

## FUNdraising Good Times: Who is your ideal partner?

Written by Mel and Pearl Shaw  
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How do you become a successful nonprofit fundraiser? What is the secret to success? An engaging personality, relationships, tenacity, creativity, sales ability and consistent follow through are some of the attributes of success fundraisers. Here's another: teamwork! Successful fundraisers don't go it alone: they always have a partner. It is flattering and humbling to be asked to play a role in raising funds for an organization you believe in. You can increase your chances of success by picking the right partner to work with.

If you are asked to help organize a marathon, a concert, or a phone-a-thon you can double your impact by getting a partner. If you are asked to lead a capital campaign, an alumni campaign, or local disaster relief campaign get a partner and double your impact. When agreeing to help with fundraising make your answer, "Yes, and I'd like to have a partner work with me. So-and-so is a great asset and he has volunteered to work with me on this project."

When you have a fundraising partner you have someone to bounce ideas off of, to make plans with, and to inspire you if you feel discouraged. If you know there are times when you will be out of town or otherwise committed, your partner can fill in for you and keep the process moving. When you have an effective and supportive partner fundraising can transform from an obligation into a fun challenge. You set a financial goal and work together to figure out how to reach it.

**Here are a few things to consider** as you contemplate who could be your ideal fundraising partner. Reflect on who you know personally, professionally, through worship, family connections, and/or community life. It would be ideal to partner with an individual who has a track record of successful fundraising. But that alone is not enough! Think about who also shares an interest in the work of your nonprofit and its values, and who has demonstrated commitment and follow through in other areas of their lives. Think about who you have helped in the past, and who might "owe you one." Look for a person who gets things done, doesn't accept failure, and always has a "plan b" and a "plan c" in their back pocket. Another ideal characteristics: people who have the power, influence and wealth to easily engage others in meeting your fundraising goal. Finally, the most important characteristic is that of accessibility. You want a partner you can reach by phone, text or email and who is not too busy to give his or her full attention to your joint project. They make your fundraising project their project.

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If this sounds simplistic, that's because it is. Find a partner, put your heads together, and have some fun raising money.

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*Mel and Pearl Shaw position nonprofits, colleges and universities for fundraising success. For help with your campaign visit [www.saadandshaw.com](http://www.saadandshaw.com) or call (901) 522-8727.*