The Art of the Ask

Recruiting & Retaining Volunteers,
Leveraging Relationships, and Successful Fundraising
Building your Volunteer Army

• The “R” in Volunteer
  • Recruit
  • Retain
  • Recycle
Recruiting Volunteers

Common misassumptions

• People will see your needs without you telling them
• People will Volunteer on their own without being asked
• That no one will help if you ask
• They will all say no if you ask
• You need an unlimited supply of volunteers
• You are looking only for MSU Grads
  • MSU Friends, MSU fans, Parents of current and former students, supports of scholarships and higher education in general
Recruiting Volunteers

Why people Volunteer

- They are asked to get involved
- Feel needed and sense of fulfillment
- Family, Friends, Neighbors, Community, etc... benefits
- They have a Passion for the cause
- Like to meet new people
- Sense of Obligation
Recruiting Volunteers

Who should we target as Volunteers?

• Those who attend chapter events & support MSU
• Those in networks of current volunteers & attendees
• Those who have time and energy to give
• Those who have skills, talents, or passion you need
• Cast a wide net in addition to targeted asks
Retaining Volunteers

Recruiting is only part of the equation

• For every volunteer you lose, you must add two to grow by one...

Keeping the Volunteers you have is paramount

• Match tasks and projects with their interests and passions
• Delegate authority and encourage, empower, and support
• Listen to volunteers, solicit their feedback
• Acknowledge their accomplishments and value

Realize that not all volunteers are the same

• Some want to do everything
• Some want to do specific things
• Some can only show up once a year
• Some only want to write a check
Recycling Volunteers

Sometimes the last place we look is the most obvious

- Former Chapter Presidents
- Former Chapter Officers
- Former Chapter Volunteers
- Former National Board Members
- Former National Presidents
Success in Fundraising

• Relationships Matter
• Fundraising Basics
• Overcoming a Fear of Asking
• Making Your Case for Support
• Setting a Goal and Making it Known
• A Good Ask is....
Relationships Matter

• The most important thing is building relationships and getting people engaged

• People tend to support things and people they have a strong relationship and affinity for

• Raising money is hard enough... it’s twice as hard when you are asking someone before you build a relationship and educate them on your cause

• Get more people engaged, build a broader base of prospects, strengthen relationships, and fundraising results will improve
Fundraising Basics

• Who are you asking?
  • Is it an individual? A company? An organization?

• What your asking for:
  • Are you asking for money? Auction item? How much?

• Understand That There Will Be “No’s”:
  • You will receive “no’s.” Don’t let them get you down

• Attitude matters in fundraising.
  • If you go into a fundraising ask assuming you will get a no, you probably will. Remember, your chapter’s mission matters!

• Illustrate the impact or concrete goal
  • People like to know that their donation is doing something specific and concrete
Overcome a Fear of Asking

• **Give First.** It is easier to ask someone to support your cause when you have led by example

• **Believe in Your Cause.** It is essential that you BELIEVE in what you asking for

• **Listen.** The better you understand someone’s values, interests and passions the better you will develop a relationship
  • People are more likely to listen to you if you listen to them first

• **Go Together.** Working together as a team volunteers can learn from each other, listen twice as well, and borrow courage from each other when it’s time to ask

• **Prepare.** What will you ask for? Why should they give? Where is the best location to make an ask? How much should you ask for
Making Your Case for Support

• What’s a “case?” It’s simply a collection of compelling reasons (both data and stories) as to why your chapter, or scholarship is worthy of support

• A “narrative gap” is the space between your cause and the prospective donor
  • Each donor has their own story they’re telling (themselves if no one else), about the type of person they are, their achievements, their family, their impact

• Tell them a story that will make their story better, and they will not only respond, but will proudly share

• Your case for support has to bridge the narrative gap between your cause and their gift
A good ask....

• **Is an actual question.**
  • Rather using phrases like, “I hope at some point you will consider....” or “I’d really like it if you would....”, be direct and ask for what you really want.

• **Invites a person to take a concrete step.**
  • That step could be writing a check, donating a silent auction item, providing event space for a meeting.

• **Is specific.** You should be specific when you ask,
  • “Would your business donate a $100 gift certificate for our chapter’s silent auction
  • “Will you consider supporting our chapter sometime?”. 
Set a Goal and Make it Known

• Our chapter has a goal of $X,XXX in scholarship support of deserving students this year vs our chapter is trying to $ raise scholarships

• Our chapter has a goal of 100 donors for the year vs. we need more people to give

• Give you the opportunity to create a buzz of excitement, and show progress update toward the goal

• As you near your goal, it creates leverage in the form of creating perceived “deeper impact”
It’s amazing what you don’t raise when you don’t ask!

HAIL STATE!

Questions....?