How to Evolve! in your Communication and Fundraising Skills

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INTRODUCTION

WELCOME to the *How to Evolve! in your Communication and Fundraising Skills* toolkit, part of the "#EVOLVE IVSolution - Training and Capacity building, the Evolution for the IVS movement" project co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union. The project seeks to enable the exchange and development of new cooperation between CCIVS members and invited guests coming from different regions of the world. In face of the declining numbers of volunteers it offers a space to build new partnerships, and to develop key competencies in the field of communication, marketing and fundraising.

Being part of the International Voluntary Service movement means that you have a very important role to motivate and bring positive change in your community. We hope you will feel inspired and empowered while you learn and grow reading it and you will find some good tips to make your organization flourish to its full potential.

COMMUNICATION
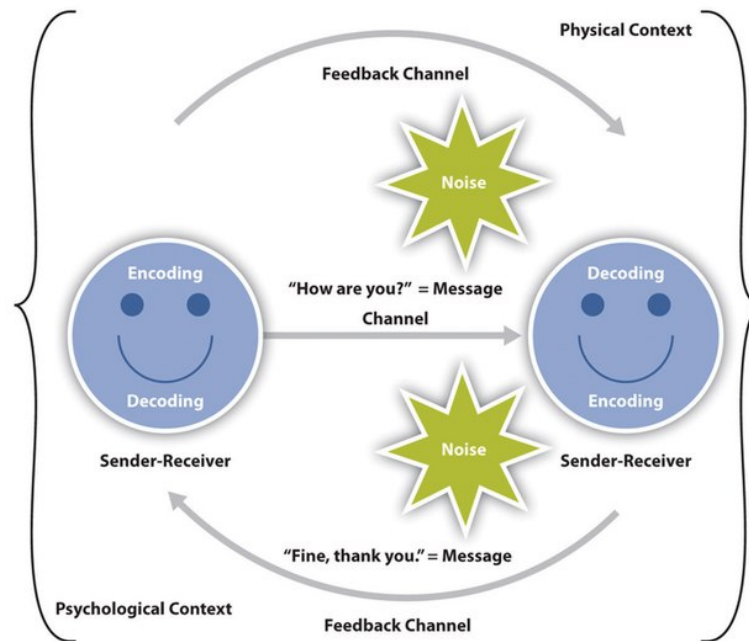
CREDIT: Interaction models of communication, Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0

Communication
noun UK
/kəˌmjuː.nɪˈkeɪ.ʃən/ US /kəˌmjuː.nəˈkeɪ.ʃən/

The act of communicating with other people (Cambridge dictionary)

To establish an effective communication it is important to maintain the first message and idea from the source to the end user. In order to do so, it's important to identify both the communication channel and the communication methodologies. If not, there can be a distorting set of factors that affect, both how the message is sent (word choice, feeling towards the listener, choice of environment, etc) and how the message is received (the level of interest, personal feelings from the receiver towards the sender, etc).

Strategic communication

Strategic communication is a term used to encompass a variety of communication-related professions, such as public relations, brand communication, internal communication and corporate communication. It refers to policy-making and guidance for consistent information activity within an organisation and between organisations. It can mean either communicating a concept, a process, or

data that satisfies a long term strategic goal of an organisation. Communication is strategic when it is completely consistent with the organisation mission, vision, values.

A communications strategy is designed to help you and your organisation communicate effectively and meet core organisational objectives. Here we look at the key elements of a communications strategy:

- What is the purpose of your communications plan?
- What resources do you have?
- What are your goals?
- Who are you communicating with (or who is your target audience) and what message do they need to hear?
- How will this message be communicated? What is your frame?
- When should this communication happen —right now or later on?
- Who will be responsible for the communication?

When looking to use strategic and effective communication we can focus on two aspects: the contents you want to share (the "what") and what you want to use as communicational tools (the "how") to transmit that content.

WHAT

1. Characteristics of the content of an effective message:

Single-minded and <u>focused</u>: Conveying just one idea at a time.

- <u>Meaningful</u>: Connect with your audience.
- <u>Important</u>: Useful and significant.
- <u>Direct</u>: Be straightforward, don't cover the main message with other 'unnecessary' information.
- <u>Clear</u>: Written in simple, non-technical language, avoid using jargon.
- <u>Brief</u>
- <u>Inspiring</u>: Be clear on what will be the difference
- <u>Credible</u>: Honest and supported with evidence.
- Giving people something to <u>do</u>: The message should not only persuade through valid data and sound logic, but should also describe the action the audience is being encouraged to take.

