobody is looking at it. A more relevant measurement of success is the number of visitors to the site and what they do when they get there.

If you don't have live traffic stats installed on your website, get your webmaster to set this up as soon as possible. If you are the web-master and you have no idea how to set up stats, Google provides excellent web analytics; all you have to do is register with them [it's free] and add their tracking code to your web pages.

Visitors vs Hits

Don't get excited by the number of 'hits' you see on your site. If you have a lot of images or support files on the page, hits can add up to hundreds of thousands. What you need to look at are the number of visitors – bearing in mind that as many as 50% of these may be search engine robots rather than human!

How do they find you?

If your web traffic compares to the centre of Poffadder on a Sunday afternoon, you need to change or step up the way you market your website, both off- and online.

Offline, make sure your web address appears on every single piece of stationery – as well as press releases and on any promotional merchandise.

Online, the importance of search engine optimisation cannot be over-emphasised. Everything from your domain name to the text on your page influences search engine rankings.

Bear in mind that search engine spiders cannot see images, but you can use 'image alt' tags to drop in important keywords. These tags

can't be attached to Flash movie files – so if you use one as your header (or, heaven forbid, your whole website has been created in Flash) it will look like a big empty void to a search engine!

What are they doing?

Interrogating your traffic stats can give you a fascinating insight into visitor behaviour and help you create more effective content.

You may be despondent to see that many visitors never venture further than your home page – and even those that do are spending less than three minutes on your site. You may discover some pages are not visited *at all*.

Notoriously impatient

It's no secret that Internet users are notoriously impatient. They won't wait more than a couple of seconds for a web page to load, and will quickly scan the page to see if it is of interest. If not, they may click on another link on the site, and possibly a third, *maybe* even a fourth. But that's it – then they're off onto another site.

So how do you keep visitors on your site for longer? In Part 2 of this article, you'll find out more secrets to successful website design!

Lengthy, dry text and obscure navigation tools are a barrier to getting your message across. Don't use them! Put your most important message on the home page, otherwise the majority of visitors may never see it.

Consider trimming the text to help them scan through your message quickly.

Pages that are never visited? Scrap them – unless they serve some other purpose.

Action

Finally, an effective website is one that generates some action on the part of the visitor – whether it is signing a petition, leaving an email address, posting a comment, making a donation, offering to volunteer or contacting your organisation.

If your website 'just sits there', it's not a winner! ■

Sheila McCallum, head of DMI Online, evaluates the elements of winning websites.

Records broken in acquisition mailing for New Zealand children's hospital

DMI's international sister company in Australasia has just set a new record for donor acquisition results for a children's hospital in Auckland, New Zealand.

A test mailing for which Terry Murray designed the strategy and Denise Murray wrote the copy has just produced the most outstanding results which we have seen anywhere for many years.

Mailed to 33,000 names from five different rented lists, the test mailing package produced by DVA Navion in Melbourne has thus far identified 1715 new donors (at a profit) with donations still trickling in every day.

The top performing list produced a 7% response at an average donation of NZ\$36

(R184) with the other consumer lists producing 6,5%, 5,8% and 4,5%.

The final list (which was a list of business executives, by name at their company address) produced a 2,7% response rate – but with an average donation of \$91 more than twice the average of the other lists used.

Award

A donor acquisition mailing produced by our sister company for a New Zealand blindness agency recently won an award from the Fundraising Institute of New Zealand (FINZ) but that produced a top response rate of 3,8% and an average donation of \$40.80, so this latest mailing has more than likely produced a new record result for the whole of New Zealand. ■

Four essential points you need to know on How to create an appeal

The appeals you send to your housefile donors can be the most perplexing mailings to create.

Because you're talking to the people who know and like you, the temptation is to load up the appeal with information about programmatic initiatives and bury, deep at the end of the letter, a timid reminder that additional funds would be a welcome surprise.

Targeted

Of course, this is absolutely the wrong way to go about creating an appeal. Appeals should be targeted to the donor audience rather than created around programmatic initiatives.

