

Farewell my brother



The late Terry Murray (left) with long-time friend, business partner and fundraising colleague, Michael Downes. This tribute to Terry Murray was written by Michael Downes, former CEO of DVA Navion.

INSIDE INFORMATION

DMI – 21 things they've done to change the face of fundraising ...2

Philanthropy in focus 3

Do board members really have to fundraise? 4

It's all about making a difference 5

Acquiring new donors through direct mail: measuring success..... 7

Creating a crisis appeal..... 8

After a long illness, Terry Murray passed away on the 5 November 2008 ... the eve of his 70th birthday.

Terry was my partner, colleague in fundraising, friend and more... a brother for the past 23 years. He and I had the time of our lives through it all.

We first met in Melbourne, Australia in February 1986 where Terry was interested in the Total Development concept my consulting firm had pioneered. We resolved to do a series of three day workshops in Durban, Cape Town and Johannesburg later that year. Over 120 people attended these very successful workshops and some of them are still in fundraising today.

Total Development

In May 1987 we established the South African firm called Downes Murray International. We took our thoughts on Total Development to the world and were listened to. In New York we managed to establish the first ever World Fundraising Council which represented professional fundraising people all over the world including South Africa during times of apartheid. We established affiliations in America, Canada and the United Kingdom that led to an international consulting group.

The primary motivation was to do things together ... to spread our message around the world. We believed in teaching philanthropy... the love of mankind. We believed that fundraising was an honourable profession and that we could do great things to change the way people related to one another. We believed in caring for and sharing with others.

Leader

Terry Murray was professionally important because he had probably more experience in fundraising generally than any other living being. And I'm not just talking about South Africa where of course, he has been a giant in the field. No, I'm speaking internationally... Terry Murray is well recognised as the best direct mail fundraiser in the world bar none. Those who know have said so often.

When Terry spoke on a fundraising issue it was with a wealth of international experience. He figured

out what turns people on ... or off ... no matter their nationality.

In fundraising the turnover of people is horrific and newcomers can bring some wild ideas. Terry would calmly remind us that basic fundraising principles never die. He knew that every time some smart guy or girl has entered our profession and tried to change the way to deal with donors it would often go very wrong.

Terry and I were together somewhere in the world at least twice and maybe three times every year. I worked with him in South Africa during the formative years of DMI. He worked with me around the world with our international interests. These past few years he has helped my son, Chris Downes build a very successful direct mail business in Australia and New Zealand.

The true magic of Terry happened after business was done. He had a passion for engaging with people to ask about their families and interests. He would remember the names of their wives and children. He was always happiest interacting with people.

Team

Though we were completely different people, with different likes and dislikes, he and I spent days and weeks together talking about everything. It was because of our differences that together we were such a great help to one another personally. Because of our differences and unique fundraising experiences we also became a great team to benefit our clients.

My son Chris and I managed to get to South Africa to see him just before he died. We were able to be of some help to the family afterwards and it was indeed an honour for me to coordinate the remembrances at his wake ... a magnificent lunch in Cape Town where over 80 close friends and family joined to celebrate his 70 years on this earth.

My sincere sympathy goes to his family and to Emmi, Jenni and all at DMI ... he loved you all so very much and he will be sadly missed. For me – many tears have been shed. He will always remain in my heart and in my prayers.

'Goodnight my Brother ... I will see you in the morning'.

Michael G. Downes

DMI - 21 things they've done to change the face of fundraising



*Terry A. Murray
1938- 2008
This was the last column
Terry wrote before he
passed away on
5 November 2008.*

1 1987: Formed DMI with Michael G Downes, one of Australia's top fundraisers, and introduced the concept of Total Development to South Africa.

2. Impact on South Africa: Total Development and the donor pyramid showed S A fundraisers how building a base of individual donors could be grown to include major gifts and capital funding, and eventually lead to bequests from many of the same individuals.

