

Campaign Publicity & Promotion

An organization seeks publicity for a campaign to create an awareness of the organization's value to the community and the financial need that has brought about the campaign. This heightened awareness will assist in creating a climate conducive to giving. A secondary reason for publicizing a campaign is to give recognition to the efforts of volunteers, particularly the campaign's leaders.

A publicity plan is nothing more than the scheduling of announcements and events at intervals which will work to achieve the above goal. The scope and coverage of the campaign will depend upon realistic expectations of support from local media and to the extent the organization can generate its own publicity vehicles.

Some of the most common publicity getters are:

1. Naming of campaign Chair and goal
2. Recruitment of the campaign solicitation committee
3. Campaign kickoff with civic endorsements
4. First major gift
5. Twenty-five percent of goal reached
6. Fifty percent of goal reached
7. Seventy-five percent of goal reached
8. Major gifts received (as appropriate) Significant "named" gift announcements for capital and endowment campaigns
9. Ground-breaking (in the case of a capital campaign)
10. Ninety percent of goal reached
11. Goal reached
12. Dedication (in a capital campaign) or a celebration function in every case

The idea is create a public awareness of the reason for the campaign, rather than of the campaign itself

Bear in mind that publicity is sought only in order to support the fund-raising effort. It is possible for those managing a campaign to become too enamored with publicity and expend effort on obtaining it that would be far better spent on asking for money. Nearly every organization has a mechanism and a person or persons assigned the responsibility for publicizing activities. Campaign management should leave the planning of publicity, the issuing of press releases, and obtaining of media coverage in the hands of this or these persons.

A good publicity effort requires that someone take the responsibility for its execution. A development officer's job is to see to it that the money is raised. If he/she gets sidetracked by the search for publicity, the campaign itself can be placed in jeopardy. Publicity must be kept in its place. In fact, it is best left to the communications or marketing departments of an organization or a volunteer communications professional. It is their job, after all, and the smart development officer asks that they generate the required publicity, leaving those responsible for fund-raising to work on the real job --- achieving the campaign goal.