They should state in a frank and obvious manner that you're asking for an additional gift – and they should be tested and refined as much as any acquisition control.

But, luckily, once you turn your thinking about appeals around, it's not difficult to create a mailing that's a success at appealing for funds, while still expanding the understanding your donors have of your organisation and its mission.

There are four elements – beyond the 'ask', offer, and package – that go toward creating a successful appeal. If you can combine all four into one mailing, you probably have a record-breaking appeal on your hands. But if you look at an upcoming appeal's strategy and find none of the four present, it's time to go back to the drawing board.

The first element of a successful appeal is urgency.

Even donors who have been contributing to your cause for decades will respond more readily to an urgent need than a request for continuing help. If your organisation has any unforeseen expenses, if your budget is out of whack, or if issues close to your organisation's mission are in the news, all of these are good reasons to create an appeal with an urgent 'ask'.

One thing to note: Even though an urgent appeal may be built around a once-in-a-lifetime issue, that's no reason to create a new package from scratch. A well-run direct mail fundraising programme should have package treatments and reply device techniques tested and ready to go that are known to work with different types of 'asks'.

The second element of a successful appeal is specificity.

If you can state you need a specific amount

of money to accomplish a specific goal, you'll inspire more donors to make an extra gift to your cause.

Your job is to fight for copy that's specific about your organisation's needs, while avoiding language that requires gifts to be restricted in any way.

The third element of a successful appeal is emotional connection.

I've written before about the plague of direct mail fundraising copy that's sterile, trite, or watered-down.

Appeal copy, like acquisition copy, needs to jump over a high bar to stand out in crowded mailboxes and inspire donors to action. If you can get your donors angry or break their hearts by telling a wonderful story, you'll be much more likely to get a response.

The final element of a successful appeal is involvement.

A successful appeal will provide the donor with a way to feel involved other than writing a cheque.

In an appeal I worked on this year, we asked donors to sign a card or send a note of encouragement to scientists working to protect the ocean.

Connection

Not only is net revenue going up quite a bit (returns are still coming in), but hundreds of donors are deepening their connection to the organisation by writing heartfelt notes of encouragement.

And with all that said, if there's a hard and fast rule in direct mail, it's that the most urgent, specific, emotional, and involving appeal still won't work if it's mailed to the wrong person.

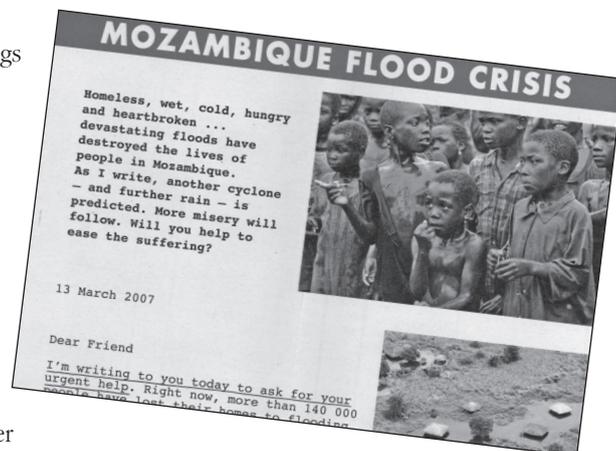
Peter Schoewe is Senior Consultant, Mal Warwick Associates, 2550 Ninth Street, Suite 103, Berkeley CA 94710-2516, www.malwarwick.com, e-mail peter@malwarwick.com. ■



May your camp make you
a friend of the trees,
the soil and animals,
and may you realise the power
of your special self.

With warm regards

(Above) Involving: Eco-Access sent donors a card which they could use to send their notes of encouragement to children going on camp. (Top right) Urgent: When floods hit Mozambique earlier this year, HOPE Africa sent donors an urgent appeal for support.



Adapted from

Successful Direct Mail,
Telephone and Online
Fundraising™

July 2007

Visit www.malwarwick.com

Training and leadership of your most vital volunteers

It's common for non-profits to recruit business executives as board members, board chairs of large and small committees, and planners of major special events and fundraising drives.