3. 1987: Published the first issue of *Fundraising Forum* - a free quarterly newsletter which incorporates articles (published with permission) from a number of international fundraising publications, plus articles by local writers – all of which are of interest and use to local fundraisers.

4. 1987: With Michael G Downes, started the first ever global fundraising consultancy group, with associates in Australia, New Zealand, the USA, UK, Argentina and Mexico.

5. The result was that we were able to bring to S A the best of what was happening in fundraising internationally, and also have many of the principal members of the international association visit SA and provide talks and lectures.

6. 1988: DMI pioneered the development of Donor Vision, the first locally designed donor software in the country, which gave local fundraisers the opportunity to buy a product at South African rather than imported prices.

7. 1989: With Colin Shepherd, one of the founders and directors of the Response group (of which DMI was part) we developed the Delphi Lifestyle segmentation system – a sophisticated method of list selection to enhance responses to both donor acquisition and commercial direct marketing.

8. 1990: DMI organised and ran the first ever Southern African Institute of Fundraising International Convention. It attracted nearly 500 delegates who, over three days had the opportunity of learning from eight international presenters, plus Clem Sunter – for whom this was the first opportunity to share his scenario planning presentation with members of the not for profit sector.

9. 1991: DMI introduced the mail/phone technique to South African fundraisers - a

combination of letters followed by a telephone call to discuss and secure a pledged donation. The technique was, and still is, hugely successful for a large number of organisations.

10. 1991: Terry Murray was invited to speak at the Australasian Institute of Fundraising Convention in Adelaide, and as a result was able to show Australia and New Zealand that South Africa was in no way behind with fundraising techniques and successful case histories.

11. 1993: DMI developed, and for many years ran, a fundraising training programme for grassroots fundraising organisations called Fund Train, and scores of South Africans qualified over the next few years.

12. 1994: *The Non Profit Times*, one of the USA's best fundraising publications featured 13 DMI direct mail fundraising packages - a tribute to the creative work which was producing sound results for so many South African clients.

13. 1993: DMI developed the first database of Corporate, Trust and Foundation donors for South African fundraisers.

14. 1995: Jenni McLeod was invited to speak at the International Fundraising Convention in Amsterdam and presented a paper on The Development of an Individual Database.

15. 1995: DMI introduced the concept of the Bequest Society to South Africa with the formation of the Heritage Society for the UCT Medical School. Subsequently, the concept was introduced to many other NPO's with great success, and it has helped to dramatically increase

income for many SA organisations.

16. 1997: At the invitation of Michael Downes, DMI introduced the bequest society concept first in New Zealand and then in Australia, where it has taken off with huge success. The Australian company has two clients whose bequest society programmes have earned awards from the FIA.

17. 1999: A direct mail fundraising mailing by DMI produced a gift of R1.12 million from an individual donor living in Ireland.

18. 2001: DMI's various programmes for local clients produced more than R60 million in a single year for the first time.

19. 2002: DMI first proved the value of long standing partnerships with their clients when they celebrated a 21 year relationship with an

“The result was that we were able to bring to SA the best of what was happening in fundraising internationally”

Continued on page 6

Milestone Thinking

On-target observations in brief

Take pride in what you do and know that you're asking, not for yourself, but for a good and worthwhile cause that deserves support. Your role is to be the conduit between donor and deserving recipient.

With acknowledgement to

Terry Murray in

The Art of Asking + 60 More Fundraising Tips and Trends

Only passions, great passions, can elevate the soul to great things.

Denis Diderot

Just as your direct mail letters must come across as personal, one-on-one communications, so too must your e-mail appeals. Use 'I' and 'you' as liberally as possible.

With acknowledgement to

Mal Warwick in

Mal Warwick's Newsletter September 2008

It's important to impress donors because they talk, and they talk to one another.

With acknowledgement to

The NonProfit Times

September 15, 2008

Great things are not done by impulse, but by a series of small things brought together.

