

The Extreme Fundraising Ezine, Vol. II Issue 17

Welcome to the August 17th edition of Extreme Fundraising!

We're coming to the end of our series exploring how our innate abilities affect the way we raise money. The past eight issues of this series are available in the archives at <http://fundraisingcoach.com/ezine.htm>.

In this issue, we'll look at the fourth of the five powerful Driving Abilities: Spatial Relations Theory.

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I. Driving Abilities: Spatial Relations Theory

Spatial Relations Theory and Spatial Relations Visualization (which we'll look at next time) are closely related. Together, they measure two sides of the same coin: a person's preference to mentally deal with the "real world" of objects and systems or a person's ability to deal instead with the realm of relationships and intangibles. People high in both are often dealing with the world in a hands-on capacity like engineers, doctors, and physicists. People low in both are much more comfortable dealing with the world of relationships, laws, and other abstractions. They are often counselors, managers, and accountants.

******HIGH SPATIAL RELATIONS THEORY******

CHARACTERISTICS

People high in spatial relations theory find it very easy to mentally imagine and manipulate multi-dimensional spaces and objects. They have the ability to both conceptualize and design equipment and machines and to conceptualize complex organizational structures like government, businesses, or families. With an almost innate sense, they seem to just "get" how things work—even things like gravity.

One of my friends is pretty high in spatial relations theory. Whenever he walks into a room, he's instantly figures out the electrical wiring inside the walls. He doesn't have to work at it; he just "gets" it.

CHALLENGES

Even though people high in spatial relations theory can visualize how things work, they aren't necessarily able to make those systems or machines. That ability is linked with the other side of the coin, spatial relations visualization. Also, since they are so adept at "systems thinking," they can often have a hard time remembering to take care of practical things.

******LOW SPATIAL RELATIONS THEORY******

CHARACTERISTICS

People low in spatial relations theory aren't particularly interested in abstract things like higher math, physics, or cosmology. They aren't interested in how electricity works or where the wires run in a room—they just want the computer to turn on when they push the power button. People lower in spatial relations theory are much more interested in people and staying in direct contact with people. They think much more practically than the more hypothetically minded people higher in this ability.

CHALLENGES

People low spatial relations theory can have a very hard time visualizing or understanding models of systems like organizational charts. They can still change these systems or improve them but they don't naturally "get" all the interacting relationships.

******IMPLICATIONS FOR FUNDRAISING******

One of the first times I became aware of this ability and its application to fundraising occurred when our staff was trying to schedule mailings for the coming year. More and more things were needing to be communicated to our constituents. It seemed everyone in the room had a knee-jerk reaction that each new thing required its own mailing. We were coming up with far more mailings than our small office could handle and then our constituents would tolerate. We felt more and more overwhelmed.

I remember getting really frustrated with the way the conversation was going. After a while, I just couldn't hold it in. Almost irritably I asked, "Why don't we just do this?" and proceeded to effectively blend the messages into our existing mailings. I didn't know about this ability at the time. I just knew how frustrated I was that the others didn't "get it." Could I be the only person in the room to see how all the mailings interacted with each other?

It turns out, I was. That's not a value judgment. Not being able to see the systems isn't a good or bad thing. I can easily miss the practical—like remembering to have sufficient postage for our mailings.

Rather than getting frustrated that people were missing something I thought was so obvious, I learned to choose to see my perspective as a gift I could offer the team. And others will remind me to have the right postage!

I can also see implications for donor cultivation and stewardship involved with this ability. Some donors will be incredibly interested in organizational mission and vision and how the organization is structured to empower that mission. Others couldn't give a rip. They want to know about the people involved and the practical things like where their money is going.

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

Does this information about spatial relations theory make sense to you? Can you see how it can positively impact your work? Send me your thoughts at marc@fundraisingcoach.com.

II. The Fundraising Coach's "Fundraising 101"

I'm looking forward to my brand new seminar "Fundraising 101." It will be held on **September 21st** from **8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.** Check out the description below.

I'm actually really excited about the entire Nonprofit Fundraising Institute I've created. The complete listing can be found on my site at: <http://fundraisingcoach.com/cmccfrcinstitute.htm>.

I realize that most of you on this list don't live in Maine. Let me know if you'd be interested in having me offer these classes over the telephone. If I know that there are 5-8 of you interested in any one topic, I'd be glad to offer it.

Here's the description for "Fundraising 101":

Raising money for nonprofits isn't rocket science but it's not all common sense either. This seminar shares some easy-to-apply principles based on decades of fundraising excellence. This is helpful both for people new to the field and for experienced pros.

Participants will learn:

- the only 3 types of communication nonprofits need,
- how many times to say "thank you" between solicitations,
- the difference between annual funds, capital campaigns, and
- endowments, and a simple model for your setting up a fundraising effort

To register, go to <http://www.cmcc.edu/training/>.

III. Marc's Writing: Biblical Fundraising?

I'm currently working on a pet project that explores how people in the Bible asked for money. It's cool to think of people like Moses, David, and Hezekiah as fundraisers!

This is a work in progress. If you'd like to look at a draft, send a blank email to: bible@fundraisingcoach.com.

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!

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