

## How Do You Know If You're Ready for a Capital Campaign?

You have a pressing need to expand your ability to serve. This may involve starting new programs, constructing new buildings, renovating current structures, purchasing equipment, or growing an endowment. How do you know if your non-profit is ready to tackle a capital campaign? Here are some checklists to help you know where you stand:

### 1. Vital indicators of campaign readiness include:

- A compelling case for support that the community will embrace.
- Development staff and infrastructure that can support a campaign. This includes fundraising staff, records, processes, and support services.
- Policies and procedures to support the campaign.
- Volunteer leadership that is able to make significant contributions of money and influence to achieve campaign goals.
- A donor base that is properly segmented, screened, rated, and reviewed.
- Donor cultivation strategies that will engage major gift prospects.
- The ability to handle complex gift arrangements.
- Prospect research to help build prospect cultivation and solicitation strategies.
- A prospect management system and regular prospect management meetings.
- A gift table that lays out the number of gifts at what levels are needed.
- A timeline for fundraising that approaches the campaign sequentially.
- A Feasibility Study that indicates the size, timing, and other factors of a campaign.
- Recruitment strategies to bring in more volunteer leaders with impact.
- A comprehensive list of donor recognition opportunities.

- The ability to stage cultivation events.
- The ability to keep “regular” fundraising going effectively while the capital campaign is conducted.

## 2. There is a process of determining campaign readiness.

Counsel uses his/her experience to shorten the learning curve for the organization and help develop on-target plans that will get results. These are some of the steps in that process:

- Interviews with key staff, volunteer leaders, prospects, and donors. This often involves a Development Program Audit, a Strategic Plan for Development, and a Feasibility Study.
- Review of past fundraising performance.
- Assessment of the development staff’s ability and depth.
- Assistance with developing the case for support and testing it in the community.
- Specific prospect development strategies.
- Prospect research that identifies and quantifies the best prospects.
- Staff training.
- Education of top management.
- Presentations to the Board of Directors.

## 3. It is vital to be ready for a campaign.

One thing is abundantly clear: an organization cannot fail in a capital campaign. To be successful, the organization must count the cost in terms of time and financial investment. There are established ways to conduct capital campaigns. Counsel can be the expert guide the organization requires to make the campaign a success.

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