Vincent van Gogh

Implement measures to recognise all donors after five and 10 years of consecutive giving.

With acknowledgement to

Successful Fund Raising

July 2008, Volume XVI, No. 7

If someone cares enough to sit down and write a cheque or fill in a reply form or go on the Internet to make a gift to us, then we owe it to them to thank them.

With acknowledgement to

Trisha Dunbar in

The NonProfit Times

October 15, 2008

Great work is done by people who are not afraid to be great.

Fernando Flores



Photo: Les Goodman

All we see is potential...

The KwaZulu-Natal Society for the Blind's Baumann House Early Childhood Development Centre opened its doors in 1988.

Since its inception it has provided a sound educational foundation to more than 300 children and offered guidance to their families. The centre caters for visually impaired children from birth to seven years old and is the only facility of its kind in KwaZulu-Natal.

Holistic developmental therapy is provided to the children and the routine is much like that of a regular pre-school, except that each child has specifically prescribed goals and are largely taught on a one-to-one basis.

While a sighted child learns by visual stimulation, the 'world' must be brought to the child who can't see. The programme prepares the children for entry into formal schooling programmes.

Parents and caregivers play an integral role in the programme – because parents generally have limited knowledge on how to stimulate and meet the learning needs of their visually impaired child.

Time is spent educating the parents about their child's disability, and how best to use everyday activities to teach the child skills which he or she would not learn incidentally. Our aim is to help each child reach their full potential and to develop into independent, self-motivated adults.

Contact Neville on 031 202-7277 for more information.

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

Helping every child with visual impairment to reach their full potential – that's the goal of the KwaZulu-Natal Society for the Blind's Baumann House Early Childhood Development Centre.

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 international 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

Do board members really have to fundraise?

Many nonprofits today view fundraising as a major responsibility for board members. Every board member is expected not only to make their own monetary donation, but also to successfully solicit significant donations from their personal or professional contacts.
Nancy Witbroe and Joe Zimmerman report.

Some nonprofits are taking this idea too far. And, it might not simply be a misdirected emphasis on one board function versus another.

In some organisations this practice has become a convenient way both to keep troublesome board members from meddling where the executive director does not want them, and for non-profit managers to avoid accountability for their own shortcomings.

What should board members be doing?

Before everyone gets steamed up, everyone can probably agree on two generalisations about most non-profits and their boards. First, all board members should donate money to their non-profit, at a level that is a stretch for them, to demonstrate their commitment to its mission.

Second, every board member should be willing to assist the executive director, development officer, or any other staff person in approaching potential donors about monetary support. Every board member should be willing, and fully able, to describe their non-profit's mission, explain the case for additional funding, and unashamedly participate in the organisation's request for support.

Troublesome

The practice that can be troublesome is requiring every board member to act in the capacity of a fundraiser and making this the (or a) primary responsibility for the members.

Let's review the basics on the most important functions for board members. (Check your reference books if you don't agree with these.) The most important activity for a board is to set organisational strategies and policies.

Second most important, boards must provide governance and broad organisational oversight. Down the list a bit, boards are often said to be responsible for ensuring sufficient organisational resources (including funding), although even this responsibility does not necessarily require directors to be fundraisers.

Most board members have limited volunteer hours they can contribute. The time they spend acting as fundraisers is time they do not spend in strategic planning and thinking, policy-making, organisational governance and oversight. These latter functions truly require board activity and cannot succeed without board participation.

Fundraising, on the other hand, can be greatly assisted by socially-skilled and well-connected board members. But directly raising money shouldn't be a fundamental requirement for board members, nor one of their top priorities.

There is a possible dark side to this, a downside of board fundraising.

In non-profits where board members are assigned to do fundraising as a major

responsibility, it is easy for executive directors and development directors to use the board shortfalls as excuses for their own inadequacies as fundraisers. 'The board doesn't do a good job of fundraising. That's why our fundraising revenues are down.'

