Ask Without Fear!

Connecting donors and raising money during a coronavirus pandemic

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Nonprofits: If your board is telling you now is not the right time to ask, thank them. Then ask anyway. IT'S NOT THEIR DECISION.

3:13 PM · Mar 26, 2020 · Twitter Web App

There is no such thing as a "non-COVID essential" charity.

Every mission matters right now. Any diminished service offering has an impact.

You. All. Matter.


You are worthy of support.

11:31 AM · Apr 8, 2020 · Twitter Web App
Talking Adult to Adult

Agent

Parent

Adult

Child

Respondent

Parent

Adult

Child
Talking Adult to Adult

Agent

Parent

Adult

Child

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Parent

Adult

Child
Talking Adult to Adult

Agent

Parent

Adult

Child

Respondent

Parent

Adult

Child
Talking **Adult to Adult**

![Diagram showing relationships between Agent, Adult, Child, Parent, and Respondent]
Coronavirus not COVID-19

Donors aren’t using the term “COVID-19”

Donors are using the term “coronavirus”

It’s up to us to speak *their* language.

Also, donors are not feeling like they’re being asked.

It’s up to us to ask. It’s up to the donor to decide.

https://queerideas.co.uk/2020/03/coronavirus-fundraising-what-weve-learned-so-far.html
What I’m telling Clients to Do

• Don’t “go dark” - stopping communicating now will result in awful fundraising later
• Build relationship with donors - can’t meet face-to-face or at events but can
  - Call on the phone
  - Text
  - Instant Message
  - Send notes
  - Send videos
  - Comment on LinkedIn
  - Interact of Facebook
  - Reply on Twitter
  - Zoom
What I’m telling Clients to do

• Accelerate some asks
  - People “get” the need now - coronavirus, unemployment, recession
  - If you have an event in the future - make sponsors feel the love now
  - “Test close” in dialogue with donors, seeing where their thinking is

• Build out your major donor relationships
  - Veritus Group’s dashboard
  - Add every donor you’d assign to staffs, corporations, even media folks
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It’s Working

- **Zoo** - over $250,000 in one week
- **Rural NC hospital** - over $65,000 in one week
- **Private School** - “It’s like year-end giving but in March & April”
- **Greenville nonprofit** - $10,000 from first email appeal
- **Long-term care nonprofit** - $10,000 in email
Be Clear

• **In print/email**
  - Be clear. Get to the point. Entire ask in first 3 sentences.
  - Donors are generous but have a much shorter attention right now.
  - Give them a problem to solve NOW. Not “preparing for future.”
    › People to help NOW
    › Budget shortfall NOW
    › Moment to seize NOW
  - Things are *not* “ok.” Let them know the only fix is their donation.

• **On phone**
  - Check in. Let them know you know this isn’t “business as usual”
  - Be human. Relational.
  - Be ready for them to ask “how can I help?”
• Giving Days - May 5 •

- #GivingTuesdayNow
  https://now.givingtuesday.org/

- Palmetto Giving Day
  https://www.palmettogivingday.org/

- Midlands Gives
  https://www.midlandsgives.org/
• 5 Things to do with Donors NOW •

1. Check in on them - ask how they’re doing

2. Ask them if you can drop anything off

3. Ask them to give
   • For money (crisis or shortfall)
   • If they have a donor advised fund (DAF)
   • Matching gift for May 5th

4. Thank them for making a (specific) difference

5. Clean up your database
• Three Phases •

Phase 1: Spike

Phase 2: Trough (long)

Phase 3: Additional Bump

https://worklessraisemore.com/3-phases-in-crisis-fundraising/
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Here's what you DON'T want to do on the other side of coronavirus... saying to donors 🎨: “Oh hey! We thought we’d give you a break during the pandemic and not bother you, but now we’re ready to start back fundraising... do you have a moment?” ❎
• Additional Resources •

• Free Review Fridays
https://worklessraisemore.com/free-review-fridays/

• Coronavirus emergency appeal
https://worklessraisemore.com/coronavirus-e-appeal/

• Alternatives to Your Canceled Fundraising Event
https://thenonprofitacademy.com/trainings/canceled-fundraising-event-solutions/

• What Leaders Need to Know About the Brain
https://thenonprofitacademy.com/trainings/know-the-brain/

• Leading in Stress

• Event Fundraising during a Pandemic & Media in Crisis
https://www.facebook.com/nonprofitstorytellingconference/