2. Messages that 'stick'

Principles of persuasion and being memorable:

- Make use of analogies (a comparison between one thing and another);
- Do something unexpected;
- Use specific and concrete language and details;
- Tap into positive or negative emotions;
- Feature real people in your stories, especially those from affected communities

HOW
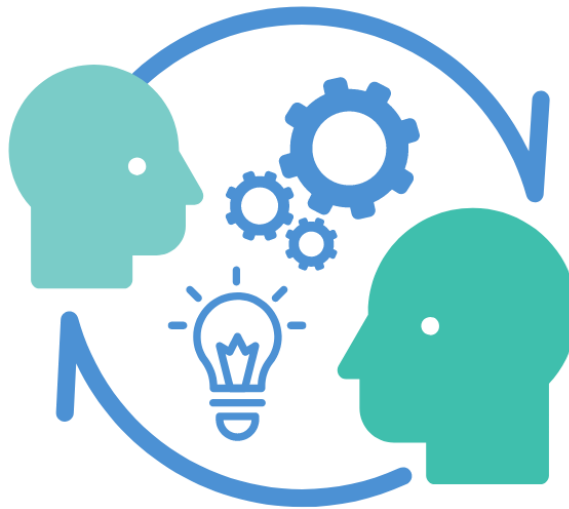
1. Communication Styles → Assertiveness

Saying no, is not impolite, being assertive is not being aggressive or submissive or passive. Assertiveness is based on balance, it requires being <u>forthright about your wants and needs</u> while still <u>considering the right needs and wants of others</u>. When you're assertive <u>you are self assured</u> and draw power from this to get your point across firmly fairly and with <u>empathy</u>. Assertiveness helps to clarify each individual's limits without infringing on the boundaries of others. Assertive communication is clear, honest, firm.

How to follow an assertive communication style:

- be respectful, also taking into account body language
- don't assume people already know your need
- don't allow differences to make you angry
- do an active listening to their position
- speak simply and directly and not making accusation to the second party
- exercise the power of 'I': never language like 'you never' 'you always'
- stay calm
- set boundaries

Importance of non-violent communication

The concept of Non Violent Communication was founded by Marshall Rosenberg, an American clinical psy-chologist in 1984. Many cases of misunderstanding and conflict in voluntary projects could be prevented or better dealt with if communication was more constructive. NVC is based on the assumption that all humans share the same needs, and these needs can be met without violating others and their needs. The key to doing this is through connecting with each other.

NVC contributes to connection through encouraging us to express our own needs and to listen to others.

The NVC model consists of four steps:

- <u>First step:</u> Observation
- <u>Second step:</u> Feelings (What do I feel?)
- <u>Third step:</u> Needs (What are my needs?)
- <u>Fourth step:</u> Request

Importance of attitude

As we are saying, it is important to take the listener into account of course by including their ideas in your speech and acknowledging what they say. However it is also important to remember that:
attitude = your words + tone + your non-verbal communication

When you are tired, stressed and hungry or if you are upset with the other person, you do not say things in the same *way*, even if you use a different vocabulary to transmit your message as hospitable as possible.

Non-verbal communication

The *way* you speak sometimes contains more information about how you feel and what you want to communicate than the actual words you are using. As stated above, if you really want to find a solution to a delicate situation, or be sure you convey the correct message, it is useful to separate the "what" and the "how". According to the Mehrabian model, only 7% of personal communication relies on verbal communication or the actual words that are spoken. The remaining 93% lies in non-verbal communication, with 38% comprising tone of voice and 55% concerned with body language.

Some good non-verbal communication is:

- Making <u>eye contact</u> with the audience as much as possible
- Gesturing to <u>stimulate curiosity</u> and interest in the audience, like raising the eyebrows or nodding
- <u>Smiling</u> whenever appropriate implies positivity
- <u>Mirroring</u> or imitating the postures or mannerisms of the other person (without mimicking)
- Avoiding eccentric or confusing gestures, grimaces and poker-faced expressions
- <u>Hands</u> moving freely and relaxed and not folded or near your face
- Standing upright, <u>inclining the body</u> forward

Including extra visual presentations always helps of course — pay attention also to your listener's non-verbal cues when you are speaking — are they eager, reluctant, impatient?

Build (and communicate) your organisational identity

Strategic planning is a key function of an organisation's management that helps to set priorities, allocate resources, and ensure that everyone is working towards common goals and objectives.

CREDIT: MakeOver toolkit

However, for strategic planning to be effective, there are two important tools that are needed – a vision and a mission statement. These serve as a guide for creating objectives and goals in the organisation, thus providing a road-map that is to be followed by everyone.

Unfortunately, despite the importance of vision and mission statements, many organisations do not have them.

In other cases, the two statements are lumped together as one or used interchangeably despite their distinctive differences. This creates a confusion in theorganisation that makes it harder to achieve the set objectives and goals.

Mission

Brief, powerful statement including the reason the organisation exists. It often explains why it was founded, along with what it actually does in terms that convey the organisation's values.

Mission statements look at what can be accomplished today.

- What do we do?
- For whom do we do it?
- What is the benefit?