Fault

Then, when the board evaluates the executive director's performance, a revenue shortfall can become the board's fault, not the fault of the executive director.

Furthermore, it could be argued that if a board is doing oversight of the organisation's fundraising, then its own involvement in fundraising would at least blur its objectivity, and at most could constitute a conflict of interest. Aren't the public's interests better served by having the board oversee the fundraising done by the non-profit's staff, rather than themselves bearing primary responsibility for fundraising?

When boards are actively involved in setting policy and strategy, and conscientiously performing oversight and governance, they often are not warmly beloved by non-profit staff.

Board members perceived as micro-managing operations frequently annoy executive directors. A convenient way to prevent the board from meddling in operations and disengage them from their pesky oversight is to distract them with fundraising tasks.

Rather than spending board meeting time talking appropriately about policy and governance, or even inappropriately about operations, an executive director can run out a lot of the meeting clock by encouraging board members to feel guilty about their non-performance in fundraising.

Organisations with strong requirements for board fundraising suffer in yet another way.

This probably makes it impossible to acquire and retain, and effectively discriminates against, board members who have fewer resources and affluent contacts. The lack of youthful, less-established, more diverse board members might penalise the non-profit in terms of visionary thought, out-of-the-box problem solving, knowledgeable counsel, youthful energy and contemporary ideas.

Engaging with mission

The most critical requirement for board members is to engage with the organisation's mission. Every board member must honour a non-profit's purpose, share its values, recognise its vision for the future, and promote its programmes.

This empathy with and passion for the

Continued on page 6

*Adapted from
 The NonProfit Times
 September 1, 2008*

It's all about making a difference

Every fundraiser or fundraising executive (be they the CEO's, board members of NGO's, the fundraising staff or for that matter fundraising consultants) should try to attend this conference at least once in their lifetime.

It's at once a humbling experience as well as being extremely inspiring. The inspiration comes not only from the valuable content but also from the passion, commitment and energy of the delegates.

People

The passion for, and commitment to, the cause is what makes the difference between success and failure.

Fundraising's all about individuals and the relationships one develops with them on behalf of our cause. It's people in all instances that make the decisions about whether they support your work.

As DMI have been saying this for years it was great to have re-affirmed that this is still the centre of successful fundraising. Knowing who your donors are and where to look for more prospects with the same profile is key.

There were a selection of sessions on donor recruitment and retention, and the donor journey. Some disturbing statistics also on the number of first time donors who never give again: 45 - 80%.

This has made many organisations look critically at how they handle their first time donors and the ongoing relationships. 75% of first time donors interviewed in focus group sessions admit to looking up an organisation's website before they make their gift, making it imperative for NGO's to have this shop window - it establishes credibility.

Integrated programmes using as many media as possible were recommended: direct mail, television, e-mail, telephone and face-to-face. There was a good deal of emphasis on the role of new media including the opportunities available on the social networking sites and the global giving portals available in most countries nowadays.

In South Africa visit www.myggsa.co.za. But South African charities do not have to limit themselves to our shores only. If they qualify they can feature on other sites which attract donors worldwide – for example www.globalgiving.com and www.universalgiving.org.

Panic

At the time of this conference, the collapse of the banking/investment system in Iceland was big news and there was a lot of talk of a global recession. This was a frequent topic of conversation, along with its effect on fundraising. Surveys were conducted of INGO's and key individuals in the not-for-profit sector worldwide. The response, in detail, is available on the Resource-Alliance website, but

essentially not-for-profit organisations shouldn't panic.

Foundation grants will be honoured and individuals who have relationships with their charities will make the effort to continue giving to the organisations that depend on them, although the more fickle corporate sector will be the first to pull back.

NGO's must go out with confidence to recruit new donors because in a recession people appreciate more than ever the severity of the need. There will be a greater need from within organisations to reassure donors of their efficiency and best practice, but they mustn't cut back on publicity and operations.