In all such assignments, the executives will be co-ordinating mainly other volunteers.

While most business management skills are transferable to the needs of the non-profit, it's important to help leadership volunteers recognise how working with other volunteers could differ from being in charge of their employees.

Intellectually, most people can define what employees and volunteers have in common and where they are quite different. But it can't be assumed that knowing these characteristics translates into applying that understanding in daily work.

Take the time to train leadership volunteers. This will make them far more effective, more quickly, and will avoid some of the pitfalls inherent in neglecting these interpersonal dynamics. Start by asking leadership volunteers to list what an employee wants and needs from a supervisor – and what a supervisor expects from employees.

Ask what the group thinks might be on the same lists for what's wanted and expected in an all-volunteer situation. Expect the first response to be, 'they want the same things.'

Some of what helps people, paid or unpaid, to be productive are universal:

- Define roles with clear goals;
- Training or at least good instructions;
- Access to information and advice;
- Fairness and consistency;
- Recognition;
- Coaching; and,
- Appropriate and sufficient resources.

It's useful to acknowledge that volunteers and employees share these wishes, but that's not the whole story. Next, consider some unique volunteer-related issues.

Schedule and time

One of the major distinctions between employees and volunteers is the number of hours they spend working for your organisation. With only very few exceptions, volunteers are actively focusing on your needs for a few hours or less per week, while employees in a full-time job have the organisation as a priority in their lives.

Leadership volunteers are themselves busy people with a long list of commitments apart from their service to you. Yet it's easy to forget that also is true of the other board or committee members. This doesn't mean volunteers don't want or intend to keep their promises to follow

through on assignments they've accepted. It's just that it's helpful to remember that their paying jobs and already-limited family time might have to come first.

As a practical matter, the issue of schedule makes it easy for volunteers to feel out of the loop. They need to be updated on progress and news in a more conscious way than do employees, who will pick up much of the information and gossip naturally during a week at the water cooler.

It's hard to see the big picture when spending only a few hours each week or month on a project, so all volunteers need their activities placed into context. Remind leadership volunteers to:

- Start all meetings with a recap of what's happened since the previous meeting;
- Include volunteers on agency notices and communiqués, whether snail-mail or e-mailed;
- Send background documents, clearly marked 'FYI' to differentiate them from materials needing direct attention; and,
- Encourage volunteers to ask questions to fill in gaps in their knowledge.

Motivation

It's as inaccurate to characterise all volunteers as 'passionate' for your mission as it is unfair to consider all employees as giving their services merely because 'it's their job'.

Ideally, both paid and unpaid participants care deeply about the organisation's work, and it's best to approach both with that assumption.

Nevertheless, it ought to be the case that volunteers begin – and remain – involved because they care a great deal about helping your cause. This means they need to see how their involvement makes a difference. Leaders must thank volunteers for what they accomplish and not simply for 'time served'.

It's also worth noting that volunteering is a 'leisure time' activity, able to be done only when the volunteer is not committed to other obligations.

So it's paramount that a welcoming climate is created in which volunteers look forward to doing their service. Having fun is a great tool for volunteer retention, as well as fostering creativity and innovation.

'Fun' can range from offering time to socialise before or after meetings, making sure volunteers become acquainted beyond the facts of their résumés, or building in applause

By taking the time to train leadership volunteers, you'll make them far more effective, more quickly – and you'll avoid the pitfalls inherent in neglecting these interpersonal dynamics. Susan J. Ellis reports.

*Adapted from
The NonProfit Times
June 1 2007
Visit www.nptimes.com*

Continued on page 8

Training and leadership of your most vital volunteers

Continued from page 7

and humour wherever possible.

