

Five Keys to Building Fundraising Success in Diverse Communities

Key # #1.....Know Your Demographics

Data Source Examples

- 1) StatsCan Community Profiles
- 2) Customized Census Canada profiles
- 3) Social Planning Councils (where available) e.g. Community Development Halton; SPC of Kitchener-Waterloo
- 4) Municipal GIS (Geographic Information Systems) Surveys
- 5) StatsCan GSS (General Social Survey)
- 6) Studies, reports and environmental scans ¹
- 7) Extrapolations from non-diversity related projections and analyses ²
- 8) *Portraits of Seniors in Canada* (Census Canada)

Data provides 'the hard facts' some organizations need to justify supporting a diversity-related initiative. In these environments appealing to decision-makers at an insight/experiential/emotional level may not yield positive results as there might be a feeling that there are no 'solid' reasons for expending required resources. 'Hard facts' ensures that "that which gets measured gets done".

Key #2.....Cultivate Strategic Relationships

Partnerships

Collaborate with stakeholder groups on:

- Social and cultural events
- Strategies for more effective marketing, community outreach, public relations and/or communications that give access to 'inner sanctums' of community life
- Diversity-competent service delivery
- Building networks and strategic approaches
- Joint application for dedicated funds to address issues of mutual concern

¹ e.g. *Social Trends Magazine*.

² Organizations such as Catalyst Canada; Pollsters such as Environics and Ipsos-Reid; Conference Board of Canada; Boards of Trade; and major banks and management consulting firms periodically produce reports whose findings can be used to support the need for diversity-related programming.

Forums

A forum brings together a cross-section of targeted organizations or communities act as a sounding board or to provide key information on relationship with their community. Forums require common vision and priorities. They also require ground rules about handling forum decisions or recommendations.

Community Appointments

Appointing community representatives to your decision-making bodies brings the community into the organization. This yields in fresh ways of understanding –and accessing—the community in question and builds relationships with the community in an organic way. It also creates new channels into the community. It is critical to ensure, however, that a cross-section representing a diversity of community voices of the community be considered for these positions.

Steering Committees

A steering committee has more power than a forum, but does not have complete control of outcomes. For example:

- Will the members expect more power and more access to your organization than you prepared to give?
- Will the group be compatible?
- How will members be selected, and how will they relate to their own constituents?
- How will the group ensure that both the organization's and the community's interests are met?

Key #3.....Get on the Community Radar Screen!

Lessons Learned from New Immigrant Giving Patterns

- 1) Become a cause with which people are familiar
- 2) Know and become relevant to current community concerns
- 3) Learn the *language* and *currency* that gets you into the 'inner sanctums'
- 4) Find and leverage shared values and worldviews
- 5) Rise above the crowd by demonstrating commitment that extends beyond simply wanting money from the community

Key #4.....Create an *Alternative Future*

“The conversations that build relatedness most often occur through associational life, where (people)...show up by choice, rather than ...where professionals are paid and show up by contractual agreement” **Peter Block, Community: The Structure of Belonging**

To create new paths in your relationship with your diverse fundraising targets:

- 1) **Engage** communities...in an ongoing relationship outside of fundraising
- 2) **Empower** communities...to make choices about their response to your appeal
- 3) **Equip** communities...with the information *they* need to make sense of your messages
- 4) **Embrace** communities...as partners in your business
- 5) **Educate** communities...about who you are, using tools, vehicles and communication approaches developed with their input

Key 5.....Know and Prepare Yourself

You can only be as diversity competent externally as you are internally:

- 1) **Assess Your Readiness** to broaden the bandwidth of inclusion in your fundraising strategy; ensure you have the requisite support systems in Key Operational Areas
- 2) **Strategically Embed** diversity into your policies, goals, mandate and vision.
- 3) **Train Key Personnel** in diversity management and on diversity-related issues
- 4) **Implement** your fundraising strategy by building key strategic alliances with diverse communities and by using tools and resources that resonate with them.

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For more information, tools and resources visit:
www.diversitytrainersplus.com