Today's donors are more values-driven. Be honest and direct in all your communications and endeavour to deepen their understanding of the work of your organisation.

The greater the involvement, the greater the chance of sustained loyalty. Be real and over-deliver on your promises.

Give your donors multiple opportunities for involvement – as a donor, volunteer, Campaigner, host, or committee member. Research has shown that the more involvement, the longer and more financially valuable the relationship. A volunteer's four times more likely to leave a bequest than an occasional donor.

Bequests

On the subject of bequests (or legacies as they're referred to in the northern hemisphere) the 'baby boomers' are reaching the age group to consider this as a way of giving.

Statistically bequests have been declining with the death rate but things should start looking up again from 2012. In the UK over 60% of the population give to charity but a small proportion leave a charitable bequest.

That's why a consortium of NGO's banded together to finance a national 'legacy awareness' programme which today is showing dividends for all the causes concerned and the industry as a whole.

The same's happened in the Netherlands and other European countries are following suit. It would benefit all South African charities if we could do the same. If your organisation is interested in participating, please give me a call on 031 207 3755.

The campaign will teach the public about a 'bequest' as a way of supporting their charities and it will also create awareness and goodwill for all the organisations concerned.

It's too expensive an initiative for one charity to handle alone but together we can make a difference.

In fact that thought ... that we can make a difference ... is what sets us fundraisers apart. We're the conduits to collectively making a difference in our world. ■



The 28th International Fundraising Congress – the premier event for fundraising executives, took place in Holland in October. Downes Murray International's Jenni McLeod was among the 1 000 delegates.

Do board members really have to fundraise?

Nancy Withbroe is a consultant with CDR fundraising Group in the USA. E-mail nwithbroe@cdrfg.com

Joel Zimmerman is director of consulting services for CDR Fundraising Group. E-mail jzimmerman@cdrfg.com

Continued from page 4

mission is required for board members to satisfactorily carry out their core functions: strategic guidance, governance and oversight.

In addition, these same characteristics make board members – or anyone else for that matter – powerfully effective fundraisers.

If you have recruited, oriented and educated the board correctly, the members will become fundraisers. Their enthusiasm for mission and their personal dedication will sell itself to the people with whom they associate. Nonetheless, the reason they need to engage with mission is to do the work of a board – not to stand in for other people who must be dedicated to fundraising.

Of course, for top-end fundraising activities, such as capital campaigns, board members are irreplaceable in the fundraising process. Here, our nonprofits depend on people who are socially well connected and comfortable rubbing elbows with donors capable of making major gifts. You need people who remain composed and unruffled in casual conversations about seven-figure gifts. Here, you need board members. But here is not a place that all board members necessarily need to go.

Splitting responsibilities

Some organisations have recognised that many people who could effectively help them with policy and programme are not the same people who are well-connected for fundraising. In such cases, non-profits have established two boards, at times referred to as a board of directors and a board of advisors.

The board of directors is asked to

fundraise, while the board of advisors, chosen on the basis of substantive expertise rather than social position, assists the organisation in programmatic and substantive ways. From a governance point of view though the fundraising group is usually still the ‘official’ board.

This invites other questions. First, why is the group with substantive expertise not the ‘directing’ group? Why does the group chosen on the basis of social connections have official dominion over strategy, policy, governance and oversight, rather than the more knowledgeable advisory group, which is directly involved with programmatic decisions?

True, the fundraising board of directors has a more objective vantage point from which to exercise oversight (though the members might have less skill or desire to do so). They might argue that as stewards of the money they have raised, they should direct how the money is spent. But, the expertise-based board of advisors is probably more qualified to develop policy, execute strategy and promote governance.

Boards would work best if the responsibility for fundraising were left to executive and development directors of fundraising committees, and boards of directors concentrated their time on strategy, policy, governance and oversight.

Well-connected fundraising friends could be courted and dearly welcomed as very special volunteers, and recognised with special titles as patrons. A few board members could serve as liaisons between the fundraising committee and the rest of the board.

