

## FUNdraising Good Times: How to succeed in fundraising

Written by Mel and Pearl Shaw  
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Happy New Year! Are you beginning 2014 with your hopes pinned on a bountiful new year? Does your vision of December 2014 include smiling faces as you toast members of your fundraising team, celebrating a year that broke fundraising records? Are you dreaming of fundraising success, or are you planting seeds that can bear fruit this year and for years to come?

We suggest giving your dreams a strong foundation: put in place the prerequisites for fundraising success. There are 18 things you can focus on throughout the year that will help ensure fundraising success in 2014 and for years to come. This column focuses on four: agreement, commitment, teamwork, and a budget.

Start with **agreement**. Do the leaders of your organization agree on the fundraising priorities and how much needs to be raised? Are the goals in line with your nonprofit's strategic direction? Does everyone understand the current financial position? Are the goals realistic? Is there an understanding of where the money could come from? Are there contingency plans in place in case initial donors or funders are unable or unwilling to give at the level your nonprofit anticipates?

Move on to **commitment**. Your board might approve a budget that depends on the organization raising a specific amount of money, but that is not the same as being committed to ensuring the funds are raised. Leaders demonstrate commitment through their own personal giving. If board members won't give, why should anyone else? Involvement is another way to demonstrate commitment. Are board members willing to host fundraisers and fundraisers? Talk with current and prospective funders? Introduce your nonprofit to a new circle of potential supporters?

Board participation is critical, but no board can achieve fundraising success on its own. A larger **team**

is required. Engage those who can make a difference in your nonprofit's fundraising by asking them to join a fundraising leadership team. Invite donors, local business and community leaders, your employees, volunteers and those who benefit from the work of your nonprofit to lend their skills, enthusiasm and relationships. Colleges, universities, private schools and charter schools should always engage alumni. Set up weekly or monthly meetings for the team and make sure there are clear and well defined roles for each team member.

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Make sure the annual operating **budget** includes funds to support your fundraising efforts. The old saying is true: it takes money to make money. Successful fundraising requires the consistent allocation of time, money and resources. Take the time to determine how much can be allocated to fundraising, and set realistic expectations regarding how much can be raised.

Over the next few weeks we will introduce additional prerequisites for fundraising success. In the meantime, we invite you to assess your fundraising readiness for free at [www.saadandshaw.com](http://www.saadandshaw.com)

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*Mel and Pearl Shaw are the authors of "[Prerequisites for Fundraising Success](#)." They position nonprofits for fundraising success. Visit them at [www.saadandshaw.com](http://www.saadandshaw.com)*