Vision

A one-sentence statement describing the clear and inspirational long-term desired change. It is partly emotional, intending to inspire people to imagine a better future, and partly rational, presenting a view of the future that everyone can believe in.

- What does success look like for our organisation?
- How will the world be different if we succeed in our mission?
- What makes our organisation unique?

CREDIT: MakeOver toolkit

Values (statement)

Represents the core beliefs of the organisation that inspire and guide its choices in the way it operates and deals with people. These values should be embedded in both the mission and the vision and part of all internal and external communications.

It answers these key questions:

- What are the key values that guide our organisation?
- How will we define and implement these values for our organisation?
- Do they inspire pride and bring out the best in us?

From the organisational identity to the case for support

Your case for support is a document that describes your organisation's purpose, vision, strategy and direction: it explains what your nonprofit does, why it's crucial and, most importantly, why people should support you.
Its intention of persuading and engaging the reader to take action in support of the organisation.

The case for support should answer six questions:

- Why do you exist? What is the problem or need? Whom do you serve?
- Where are you going? Vision & Mission
- How will you address the need? Description of strategy, programs and projects
- What is the result? Outcomes, measurement & testimonials
- Who are you? Why is your organisation uniquely qualified to do this?
- Why me?

Once you have written a formal case for support, there are many ways you can utilise it to tell your story, motivate giving, engage supporters, and build an ever expanding pool of people giving their time, talent and treasure to support your mission.

It will serve as the foundation for all communications including grant proposals, major donors (e.g. operating and corporate foundations, government), campaigns… so think about your story from the audience's perspective!

Use your case to:

1. Build direction and defined strategy to most effectively present your vision and case to your constituents;
2. Educate and engage board, staff, and volunteers about your vision and programs — and demonstrate how organisational success will benefit the mission. Get them on board with the development of the case, present it to them formally, and educate them about how to talk about your organisation;
3. Enlist new leaders to your cause— in sufficient numbers and at the proper level to achieve success;

4. As an early working document and cultivation piece for prospective major donors. Invite them out to lunch and ask them to read and critique the case for the support;

5. Engage others to endorse and share your vision— and accept greater and ever-expanding responsibility of identifying with your mission and vision;

6. As a guide for the content of other collateral, articles, foundation proposals, website, and videos. Having a formal case allows you to create consistency in your messaging across the organisation.

Tips for a successful Case For Support

Make your case donor-centric!

- Write in clear, easy-to-understand language
- Write with passion and think big
- Make it visually appealing and easy-to-read
- Don't worry about length and feel free to edit, improve, iterate it
- Gain the support of the leadership and board members

Best Practices

1. Habitat for Humanity > Is a great example of how one document can be used for different purposes – website content and a printable PDF.
   While content remains the same, the website uses a scrolling format to take you through different aspects of the organisation and includes videos to tell their story. The print version is shorter and includes prominent visuals.
   Notice the compelling case they make through the use of very simple language, eg. 'Help us build strength, stability and self-reliance.'

https://www.habitat.org/multimedia/case-for-support / .pdf
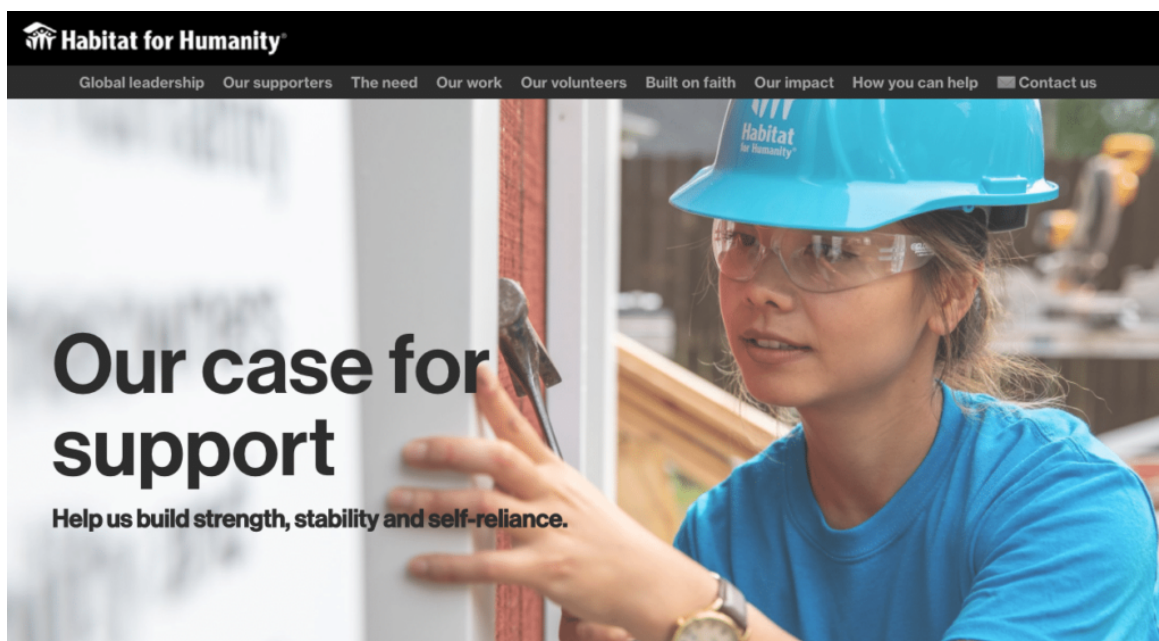
2. Waterwise > Uses icons and infographics to illustrate their point. While section headings are generic ('Our plans for the future,' 'Who do we help'), its simplicity makes it easy for donors to find the information they're looking for. At just 7 pages, Waterwise covers all major sections without expecting donors to invest a lot of time understanding their work, making it an ideal document to share at a first meeting.

