



## Steps to a Successful Fundraising Event

1. **Decide what type of an event will be most appropriate and enjoyable for your community, friends, and family members.** It is important to choose an event that will attract the most volunteers and participants. Be creative and have fun!
2. **Determine the fundraising components of the event.**
  - Auction—Silent, Live, Online
  - Corporate Sponsorship
  - Individual Donor Gifts
  - Ticket Sales
  - Registration Fees/Fundraising Minimums
3. **Establish a goal/purpose for your event.** Determine up front what your goals are in planning the event. There may be goals beyond fundraising (for example, creating awareness for a particular program or honoring someone special).
4. **Prepare a budget.** Preparing a budget of projected costs is a necessity for any successful fundraising effort. Establish fundraising goals for the various components of your event and develop a list of expenses, while keeping in mind which items you could potentially have donated. Costs per funds raised are a critical aspect of developing an effective fundraising event. As a guideline, try to maintain expenses less than 20 percent of anticipated revenue. Events with expenses greater than 50 percent of revenues raised will not be endorsed.
5. **Select a date.** Give yourself plenty of time—a minimum of six months—to organize an event. This will provide enough leeway to plan and publicize it appropriately. Check for other events that may be taking place in your area at the same time. Try to avoid scheduling your event near a holiday or holiday weekend.
6. **Form a committee.** A great source of support for your event can be found by forming a committee of your closest friends, family, community members, and colleagues to help manage the many components and logistics involved in event planning. This small group of volunteers will provide the leadership and assistance you need to organize and run a successful event.

Divide event details and logistics amongst your committee members. Your committee may grow as your list of event details grows!

7. **Select a location.** Depending on the event, it is important to ask yourself some or all of the following questions regarding location:
  - Will it be an indoor or outdoor event?
  - Is it insured
  - Is there adequate parking?
  - Do you need a kitchen facility?
  - Is there handicap accessibility?
  - Are there any restrictions on vendors that can be brought to the venue? Are there any entertainment restrictions?
  - Are there any special permits required for the space or event?
  - For an outdoor event, has a rain date been established?
  - Is there adequate space for a silent auction?
  - Can the space accommodate the number of people you are expecting?
  
8. **Develop a timeline.** Once you have decided on the type of event, the theme, date, and location, and have identified a committee, developing a timeline is the next step. It is important to not only know what needs to be done, but when it needs to be done. A timeline will help you track who is responsible for each task and when it needs to be completed.
  
9. **Take a bow.** Congratulate yourself and your committee of volunteers for planning a successful fundraising effort. It is always great to organize a follow-up meeting with committee members to discuss and evaluate each event component. Most importantly, thank all of your supporters and guests in a timely fashion (two weeks or less). Determine whether you will have the event again, and start your planning early!