It’s time to rethink the sacred cow of burdening the entire board of directors with a primary responsibility for fundraising. ■

DMI – 21 things they’ve done to change the face of fundraising

Continued from page 2

organisation, which saw a growth of their donor base reach 60 000 names with an equivalent increase in income. Then in 2006, a 25 year relationship with the Catholic Archdiocese of Durban was celebrated.

This solid overseas fundraising programme aimed at the U S A, U K and Ireland has been enormously successful in raising support from loyal donors over many years - a programme which includes major gifts, monthly gifts, and bequests.

20. 2003: DMI introduced their online division helping clients with website design and access to online giving.

Currently, 18 clients are taking advantage of

this service. And in 2007 one client received the highest online donation so far (R68 850) from an overseas donor whose only specification was that it should be used for the greatest need.

21. 2007: DMI helps 18 clients raise a total of just under R70 million, locally and internationally.

During their existence DMI has led the way in fundraising in South Africa, and has possibly made a greater impact on growth and improvement than any other company in this field.

And as part of their 21st birthday I’ve been privileged to have DMI publish my book – *The Art of Asking + 60 more Fundraising Tips and Trends*. ■

Acquiring new donors through direct mail: measuring success

Regional and local charities with relatively small donor bases need to understand the role that direct mail plays in acquiring new donors.

'At every organisation, some level of donor attrition is inevitable,' says Stephen Hitchcock, author of *Open Immediately: Straight Talk on Direct Mail Fundraising*. 'In any given year, at least 10% and more likely 20% of your donor base will fade away.'

If you neglect acquisition, in other words, you doom your organisation's charitable giving.

Future

'If you stop acquiring donors now,' Hitchcock says, 'in as few as five years you could end up with next to none. Therefore any organisation desiring a long-term future must invest in some level of acquisition.'

It seems especially urgent for a charity that counts its donors in the hundreds or low thousands. An unreplenished donor base will definitely stunt your growth.

You can go about acquisition many ways – collecting names at fundraising events, for instance. But the conventional route is to do a mailing. You send out a direct mail solicitation to households you don't already mail to, asking for their support.

Not just any households, of course. You want households you feel might be predisposed to your cause for some reason.

If you're trying to acquire new donors for a family planning clinic, for example, you might target women in certain postal codes. If you're trying to acquire new donors for an adolescent mental health centre, you might target parents inside your service area.

You mail your solicitation. Within 12 to 14 days, you will have most of your return. Over the next six months, a couple more responses will wander in; but pretty much all your response will be in your hands within two weeks. How exciting ... and fast ... and, of course, sometimes devastating, if you've done something amiss and the response rate isn't good.

Successful

But let's assume the solicitation went fine: the appeal was good enough to achieve an average successful response. In 2008, in the United States, experts say an okay (not flaming great, not miserable) response to an acquisition mailing is one half of 1% (0.5%). If you mailed 20 000 pieces, a typical successful response, therefore, would yield for your organisation 100 new donors.

The big question then becomes: Is that enough? Well, that all depends on your goal. What are you measuring?

If you're measuring immediate cash income, you might conclude that the effort wasn't worth the trouble and cost. If, for instance, the average gift from these 100 new donors was R100, you've just brought in R10 000. Which probably covers just a fraction of the cost of printing and postage.

By another standard, though, you've done surprisingly well. Wasn't the real purpose of this particular mailing to plug a hole?

You set out to replace your annual 10 to 20% donor attrition. If you have 500 donors in your current base, and you lose the full 20% (i.e., 100 donors depart), then your acquisition mailing has at least broken even, which is the goal. Those 100 new donors replace your loss.

But a no-growth goal doesn't get you far. So you probably want to do more with your acquisition mailing than simply make up a loss; you want to expand your donor base.

