



One Year, One Fund

Another Approach to the Annual Appeal

If you have participated in an Annual Fund Workshop program, you have learned a tremendous amount about the way to conduct this essential part of your development efforts. And you possibly have been overwhelmed at the idea of taking on this work by yourself or with a volunteer or two. The *One Year, One Fund* approach collects many of the Annual Fund elements and then parcels them out to you, and to those who are working with you, piece by piece in a manageable and still effective way.

The basic structure of your “campaign.”

1. With the appropriate leadership group, determine the funding priority for the appeal.
2. Begin to build the language that will support your request in various methods of communication.
3. Brand the fund with the look that will communicate it instantly, and will work all year long. Have electronic files of the print brand in color and in grayscale so that you can use it both ways.
4. Build an online giving page that is branded with the campaign look.

Build the communications plan for the campaign.

5. Look at your communications calendar for the year and schedule stories and updates about the appeal using all available communication options: print, e-newsletters, Facebook, website, events and small group gatherings. Be strategic in integrating this communication
6. Draft the letter that will be the main solicitation vehicle. Proof, edit, test on small groups until you think it is an effective “ask.”
7. Determine which constituents will receive the mailing. Is there an equally effective way to meet other constituent groups?
8. Send the letter, the reply device and both envelopes to the printer.
9. Launch the appeal with a dedicated page on your website, one that is thoroughly linked to the customized online giving page.
10. Follow up immediately with a column or a full page in the parish bulletin.
11. Prepare the list for the print mailing; send that list to the mailing house with a “drop” date of ten days to two weeks.
12. Follow up within a week or two with an electronic solicitation, one that uses much of the same language as the print solicitation but is briefer and uses links to the website to tell a powerful story and to take viewers directly to the giving page.

Continue to tell the story and invite engagement throughout the year.

13. Return to that strategic communications calendar and communicate this program with different stories, different photos (same brand, though!) at regular intervals throughout the year.
14. Depending on your internal capacity, do a postcard mailing after four months; or a thank you phonathon, or post a video about the progress.
15. Say thank you. Tell them what good you are doing with their gifts. Say thank you again.

Building the Development Program on the One Fund Approach

It is possible to organize the entire year, including many special events, around one goal or one central idea if the idea is large enough so that it is possible to look at it from different angles. It can also be expanded to be part of the academic or community goal or theme for the year. For instance, if your school goal is to begin to build the classroom of the 21st century, these are some tactics you might use:

- You can have small stories throughout the year in all communication modes that talk about technology implementation at different grade levels.
- Have a coffee for parents that demonstrates some of the programs that you plan to bring in to your curriculum.
- Interview, for the website or newsletter, an alumnus who has gone into the technology field.
- Follow the progress of the project with a video of children using the program. Use that video at an event or use it on your website.
- Sponsor a forum on ed tech; bring in speakers from the field; invite communities from neighboring schools and the general public.
- Work with your school's tech team to produce a tech fair in which your students demonstrate what they have learned in technology.
- Have teachers speak at parents' gatherings about the ways that technology has been integrated into other disciplines.

When planning the year, look at those events or those programs that do not fit into this strategy and determine (as you always would every year) if these are effective and then plan around them.

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