https://waterwise.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Case-for-support.pdf

CHECK LIST FOR YOUR CASE FOR SUPPORT

Rating Key: 1 = not well, 5 = very well

Topic	Question	1-5
CORE CONTENT		
	Does the case explain clearly how your organization makes a difference in the lives of others?	
	Does the case explain how and why your campaign will increase your impact in your community?	
	Does the case make clear your organization's vision?	
	Does the case spell out the basic elements of your plan?	
	Does it clearly explain what your campaign is raising money for and what those objectives will cost?	
EMOTION		
	Does the case inspire you? Is it exciting to read about the possibilities?	
	Is there anything in the case that moved your heart?	
	Did you find yourself wanting to help make the project a reality?	
WRITING		
	Is the case written in the active rather than passive voice?	
	Is it written from the perspective of the reader's interests rather than the organization's needs?	
	Are the sentences short--no more than 10-15 words?	
	Does it rely on short, simple words rather than multi-syllabic verbiage?	
	Is the case as brief as it can possibly be?	
HEADINGS		
	When you read only the headings, do you get the gist of the message?	

Developed by Andrea Kihlstedt and Gail Perry for Capital Campaign Magic, 2014

SOURCE:
https://www.sumac.com/assetswp/misc-docs/case-for-support-checklist.pdf

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- ☑ Conduct a feasibility study or interview stakeholders
- ☑ Gather all relevant information – set up a single folder for your case for support and then individual files for each of the components
- ☑ Create a detailed outline
- ☑ Identify gaps and source information that's missing
- ☑ Define your audience or go through donor profiles if you have them

Topic	Question	1-5
	Do the headings engage you enough to make you want to read they body copy?	
APPEARANCE		
	Is it laid out clearly and simply with plenty of white space?	
	Is the text in a serif font of at least 12 point size?	
	Are the paragraphs short--no more than 3 or 4 sentences maximum?	
	Are the margins wide enough to write comments?	
FLOW		
	Do the ideas expressed make both logical and emotional sense?	
	Are the sections in an order that leads you through a natural thought process?	
ADMINISTRATION		
	Does the phrase "DRAFT of [date]" appear at the top of every page?	
	Does every page have a DRAFT watermark?	

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: Write down any specific comments our thoughts about how the case might be made stronger and more compelling.

WHILE YOU'RE WRITING

- ☑ Keep the narrative donor-centric
- ☑ Describe services or outputs, the impact they will have and on whom
- ☑ Have a clear call-to-action
- ☑ Use clear, easy-to-understand language: make sure there's no jargon
- ☑ Get inputs senior leadership and board members
- ☑ Write with passion

EDITING

- ☑ Ensure your message is clear and consistent
- ☑ Check that all feedback has been incorporated in the final draft
- ☑ Check language and vocabulary you use reflects your tone of voice
- ☑ Double check that testimonials and statistics you've included are accurate
- ☑ Ensure frequently used names, descriptions and terms are consistent
- ☑ Check all referencing and sources
- ☑ Run a spell and grammar check
- ☑ Proofread secondary information like captions and tables

DESIGN

- ☑ Check font size, margins and alignment of objects and images
- ☑ Make sure photos high resolution and won't pixellate when printed
- ☑ Check the designed document against your final draft to ensure that every piece of information has been included

Online identity

MY ORGANISATION'S ONLINE IDENTITY

Name of organisation and country:

1. Does your organisation have a website? If yes:
   - How often do you use it (every day/few times per week/when needed)?
   - For what do you use it?
   - What does it contain in terms of categories and information?
2. Does your organisation have a Facebook page? If yes:
   - How often do you post on it?
   - For what do you use it mostly?
   - Does it have all the information (description, contact info, mission, links to other online platforms) filled in the "About" section?
   - Does it have pictures from activities and photo albums?
   - How many fans/likes/shares does your page/group have

