



## *Bringing Your Future Into Focus*

### **Strengths + Objectivity = Success**

No doubt about it, these are rocky times. The fact is, many nonprofit executives are anxious about maintaining the quality of their services — perhaps even making payroll.

Overwhelmingly everyone, it seems, has advice to offer — some probably good, some of it suspect. And too often it's not at all clear how to get from the generalities of these “how-to” articles toward actually resolving your organization's specific goals and immediate challenges.

**From our perspective, *hope* doesn't accomplish very much, even in good times.**

In fact, hoping things will turn out okay ought to be a red flag that you may not have a sustainable funding strategy for your organization.

***What's to be done?*** Americans are the most generous people on earth. The question right now in early 2009 is, *how does your nonprofit secure the support it requires to carry on the good that it does?*

Reacting to economic conditions is not enough; the philanthropic marketplace is changing in basic ways that also have to be recognized and negotiated.

(continued inside)

## *Time-Tested Resolutions for a Good Year*

### **The Continuing State of Philanthropy**

In our last issue of *Fund Raising Matters*, we took measure of the unfolding turmoil in world financial markets. As we prepared the commentary last fall, we suggested that “Many will sit behind the desk and hide. Those who recognize their organization's mission and services are even more critical today, will get back to doing the important work ahead.”

Fast forward to early 2009. Americans have opened year-end investment statements showing dramatic portfolio losses. The stock market continues to reel from rising unemployment and uncertain economic projections. Yet, some faint ray of light is visible at the end of this tunnel.

Many of our clients have reported that their annual results were above those of the previous year, and others move closer to achieving major gift campaign goals. Some did report declines, but not nearly as significant as feared.

In our recent conversations, we have found that the initial shock has worn off, and many nonprofit leaders have resolved to “get used to it” and move on to raise funds in the current environment. Finally, our new President was sworn into office with a call to action, public service, and a strong sense of goodwill toward working for our common goals.

In that spirit, we would like to offer several suggestions that may assist your efforts to get back to the important work of your nonprofit organization. In the post-holiday season, we have placed these suggestions in the form of new resolutions based on age-old adages:

**1. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush:** First, make sure you keep what you have before moving out to make new friends. Experience suggests major donors will continue to give, but they may focus their gifting on fewer organizations. This is the time to thank your donors; communicate with your friends; and share how effectively you utilized their prior support.

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## FOCUS on fund-raising and setting S.M.A.R.T. goals

The concept of setting SMART goals and objectives is a well-established planning technique.

We think the concept is vitally important to how we will work with our clients to conduct the analysis, and also in the implementation and on-going management of the recommendations and actions resulting from our analysis and report.

We have established these objectives for the **SMART-FOCUS Fund-Raising Analysis**:

**SPECIFIC:** Find the most direct way to secure results for your development and fund-raising operations.

**MEASURABLE:** Design tasks that will define success both in terms of funds raised and specific actions that lead to optimal results.

**ACHIEVABLE:** Enable key stakeholders to settle on outcomes that are measurable and obtainable.

**REALISTIC:** Existing resources are committed based on their likelihood of achieving high-priority tasks within defined time frames.

**TIMELY:** Deadlines clearly delineate specific, trackable actions.

Finally, we've added **FOCUS** because we can identify your organizational strengths and know how to leverage them with expert knowledge of the successful elements of fund-raising.

## Strengths + Objectivity = Success *Bringing Your Future into Focus*

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Goettler Associates has demonstrated leadership in strengthening institutions and organizations over the past five decades. We understand the philanthropic marketplace, and how to maximize our clients' fund-raising capabilities. Now, we have developed a new approach and service that is *responsive* to the times, and *appropriate* for today's economic realities.

Goettler Associates' **SMART-FOCUS Fund-Raising Analysis** is a new approach and service that will provide you with a timely, efficient, and objective evaluation of your present fund-raising resources and capabilities – so that a specific course of action can be devised to generate more effective fund-raising results.

### FOCUS on Strengths

People ordinarily think of weaknesses and strengths as opposites—two poles of a continuum, two sides of a coin. That is not the case in fund raising. Rather than dwelling on inadequacies at this time, we advise our clients put aside the unproductive aspects of their programs in order to focus on maximizing the organization's strengths for more immediate results.

**“Studying strengths results in productive results. Studying weaknesses results in ineffective results.”**

— Clifton & Nelson, 1996

On the surface it may seem reasonable for a development officer to work at identifying problems and then resolve them — but the error is to assume that focusing on deficiencies will immediately improve your fund-raising results. Not so! Organizational strengths begin as potential that must be recognized, exercised, and refined in order to achieve the optimum benefits. This means focusing on the positives.

### Objectivity and SMART Planning

It is a fact of life that self-knowledge does not come easy. What may be apparent to an objective third party may go unnoticed by even a dedicated insider. Objectivity is key. It's human nature. The good news is that the same approach works for organizations, too.

In our 44 years as a firm, we have observed that most organizations have capable staff, and functional systems. In today's market, many organizations and their employees are working harder than ever with fewer resources. How is the organization's leadership supposed

## *The SMART-FOCUS Fund-Raising Analysis*

to overcome the crisis of confidence in the marketplace and the overwhelming amount of free advice? We think Goettler Associates can help with a **SMART-FOCUS Fund-Raising Analysis**.

