

Nonprofit Resources

Youth Development Program Fundraising Toolkit



Compliments of Merge Education

Welcome to the Fundraising Toolkit

Almost all nonprofits need to encourage board members and other volunteers to step out into the world of fundraising. The problem is that almost no one enjoys asking for money, so fundraising is almost always a conundrum.

Can local fundraising be difficult? Yes. Is it necessary, at least to show local support to potential foundation funders? Yes!

That's why we are offering this toolkit for you to edit and complete. By developing and disseminating talking points you will achieve two important things:

1. Developing them will require you to clarify your "brand" and essentialize your thinking on why someone else should support it, and
2. Giving your volunteers talking points will greatly reduce their apprehension.

We hope the following is helpful in growing your nonprofit!

The Merge Education Team

Be sure to visit us at <https://merge-education.com> for more nonprofit resources and the very best youth development software!

FUNDRAISING TALKING POINTS

No one can do everything, but everyone can do something.

The person you ask can do something – and maybe more than you think!

There are two main points to consider while thinking about fundraising:

1. Get Emotional!

Before you fine-tune and memorize your spiel, consider why you're on the board. What do you admire most about XXX's mission? Why do you think XXX is necessary? What kind of a difference will XXX make in people's lives? Get emotional about it. Feel it. Then convey that when you talk with people.

2. Always Ask for a Donation!

ALWAYS ask, because they probably won't say "gosh, would you accept a donation?" Think of how you'd like to ask. It can be as simple as "will you help us make this happen?" or perhaps telling a story about XXX.

Here are some talking points you can play around with or use as written. Whichever you choose to do, you MUST memorize the ideas, so they roll off your tongue even if you're uncomfortable.

The 20 second pitch:

I'm on the board of XXX, an emerging (startup) nonprofit that: (EXAMPLE) empowers underprivileged students to graduate from college. Did you know that Just 9 percent of disadvantaged American students graduate with a bachelor's degree by age 24? We're going to raise that. I'd love to tell you more about the program. Do you have time now, or could we schedule a time to talk?

The 30 second pitch:

I'm on the board of XXX, an emerging (startup) nonprofit that: (EXAMPLE) empowers underprivileged students to graduate from college. Did you know that Just 9 percent of disadvantaged American students graduate with a bachelor's degree by age 24? We're going to raise that.

The students we support have often lived with serious poverty and even abuse, and the college environment can be overwhelming to them. They need a lot of training and support to adjust at first, and ongoing support so they can graduate and go on to a satisfying, well-paying career.

I'd love to tell you more about the program. Do you have time now, or would you like to schedule a time to talk?

Why should someone give to XXX? What need do you address?

To board members: Think about this question. The need must feel real to YOU, so it will feel real to the person you're talking with. They have to feel what a shame it is that so many people fall by the wayside when they could really succeed if they had the right support.

Think about what often happens (*EXAMPLE*) to these students if they fail once again. Where can they go, what kind of a job can they get?

The Need:

(EXAMPLE): Did you know that Just 9 percent of these disadvantaged American students graduate with a bachelor's degree by age 24? This is compared to 77% for affluent students. So it's a social justice issue – how else will our country begin to really mitigate its racial, social, and economic differences?

What's cool is how these youth can rise to the challenge when they get the support they need, and often – because of the difficulties they've had to navigate – they have hidden strengths and talents that start to shine. When you consider that they already beat the odds just to enroll in college and try for it, you realize what the potential is. It's a win-win for our country to be able to utilize their abilities.

I'd love to tell you more about the program. Do you have time now, or would you like to schedule a time to talk?

What does XXX do?

(EXAMPLE): We empower disadvantaged students to graduate from college through trainings and ongoing small-group workshops. We also have an online community where they feel welcome and can find support, like getting answers to their questions from others who have "been there". The support they get is a lot more authentic than what they get from school advisors.

I'd love to tell you more about the program. Do you have time now, or would you like to schedule a time to talk?

KEY SELLING POINTS (EXAMPLES)

- ✓ In our first year, we will serve # students with a total of # trainings and # workshops in our first year.
- ✓ We're conducting trainings in the XX area for the first year, and will then expand to the Metro Boston, San Francisco, and Salt Lake City areas.
- ✓ The total first year budget is small, as we prove the validity and effectiveness of the concept. It totals \$XXX.

OUTCOMES, EVALUATION, AND EFFECTIVENESS (EXAMPLES)

The main outcome we're looking for is an increase in the graduate rate of disadvantaged students.

We will evaluate our success by tracking graduation rates from our trainings, using intake and exit questionnaires, and tracking college graduation rates for all our students.

STORIES AND TESTIMONIALS (EXAMPLES)

If you don't have any client testimonials yet, use a story.

Other Funders – Who Else is Funding XXX?

Other funders can be a powerful incentive for people to give. But if your organization is new and the board is just getting started, there's no way around it. So, tell them that, and for your first few 'asks' you can tell them you're just beginning to tell the story and get support. But don't apologize! We all start somewhere, and this is where XXX is starting now. It's really the only way a nonprofit group can get started, unless they're independently wealthy.

AND DON'T FORGET!

You're serving on the board because you believe it's such a great cause! Remember that. You'll get more comfortable with each one and it will become easy.

We are pleased to provide you with this material!

We hope it helps you develop a strong organization to better serve your students - check out our site for our growing library of useful resources!



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