3. Does your organisation have an Instagram profile? If yes:
   - How often do you post on it?
   - For what do you use it mostly?
   - Does it have all the information (description, contact info, mission, links to other online platforms) filled in the "About" section?
   - How many followers do you have and how many are you following?
4. Does your organisation have a Youtube channel? If yes:
   - How often do you post videos on your channel? How many videos do you have so far?
   - What kind of videos are you posting on the channel?
   - Does it have a description and information in the "About" section?
   - How many subscribers does your channel have?
5. Does your organisation have a LinkedIn profile? If yes:
   - How often do you post on it?
   - For what do you use it mostly?
   - Does it have all the information (description, contact info, mission, links to other online platforms) filled in?
   - Do you use it to make connections with partner organisations, local stakeholders, young people and/or to look for volunteers/staff members?

STRENGTHS – What is good?
WEAKNESSES – What is missing?
IMPROVEMENTS – What could be done better?

The purpose of an organisational self-assessment is to analyse and evaluate as the organisation's leaders and stakeholders (e.g., board members, staff, volunteers…) the organisation's direction and capacity to meet its own goals.

Being an International Voluntary Service (IVS) organisation means that you have a very important role – to inspire and bring change to (young) people in your community, shaping their future and to reach this goal it is crucial to create outstanding communication strategies that will make your work widely recognised - especially online!
Appropriate online communication strategies will ensure that your organisational work is widely recognised and inspire people to support you and join your call for action!

Which of the following channels fit your organisation's capacity, resources, and goals?

Channel	Benefits	Goals	Content	Considerations
(Facebook)	The destination where conversations are already happening (79 percent of adults use it). The ability to create your own events, shop, and live video. The most active development of new features.	Brand awareness, community engagement, content distribution, lead generation, fundraising/revenue, social listening.	Fun visual photos. Human stories. Live video. Posts that offer discounts, free stuff, and special offers.	Do you have an ad budget? Are you ready for Facebook "pay-to-play" costs?
(Twitter)	The channel of the "moment" (24 percent of adults use it). The destination where current events break. The most news-focused conversations.	Brand awareness, customer support, earned media/press, influencer marketing, social listening.	Content related to current events. Live video. Popular current event topical posts. "Listicles" and how-tos.	Do you have staff available to respond at any moment? Do you have an editorial policy on engaging over sensitive issues?
(LinkedIn)	The most "business-to-business" or professional-focused social channel. A place to find volunteer support. The highest income earners.	Brand awareness, community engagement, content distribution, lead generation, fundraising/revenue, social listening.	Thought leadership posts. White papers. E-books. Instructional content. "Listicles" and how-tos.	Are you making sure your most influential staff will be able to amplify content? Does your organization have a crisis communication plan for negative feedback?

CREDIT:
nonprofit-social-media-starter-kit.original - TechSoup Global

Channel	Benefits	Goals	Content	Considerations
(Instagram)	High use among younger adults (59 percent of adults 18 – 29). More women than men (38 percent versus 26 percent). A culture of "regramming" that allows direct community engagement and influencer marketing.	Brand awareness, community engagement, influencer marketing.	Live video. Original photos and curated third party photos.	Do you have the capacity to post one photo a day?
(Pinterest)	A good channel in which to engage women (46 percent of online women use Pinterest). A visual-focused channel centered on inspiration and the storing of memorable images.	Brand awareness, community engagement, content distribution, influencer marketing.	Photos, live video, infographics, inspiring quotes, and graphics.	Are you prepared for accounts that impersonate yours?
(Snapchat)	A channel popular with millennials. A unique visual channel with special geo-targeted features.	Brand awareness, community engagement, content distribution, influencer marketing.	Photos, super-short live video.	Do you have staff who understand Snapchat's unique storytelling features (such as lenses, filters, and stickers)?

Now you have chosen the social media channels that map to your top social media goals and your organisation's mission and vision. Next, you need to think about your social media tone of voice.

Character/Persona

Trustworthy
Approachable
Welcoming
Uplifting
Knowledgeable
Well-informed

Tone

Honest
Sincere
Cheerful
Breezy
Objective
Formal

Language

Simple
Jargon-free
Inclusive
Funny
Playful
Sophisticated
Cutting-edge
Academic

Purpose

Motivate
Educate
Inspire
Amuse
Convene
Engage
Empower
Equip

CREDIT:
nonprofit-social-media-starter-kit.or
iginal - TechSoup Global

FUNDRAISING

Fundraising
noun [U]
UK /ˈfʌndˌreɪ.zɪŋ/ US /ˈfʌndˌreɪ.zɪŋ/

The act of collecting or producing money for a particular purpose, especially for a charity (Cambridge dictionary)

Fundraising is a democratic and popular way to share the power (not just economic) to change the reality with the community. At its heart, fundraising is about relationships that are fundamental to ensure organisational sustainability: often we forget that "donors are people" so one of our first skills should be the ability of building interpersonal relationships and keeping the long-term relationship top of mind.
Fundraising is a strategic process, not an event and one of its key skills is communication - it is by telling others about the work of your charity that you can encourage them to give.
A good fundraiser should be able to show donors how their gift (donation) will increase the organisation's ability to meet the needs of the beneficiaries and make a positive change. Everyone in your organisation is a potential fundraiser and needs to have a real understanding of the identity of your entity (e.g. mission, vision, values...).