Our objective **Analysis** will identify a client's unique positives and create a quantifiable means to measure, track, analyze, and optimize them. We understand that each nonprofit employs a unique mix of functional and potential strengths. The focus is on your nonprofit and how to make it as strong and effective as it can be—today!

### **How It Works**

After a client contacts Goettler Associates, we'll need as many facts as possible to begin our work. A senior consultant will then meet with you and your key executive staff, board members, volunteers, and interested community leaders to create a snapshot of the status of your nonprofit's development function. We'll look at your annual fund, memberships, special events, current and past corporate and foundation support, major gifts and any other development-related efforts underway.

We will then prepare a **SMART-FOCUS Fund-Raising Report** that will provide **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely (SMART)** recommendations, and quantitative instruments you will use to improve your performance in fund-raising as quickly as possible.

We believe the **SMART-FOCUS Fund-Raising Analysis** has many immediate and longer-term benefits for clients, and will:

- serve as a tool for decision making and consensus building at the board and administrative level, encourage greater transparency, and serve as a platform to report outcomes to all stakeholders;
- drive results by creating a roadmap for immediately improved fund-raising results;
- construct tools for the ongoing self-tracking and future self-analysis of the development and fund-raising process;
- identify longer-term strategies for sustainability and growth.

For many organizations, an expenditure of any kind in this current climate is difficult. In our view, the organizations that use current circumstances to review their present strategies and plan boldly for the future are the ones that will come out of this economic downturn in solid shape for years to come.

### *Our Guarantee!*

## **Start a SMART-FOCUS Fund-Raising Analysis Today!**

Goettler Associates can help improve your fund-raising results right now, at a time when waiting for a better environment is not an option.

Put decades of proven fund-raising leadership to work for your organization.

*There is no risk to you. We guarantee*

- That we will begin, if not complete our engagement with you in 30 days or less.
- That you will have a tangible plan to chart your future course.
- That your development function will be energized by the results.

Our Fee: \$7,200.00 (plus travel expenses)

If you're not satisfied that the results have been useful, we'll refund the professional fee.

**To learn more about how  
your Strengths  
+ our Objectivity  
= your Success**

Complete and return the enclosed reply card. Or, you can learn more on our Website:

**[www.goettler.com](http://www.goettler.com)**

For more information, e-mail us at:  
[SMART-FOCUS@goettler.com](mailto:SMART-FOCUS@goettler.com)





## GoettlerAssociates

**Our mission** is to assist nonprofit organizations in achieving challenging fund-raising goals by:

- strengthening the client's image and awareness;
- recruiting, training, and motivating volunteers; and
- attracting significant philanthropic support.

**We guide** our clients toward their financial goals through:

- the integrity and high performance standards of our employees;
- effective and honest relationships;
- the quality of our work in achieving success.

We would welcome the opportunity to learn about the current status of your advancement program — your development objectives, the challenges you face, and the resources you have for achieving your goals.

A Goettler Associates representative is available to discuss your future plans and share our insights and ideas for advancement. We offer a preliminary consultation without cost or obligation.

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## The *Continuing* State of Philanthropy *Time-Tested Resolutions for a Good Year*

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**2. Out of sight, out of mind:** Keep that which is important in direct view, or it may be forgotten or dismissed. We must keep our organization's mission and work in plain view of our constituents. And we must focus our daily work on that which is most important rather than that which is most urgent.

**3. What gets measured, gets done:** The most effective way to increase (fill in the blank) \_\_\_\_\_, is to first define and quantify the techniques leading to the desired results, then create a system to measure your performance. Quantify wherever and whenever possible and then celebrate all of the small successes.

**4. Penny wise, pound foolish:** Everyone loves to save money, but we must be certain not to cut back and neglect the larger picture of what matters most. A careful articulation of the actions and tactics required for sustainable fund-raising is required before cutting costs.

**5. Don't put all your eggs in one basket:** Our market is rapidly changing and no one can concentrate on one strategy or resource. If your past roster of major donors is full of bankers, brokers, and auto manufacturers then this is the time to diversify your donor list.

**6. Jack of all trades, master of none:** Development professionals are required to be competent in many skills. But do we know how to bring these skills together in the most practical manner to affect positive change? We must endeavor to identify and focus on our strengths and spend more time on that which is most productive.

**7. Experience is the best teacher:** This is true in our personal life, but less so in corporate life where the same mistakes are too often repeated. Before organizations can improve, they must first learn and then push toward innovation and new experiences.

**8. A job worth doing is worth doing well:** If the future includes new strategies and new actions, then make certain that each is done well and with adequate resources or the opportunity for success will pass you by.

**9. When life gives you lemons, make lemonade:** As current events have made all too clear, these are both challenging and remarkable times. We fear that nonprofit executives who sit back to see how these events unfold may be making a mistake. For the resolute, crisis brings the clarity to do things in new ways. True innovation comes when we are able to take a fresh look at what we do and how we do it.

