



## Fundraising requires creativity

By Donna D'Amour Special Features Writer  
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Fundraising for non-profits and NGOs (non-governmental organizations) is both an art and a science. It's not easy in the best of economic times, and certainly not in the midst of a global downturn.

In this age of outsourcing, it's not surprising that many non-profits and NGOs turn to the professionals to raise capital. Bolduc Nolet Primeau & Associates is one such consulting firm that specializes in fundraising

for the non-profit sector.

"The key thing is to know your donors, keep them informed on what is going on in the organization, communicate with them on a regular basis and most important, say 'thank you' for what they've done," says John McCabe, director of operations for the Maritimes with BNP in Dartmouth. McCabe has 20 years experience and says his company has never had a campaign that hasn't succeeded. "Every time we set a goal we meet the goal for the client."

BNP insists on a campaign feasibility study to get to know the leadership of the campaign, conducts interviews with internal and external sources, and confirms the feasibility of the goal. If the goal isn't feasible, they will ask the organization to lower their goal.

BNP specializes in major capital campaigns, planned giving and endowments, consulting, feasibility studies, strategic planning with not-for-profit organizations, and human assessments for organizations.

"We would work for anything from a major university or a hospital, to health organizations such as the Heart and Stroke Foundation or Juvenile Diabetes."

They charge a set fee for their service based on the hours worked, and do not receive a percentage of funds raised.

"There is a lot of preparation work before you go out and make a call," McCabe says.

They recruit the committee that will represent the NGO or client during fundraising, train volunteers to make solicitation calls and get everyone organized. They do all the marketing, planning and development, and develop a public relations plan. They begin with the top hits (those expected to donate the most) to create the momentum for the campaign.

BNP staff members are professional Certified Fund Raising Executives, a designation that is recognized by a number of different not-for-profit organizations.

McCabe says in any fundraising campaign the total costs including consultants, calls, print materials, etc. should be less than 15 per cent of the overall funds raised. His team keeps people on track, but they don't go out and collect the money.

"I'm the paid help — people are not going to give money to me," he says. "People will respond to a volunteer, somebody who is involved with the organization — that's who they respond to. Better to have the chairman of the fundraising committee talk to a donor. Even if you are working with an organization that has staff, say the staff of the hospital, it is much better to have the committee make the appeal than a staff person. The only time they will want to bring in a staff person is if they are explaining a specific type of program that would require staff expertise."

NGOs should focus on the relationship with donors — not just try to connect, but to develop a good relationship. Donors need to know that their donations are respected and will be

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