The two key principles of fundraising are:

1. If you don't ask you won't get - it is by asking for support for the work you do with the beneficiaries that you are most likely to receive support. It is important to plan your fundraising, but it is only when you start asking that you will start to see the results.

2. Thank your donors - it is fundamental to remember to promptly thank everyone and anyone who gives to your organisation. By thanking your donors
you respect their choice to give and ensure that they are more willing to give again. Besides thanking, remember to keep your donors informed about the projects and activities you are implementing also thanks to their help!

It is a common mistake to launch into fundraising activities without first preparing a Fundraising Strategy: without it you may not raise money for your real needs, or ask the right people or fundraise effectively.

Ideally it covers a three-year period, thinking of realistic financial income and expenditure. Your organisation must be clear about the key objectives and outcomes it wants to achieve and how fundraising will help achieve these goals.
As the first step to start working on the Fundraising Strategy, it is to consider the organisation's contacts (including previous donors both individuals and foundations/corporate world). Good and

updated information is going to be of great importance to your ability to fundraise effectively and to take care of your donors. Don't forget to analyse past fundraising activities tried by your organisation, as a way to learn from the successes and failures.

Reflect on how your Fundraising Strategy can develop the sustainability of your organisation, successful fundraising and continued support from donors will serve to ensure the long term impact of your action, declined in activities and projects.

Six steps to develop a Fundraising Strategy (UK's Institute of Fundraising 'The Good Fundraising Guide)

1. Organisation's Mission and Objectives
   You should have an organisational plan in place, which defines your overall mission and objectives on which the fundraising strategy should be based. If you don't already have one it is your first priority to get one!

2. Internal and External Influences
   Think about the internal and external influences that might affect your organisation. Two tools that help you to proceed are: the STEEP and the SWOT analysis.

   STEEP (Social, Technical, Economic, Environmental and Political) analysis looks at external factors that influence trends, allowing you to analyse the past and predict the future. This analysis enables you to take a step out of your personal experiences and gain a better understanding of many influential factors that may affect your fundraising but which you cannot change!
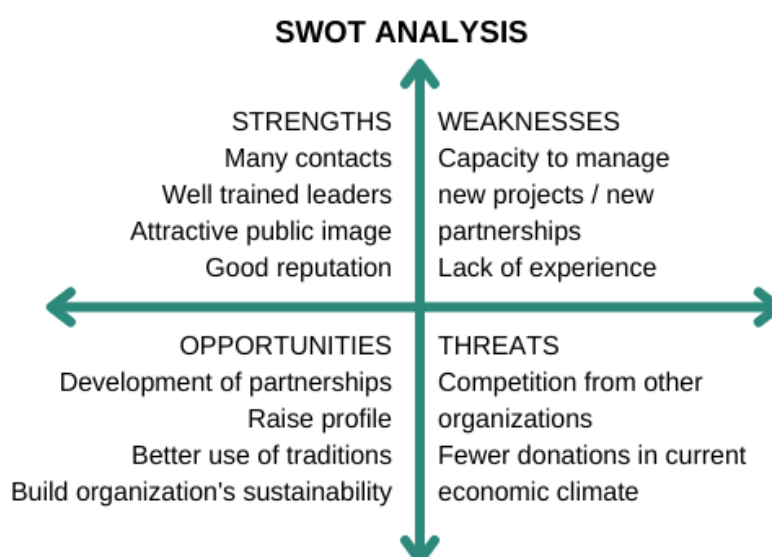
Socio-cultural	Suggested sub-themes	Factors that may influence your fundraising activities
	Gender	E.g. wealthy married women may not be able to make large donations without their husband's consent – your fundraising events may need to invite them both
	Etc,...	
Technological		
	IT/Internet	E.g. Most people don't have internet access, but nearly everyone has a mobile phone. You might find ways for people to give from their phone, instead of online
	Etc,...	
Economic		
	Interest Rates	E.g. interest rates are low, so it is less expensive for businesses to borrow – they may have more money at the moment for charitable donations (as long as banks are lending)

Environmental		
	Waste Disposal	E.g. Citizens are more aware than ever of the mage to the environment from rubbish on the streets, in river and parks. Any outdoor fundraising event must ensure all rubbish is disposed of correctly – for the environment and for the association's reputation.
	Etc,…	
Political		
	Other	E.g. the Ministry of Youth may have made it clear they are ready to work with more youth organizations

