

Announcing Results Of Fund-Raising Campaigns

The Campaign's over and the goal has been achieved. Life is good. Issue a press release and a final newsletter thanking campaign leadership, volunteer solicitors, and the donors. Single out people who should be commended, and praise the campaign chair.

The Campaign's over and the goal has not been achieved. Life has been better. This has happened to me more times than I like to admit.

Goals and resources do not always match, campaigns do develop insurmountable problems, and sometimes you just can't pull it off. Fund-raisers have to be prepared for the occasional failure.

However, bear in mind that a campaign can come up short of its goal and still have demonstrated a lot of accomplishment. You may still be able to say congratulations to volunteers and donors. The money raised may be an all-time high for the organization's annual fund. More donors than ever before may have given. The campaign may have come within 10 percent of a goal we knew to be very ambitious.

It is the rare campaign in which you cannot find a positive accomplishment to call to the attention of volunteers, donors, and the public.

So issue a press release and a final newsletter thanking campaign leadership, volunteer solicitors, and the donors. Single out people who should be commended, and praise the campaign Chairperson. Thank-you functions are still appropriate. Donors still need to be told how much they are valued and appreciated.

With the people who worked on the campaign, you need to be practical and honest about the disappointment, but don't let words of regret, frustration, and unhappiness get to the ears of those who gave.

If you become preoccupied with the shortfall and forget all the good things that happened, you do a disservice to those who worked a campaign and to those who gave to it. They should never be left to think their efforts were a waste.

I like to host a thank-you function or functions for my volunteers and major donors. The format should be in tune with the organization and the community --- a cocktail party, picnic, or open house, for example. (Don't forget to seek underwriting for this event.)