Now you have to recalculate. You work out the problem on a scrap of paper. You currently have those 500 donors in your base. (You write down the number 500.) You're going to lose 20% of them, worse case. (You multiply 500 by 20%, which equals 100.) So you need 100 new donors to make up that difference. Plus you want to grow your base by 10%, which translates into 50 new donors. (You add your replacement goal of 100 to your growth goal of 50.) Your total goal has become: 150 new donors acquired.

Effective

Mailing to 20 000 households, you won't make your goal, at one-half of 1%. If you mail to 30 000 households instead, you will, since one-half of 1% multiplied by 30 000 equals 150.

To measure how effective any kind of communication has been, you have to know first what constitutes success for you.

Many fundraisers would argue that acquiring new donors is more important than acquiring instant income, assuming you hold on to those new donors for dear life, welcoming them, thanking them copiously, keeping them well informed.

The best in-depth discussion of a long-term donor's ultimate value I know is in *Building Donor Loyalty*, by researchers Adrian Sargeant and Elaine Jay. Judging from its miserable sales ranking on Amazon, it's a book that far too few people buy. Too bad: it will change your thinking about the promise inherent in acquiring new donors. Do your organisation a favour: read *Building Donor Loyalty*.

This article is adapted, in part, from Keep Your Donors, by Simone Joyaux and Tom Abern, published in November 2007 by Wiley/AFP. ■

First, you need a clear idea of what you're chasing. Is it instant cash or long-term friends? Tom Abern reports on measuring the success of your donor acquisition programme.

*Adapted from
Abern E-News 6.1*

*Visit
www.AbernComm.com*

Creating a crisis appeal

I've seen lots of discussion lately about whether – and how – non-profit organisations should talk about the current economic crisis. I believe it's important that you express frankly to your donors your concerns in the current climate.

Here are several tips I've learned through the years to create a crisis appeal that inspires donors to help generously – rather than turning them away:

- Don't make the appeal about budget shortfalls. Most donors don't support your organisation because they care about your financial health. They support you because they believe in your mission. They've chosen to invest in your work because you're helping them advance goals they believe in. Therefore, a crisis appeal should detail how the reduced resources available to your organisation will affect work the donors believe is critical – and how their donations are even more important now that funds are so scarce.
- Appeal to donors on an emotional level. The natural human reaction to a crisis is an emotional one. If you write a dry letter filled with facts and figures, it will ring false. You need to express your true reaction to the crisis – how your heart is breaking that you might not be able to continue working on a project that was just about to have a wonderful breakthrough. You can explain how difficult it will be to tell the clients you serve that funds to help them

aren't available.

- But don't commiserate. It's fine to express to your donors that you understand these are tough times for everybody – and that understanding makes you appreciate their contributions even more. But never give them an excuse not to give by saying you know they may not be able to send a donation right now.
- Don't be afraid to talk about your deepest fears. I believe many organisations feel that expressing an emergency need for funds means they're admitting to poor management or shoddy planning. But the audience who receives your appeal is not judging you based on your organisational structure or management skills.

As I wrote above, they support you because they believe in what you're doing, if you tell them there's a real risk you might not make it through this crisis without their help, they'll be much more likely to open their hearts and their wallets, even in these tough times.

If you're able to create a crisis appeal that follows these guidelines don't be surprised if it beats your best expectations. When donors who believe in you see that the hopes and dreams you share are threatened, they'll move mountains.

Peter Schoewe is Senior Consultant at Mal Warwick Associates. Web www.malwarwick.com, e-mail peter@malwarwick.com. Reprinted with permission from Mal Warwick's Newsletter. ■

“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
- *Ahern E-News*. Subscribe for free at www.AhernComm.com

Season's Greetings

The editors, contributing writers and publishers of *Fundraising Forum* wish all clients and friends a merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.



Fundraising Forum is edited by Richard Solomon 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. 021 674-0803

Website
www.dmi.co.za

E-mail
fundraisingforum@dmi.co.za

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: richard@dmi.co.za