Socio-cultural	Suggested sub-themes	Factors that may influence your fundraising activities
	Gender	
	Ethnicity	
	Lifestyle	
	Social trends	
	Other	
Technological		
	IT / Internet	
	ICT	
	Equipment	
	Materials	
	New developments	
	Other	
Economic		
	General trends	
	Interest rates	
	Funding sources	
	Other	

Environmental	Suggested sub-themes	Factors that may influence your fundraising activities
	Sustainability	
	Recycling	
	Waste disposal	
	Energy-efficiency	
	Fuel	
	Other	
Political		
	National law / local by-laws	
	Equality	
	Vulnerable people	
	Party Politics	
	Other	

SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis gives you a better idea of the opportunities that exist and the possible downsides you need to be aware of. Keep your analyses to hand and refer to them as you develop your fundraising strategy.

SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS
Many contacts
Well trained leaders
Attractive public image
Good reputation

WEAKNESSES
Capacity to manage new projects / new partnerships
Lack of experience

OPPORTUNITIES
Development of partnerships
Raise profile
Better use of traditions
Build organization's sustainability

THREATS
Competition from other organizations
Fewer donations in current economic climate

3. Fundraising Aims
   From your organisation's needs (Step 1) and the analysis (Step 2) you have done identify your fundraising aims – e.g. raise the sum of money needed to cover the camp leaders/trainers fee. In this phase, it is the time to be clear about what the priorities of your organisation are.

4. Income Sources
   You need to consider the sources of funds and their characteristics. One way to categorise them can be:

   - Trusts,
   - Foundations and Government Funding;
   - Companies;
   - Individuals and Groups/Community Organisations.

   It is strongly recommended that a funding strategy is developed that is based on a 'funding mix'. This will ensure that you are not dependent on a few donors but on a variety of funding including income, private and corporate donations.

5. Fundraising Methods
   Depending on the SWOT analysis, the types of donor available and the length of time you have to raise funds you must decide and prioritise which fundraising methods you will invest in. Be realistic about the time you have to commit to fundraising activities – remember you will need to balance your time in order to realise all your core activities - especially if you don't have a human resource dedicated to fundraising.

6. Resources and Budget
   Your fundraising activities will be more effective if you are willing to invest time and money into them. For each fundraising method you will use, estimate the human, material and financial resources you will need. Finally you will need to develop a budget – estimate both the costs of the fundraising activity and the possible income. But don't be overly optimistic when estimating your income, but rather consider some of the risk factors (for example bad weather reducing attendance at an outdoor fundraising event). It is essential therefore to set realistic fundraising targets (income) for the organisation – meeting the target and exceeding it will give you a real sense of achievement!

Many fundraisers around the world are using a planning tool called Fundraising Cycle to plan, develop, monitor and follow-up their fundraising activities.

THE FUNDRAISING CYCLE
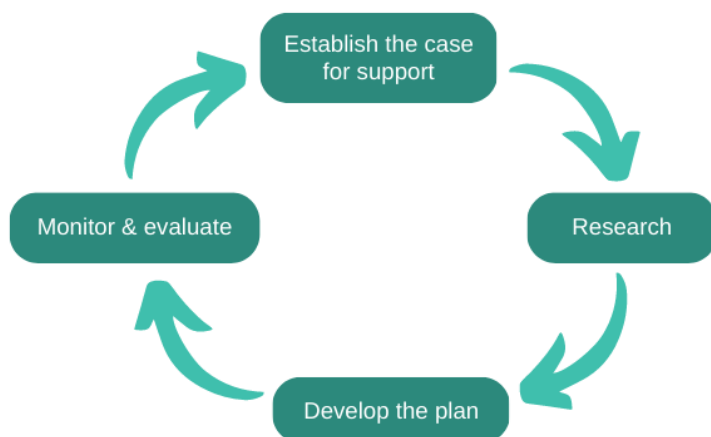
We have explored the Case for Support in the previous part of the toolkit and its establishment represents the first step of this cycle: it explains why a donor should give to the organisation and outlines what specific project or activity they will be supporting.]

The second phase, the Research meant as donor mapping, a technique to write down names of potential donors and to identify possible connections to them. It is best done with a group – this could be your fundraising committee or board and staff. One way to do the exercise is for everyone in the group to identify all the people and organisations that they know under the categories (e.g. Companies, Volunteers, Staff, Other Voluntary/Youth Organisations, Media Partners) and any for the Wish List, who you would like to support your organisation. Include yourselves on the map. You can then draw a line to show any connections you have with anyone else on the map. Why do this? It is because people mostly give to people they know and therefore the best person to introduce a fundraising ask (request for money) is often someone who already knows the donor. Next make an assessment of what the people and organisations on your map have to offer your organisation. Choose symbols for who has the potential to give money, to be an advocate for your organisation, introduce you to other donors, give expertise, etc and mark them on your map.

