

Your Organization's Portfolio: Building A Strong Communications and Fundraising Platform

90% of fundraising is planning! Donors give because a program strikes them as relevant. They believe in the individuals who are involved and want to share in the success. An organization must substantiate its competence and ability to make good on its commitments!

As part of the self-assessment process with new clients, I ask them to describe how the world would be diminished if they cease to exist. Then we build our plan of action! We take stock of their assets and challenges as we work together to build a case for their important work.

Ideally, an organization's planning process is ongoing to keep it on the cusp of change and opportunity. Communications strategies will tell the story with clarity and purpose – and pride.

For those of us who worked with small nonprofits or those that are startups or in transition, we often assume a dual role combining communications and fundraising. I believe that they are inextricably bound and that any disconnect is easily apparent both within and outside the organization. That is why I focus on good governance.

In the 1990s, I wrote a nonprofit training program, ***Using Business Strategies to Build Your NonProfit Bottom Line***. It is custom-designed for each organization's special needs and build a long-term strategy that is founded on a shared vision gained early in the training process.

With co-trainers, I also presented this program to larger groups, such as the National Council of La Raza Conferences and the State of New Jersey state-funded non-profit organizations. In every case, I was most taken by how dedicated and humble our community is. Our goals are lofty, we stretch dollars because the challenges are daunting.

STEP 1 Take Stock of Your Assets. CREATE YOUR ORGANIZATION'S ASSETS. Creating this portfolio will make public relations and fundraising much easier.

- ❑ Long-range plan statement.
- ❑ Vision and Mission Statements
- ❑ Backgrounders: issues, history, services, community impact.
- ❑ Program descriptions
- ❑ Mini-bios: board members, advisory committee and key staff.
- ❑ Annual reports.
- ❑ Multi-year financial statements.
- ❑ Endorsement letters from customers, community leaders, etc.
- ❑ Case studies that tell a story
- ❑ Wish list – Probono services and product, etc.

- ❑ Relevant news articles: organizations, key issues, influential, etc.
- ❑ Certificates and recognition.
- ❑ Public Relations materials.
- ❑ Donor letters, proposals and appeals.
- ❑ Community engagement activities and partnership engagements
- ❑ Photos
- ❑ Add your own

Take your place as a leader in your work. These are your credentials.