

The Extreme Fundraising Ezine, Vol. II Issue 13

Welcome to the June 22nd edition of Extreme Fundraising!

And happy end-of-the-fiscal year to all of you with year's that end on June 30th!

For those just joining us, we're in the middle of a series exploring how our natural talents affect the way we raise money. We've finished looking at the abilities related to our "Personal Style" as defined by the Highlands Abilities Battery: Extrovert/Introvert, Generalist/Specialist, and Time Frame Orientation.

Today, in honor of the coming new (fiscal) year, we'll take a break from this series to take a look at time management. As always, the archives for the past issues in this series are available at: <http://fundraisingcoach.com/ezine.htm>.

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I. Beginning With The End In Mind

For many of us, June marks the end of the fiscal year. This is always an interesting time at nonprofits. Along with the mad scramble to hit fundraising goals is the need to make plans for the coming year. Since nonprofits are often hesitant about hiring new employees, "planning" usually results in adding more tasks to an employees' already over-flowing task list.

This week at the APC conference in Maine, I'll be giving a seminar called "Keeping the Plates Spinning: Time Management in the Small Office." The following are two of the six powerful tools I'll be sharing. These tools are specifically designed to help you tame your task list.

******YOUR REPORT CARD******

Ask yourself the following question: "What will I be 'graded on' at the end of the fiscal year?" Based on your experience, what things will your supervisor or the board hold you accountable for you on at the end of the year? Money goals? Strategy planning? Donor satisfaction? Take some time and jot down the things that come to mind. Be sure to reserve a space to list the things that you're supposed to be doing but are never really graded on.

Then schedule some time to talk to your boss or board chair. Ask her what she thinks you'll be graded on at the end of the year. Do your lists match up? If not, exploring what communication breakdowns may be leading to the differences can be incredibly fruitful.

For most of us in North America, the idea of getting graded on our work provides incredible clarity. And it's a metaphor that your supervisor will "get" without lots of explanation. It cuts through the everything-you-do-is-top-priority muddle. You'll have a much clearer sense of what is ultimately more important. Do you pick up the phone when it rings or do you finish writing up the next appeal? If you're graded more on donor relations, you pick up the call. But if reaching the annual fund goal is more important to your organization, you know you can let the caller leave a voice mail as you finish writing the appeal.

******MANAGING UP******

I know you'll probably have a hard time relating to this story but humor me as I tell it to you. At one job, everything that was put on my plate was presented as *the* #1 priority, *the* most important thing I could be doing. Whether it was an idea from a book or a conference, pressure from the board, or merely a knee-jerk reaction to a disgruntled donor, there was always a very good rationale that explained why this really *was* the top priority.

One year, I took out a legal pad and listed all the activities I was currently doing: tasks, obligations, expectations, responsibilities, everything. I filled up an entire sheet! It was both impressive and a little scary to see them all listed out.

Then I listed all the new things that were being put on my plate for the next fiscal year. Finally I set up a time with my supervisor to go over the list. When we got together, I gave her a copy and explained what I'd done. I let her know that I knew that each task was worthwhile in and of itself. But, I went on to explain, I am a finite being with finite amount of time. While I would endeavor to do it all, I needed to know which activities and responsibilities trumped the others. So I asked, "What should I move from the 'already doing' page to make room for the new things?"

She was shocked and a little bemused. She appreciated my frankness and honesty. She even admitted she wished she could do that with her boss. I thanked her and re-asked the question. We spent a lot of our time talking about what we as an office valued and how we wanted that communicated. By the end of our time, we settled on my 5 or 6 top focus items.

******WHAT ABOUT YOU?******

These two tools are extremely powerful. They're also somewhat time consuming, at least at first. They force a lot of conversation which can end up saving you an *incredible* amount of time later. I would venture to say that each minute invested in these now will save you hours over the course of the next year. An ounce of prevention *is* worth a pound of cure!

Are you going to commit to trying these tools? Let me know! You can reach me at: marc@fundraisingcoach.com.

II. New Learning Programs for Fundraisers

As a subscriber to Extreme Fundraising you get the inside scoop on my latest offerings. I'm offering three new teleclasses to help you be more successful at the critical skills of fundraising and goal-setting. Teleclasses are workshops by phone—an exciting new way for you to become more successful without leaving your desk.

The three new classes are:

- *Raising Serious Money NOW: The fundamentals of major gift fundraising*
- *Fundraising 101: The basics of raising money for nonprofits*
- *GoalMagnets: Time and life management for fundraisers!*

I'm really excited about these classes! Each course meets twice a month for two months and costs \$195. These are a terrific way to make sure your summer is productive. If you'd like more information, email me at: marc@fundraisingcoach.com (or simply reply to this email). As an Extreme Fundraising subscriber, you'll get \$50 off!

III. Marc's Speaking

The Advancement Program Council's "On the Road" workshop is this week! I'll be teaching all six time management tools in my "Keeping the Plates Spinning" seminar.

Thanks to a special benefactor, schools paying for one attendee may take two! This benefactor would especially like schools to bring volunteers to be trained.

APC offers the most practical, down-to-earth information I've found anywhere. More details can be seen at: <http://www.apcnetwork.org/pdf/APC%20in%20Maine%20-%20program.pdf>

To your extreme fundraising success!

Marc

Marc A. Pitman is an executive coach to nonprofit leaders. An expert in helping people identify their natural abilities, he's committed to providing down-to-earth information that will decrease stress and put the "fun" back into fundraising!

The Extreme Fundraising Ezine is a free newsletter of The Fundraising Coach. Pass it on!

The Fundraising Coach, 632 Main Street, Lewiston, ME 04240, <http://fundraisingcoach.com>

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