Why not keep your donor map on a wall in your office (though probably not on public display) and add to it as your organisation grows. This way it becomes a living document. Alternatively you could create a series of lists of just the potential financial donors. You should include those donors who have already given to you and don't forget your Strategic Partners who might be able to donate to a project within your partnership. To be an effective fundraiser, with the interests of your association at heart, you need to be able to stand back and assess if each of the sources of funding you wish to apply for are appropriate in delivering your organisation's needs. Once your list has been completed, you must scrutinise each donor on the list to identify those that are the best match for your association or the specific project that you are planning to launch. The specific criteria you use will differ from project to project, in most cases they will be based on the information that you gathered during your earlier research and analysis.

Another crucial step is how to make contact with donors. As we have seen, it is crucial to develop a good relationship before asking for funds and this takes time. Do not rush into asking for any kind of financial support before undertaking research (outlined above) on the donor. Careful research will greatly increase your chances of success.

For donors that know you: they are already keen supporters of your work so ensure that you keep them interested and informed about your projects and your progress. For example, you could send them a copy of your recent newsletter to accompany a card to thank them again for their ongoing support. We don't recommend that you continuously ask them for funding.

For donors that don't know you: do your research and never beg. Careful research will determine how they prefer to be contacted and approached. Respect their guidelines and their advice. Allow them the time to get to know you as well as to research your organisation.

Types of donors

- Individuals > include current volunteers and staff, parents of members, former members, official 'Friends' groups of the Association, previous individual donors, business people and politicians;
- Local and National Government > many IVS organisations have had success in partnering with government at local and national levels. This may be through the Education, Youth or Health Ministries or other departments. Partnership can add credibility and raise the profile of International Voluntary Service and lead to funding for joint projects;
- Companies > ranging from local enterprises, national businesses and multinational companies. Companies may be willing to donate money, or give gifts in kind and expertise. There may be opportunities to partner with a company in a sponsorship deal – where your organisation is willing to promote their brand in return for defined benefits. Some companies (especially international ones) have employee engagement programmes, where their staff may volunteer for charities. Remember that corporate partnerships must respect your organisations fundamental values of integrity, independence and impartiality, and promote IVS values like peace, solidarity and respect for human rights (e.g. not accept contributions from companies that are involved in the production and trade of weapons and directly/indirectly involved in financing the war industry…);

- European funds > the European Commission has significant funding programmes and the publication of a call for proposals will indicate the relevant funding priorities of the European Union, eligibility criteria and any other conditions for award of a grant;
- Trusts and Foundations > many countries have grant-making Trusts and Foundations that are set up to give money away to preferred organisations and causes. Some are international with offices in many countries and most will have clear guidelines of what they give to and a defined application form that all applicants must follow. You should not search only for funding specifically available for youth. There are several fields in which your member organisation might present a relevant proposal, such as: social inclusion, active citizenship and human rights education, gender equality, protection of the environment and culture among others.

Coming back to the Fundraising Cycle, the third step is to plan and implement the fundraising activities in detail. If you plan well you ensure you have the necessary resources for the activity, ensure it operates cost effectively and you will reduce the risks involved.

When choosing the type of fundraising activity you need to consider the time-scale and resources available. During and after your fundraising activity it is important to monitor and evaluate the successes and failures of the activity. This helps you to understand how you might make the activity bigger and better the next time and what lessons you have learnt from what has not gone as well as you had expected. The fundraising cycle then begins again, building on successes and reducing failures, developing relationships with donors and identifying new fundraising opportunities to take advantage of.

You will want to monitor and evaluate both your fundraising activity and your project or activity that has been funded by your donor(s). Monitoring and evaluation of your project will provide you with a process to assess the impact of the project and aid your future project design and implementation. It should also provide you with the statistics and stories that you will need to report to your donor and that you can also use to inspire others – both your members and the public in general (perhaps through the media).

As part of your evaluation of the fundraising activity you will consider if it is possible to repeat the activity and perhaps to obtain more funds from it next time. If your fundraising activity was making a funding proposal to a grant-making donor you will want to explore if you can approach the same donor for additional funds, even for a larger donation. How well you have cared for your donor and reported on the impact of the first donation will influence the likelihood of them donating again and possibly more.

In fundraising we must accept that often our fundraising requests to grant-making bodies will be unsuccessful. Remember, your application may have been good, but the competition intense and other applicants may have had a stronger connection with the grant-making organisation, or a proposal with a closer fit to the donor's interest. Don't let rejections put you off – instead try to work out what will make your next application more likely to succeed and keep applying (could you meet the next donor before applying for funds, could you identify a proposal that is closer to the donor's interest, etc).

How to Evolve! in your Communication and Fundraising Skills

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