- Recognition is a continuous responsibility of volunteer leaders, and it's so much more than annual formal thank-yous. The personal touch matters a great deal, as does expressing appreciation as soon as possible after the good work is done. A few other ideas are:

- Because major goals will take a year or more to reach, don't wait until the end to give recognition. Break down the time line and applaud reaching intermediate targets and small but vital successes along the way;

- Thank volunteers by name for specific contributions. Use fun gifts to make a point. For example, hand out Lifesaver candy rolls at the very next meeting to the volunteer responsible for finding the new venue when the original one cancelled. It might be corny, but it will be noticed.

Leadership style

One of the wonderful things about working with volunteers is that they bring a wide spectrum of different skills, experiences, and community contacts.

This means a leader is not required to have all the answers, nor expected to make decisions alone.

A collaborative, participatory team decision-making approach has the most success, especially when all the perspectives volunteers represent are included in the deliberations.

Conversely, while acknowledging the skills of volunteers, it's also important to note that no volunteer is too experienced or too high status not to benefit from orientation and even some training.

This is why it's right to prepare volunteer leaders for managing other

volunteers. You could encounter concern that it might be insulting to ask other business executives, for example, to attend a training session.

Point out that the intent is not to imply lack of knowledge, but to give support to ensure success in this particular non-profit context.

You might need to coach leaders in how to criticise a colleague when both are volunteers. A person who has no trouble being the boss in a business could be very reluctant to be directive or perceived as negative in your setting. Point out that:

- It is worse to talk negatively about a person with others than to confront the person directly about poor performance.

- It's actually more flattering to suggest that a volunteer could do better at something than to act as if you think they've already done the best they could.

- If you want to recognise good volunteers, then deal with volunteers who are not doing the right things, otherwise, you send the message to all the others that it doesn't matter whether or not they do something well.

- It could be a relief to the volunteer that you are offering options for improving a situation the person also believes is not working out.

- Stress self-fulfilling prophecy. Set high standards and don't settle for 'well, we've got to accept whatever volunteers do'. Expect the best and that's what you'll get. But don't assume that everyone automatically comes with positive expectations, even volunteers themselves.

Susan J. Ellis is president of Energize, a Philadelphia-based training, publishing and consulting firm specialising in volunteerism. E-mail susan@energizeinc.com. www.energizeinc.com ■

"Reprinted with acknowledgement to ..."

Fundraising Forum prides itself on keeping South African fundraisers right up-to-date with developing attitudes, trends and techniques, both here and overseas. We are grateful to the following international publications, which are regularly quoted and highly recommended:

- *Successful Fund Raising*, PO Box 4528, Sioux City, Iowa, 51104, USA, (12 issues per annum \$159) website: www.stevensoninc.com
- *The NonProfit Times*, 190 Tamarack Circle, Skillman, NJ08558, USA, (\$129 per annum) website: www.nptimes.com
- *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*, PO Box 1989, Marion, Ohio, 43306, USA, (24 issues – one annum at \$95) website: <http://philanthropy.com>
- *Successful Direct Mail, Telephone and Online Fundraising*. Subscribe for free at www.malwarwick.com/newsletter

Fundraising Forum is edited by Richard Solomon and Terry A Murray and published by Downes Murray International.

Downes Murray International

Downes Murray International are fundraising consultants, working with non-profit and non-government organisations of all kinds, to increase their fundraising effectiveness.

We offer feasibility studies, strategic planning workshops, direct mail fundraising, mail/phone, corporate and capital fundraising campaigns, Internet fundraising and website design, church fundraising and bequest promotion programmes. In addition, Downes Murray International has close links with a number of fundraising consultancies across the globe, and represents DVA Navion International Consultancy in Africa, enabling us to keep a finger on the pulse of international trends and techniques. For more information contact your nearest office.

Durban

Tel. (031) 207-3755

Johannesburg

Tel. (011) 465-7217

Cape Town

Tel. (021) 674-0805

Website

www.dmi.co.za

E-mail

dmi@iafrica.com

If you would like additional copies of *Fundraising Forum* or would like to add names to our mailing list please write to:

The Editor
Fundraising Forum
PO Box 3455
Durban
4000

e-mail: jenna@dmi.co.za