



DOUBLE-DOZEN 'CAN-DO' NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

Even though we moved into the new millennium in 2000, this article still retains the wisdom it was built on back then.

Here are some New Year's resolutions that will help board and staff leadership engage in meaningful actions that build organizational capacity.

To nurture our donors we will:

1. Send personalized donor acknowledgements, signed by the president of the board or chief executive officer, within 48 hours of receipt of the gift.
2. Train board members to call donors when a gift is at or above a predetermined level.
3. Include a personal, handwritten P.S. in a donor's acknowledgment letter, written by a specific staff or board member known to that donor.
4. Acknowledge upgraded gifts with a special letter or phone call by a board member.
5. Adopt a board policy that honors all donor requests (including donor preference for solicitation, recognition and designation of contributions) and also delineates how to handle requests which cannot be honored.
6. Create a survey to randomly sample the opinions of our donors each year which does not include a solicitation.
7. Inform donors of the results of the survey and use these results to inform decisions about our fundraising plans.
8. Invite SYBUNTS and LYBUNTS* to a special activity where appropriate board members "mix and mingle" with them.
9. Include a small but useful thank you gift (something which includes the organization's logo and contact information) with the acknowledgment letter annually to remind donors of your organization throughout the year.
10. Assign board members to serve as hosts to specific donors at all events in order to personalize these experiences and build relationships with these donors.
11. Send specially designed appeal letters to SYBUNTS and LYBUNTS to renew their commitment to the organization and follow up with phone calls by board members.
12. Thank donors for their previous generosity in all appeal letters.
13. Keep all constituents informed about the activities and plans of the organization on an ongoing basis.

14. Encourage board members and donors to get more involved by engaging them in meaningful work, including as “reporter-writers” and “tea” hosts.
15. Hold an annual, no charge event at which board members host friends and business colleagues, in order to share the good news of our organization and promote major gift commitments.

To ensure organizational success we will:

16. Focus on mission-based decision making.
17. Commit to becoming a learning organization rather than being perceived as an “If it ain’t broke why fix it” agency.
18. Seek to make changes that enhance our mission.
19. Make accountability a priority.
20. Inform our decision making by adopting and using an ethics code of behavior.
21. Adopt a realistic budget based on strategic goals and key indicators.
22. Explore and encourage creation of appropriate Collaboratives.
23. Review and revise our mission and vision through a values orientation.
24. Advocate and lobby for our constituents and for mission-based issues.

Now, how many of these New Year’s Resolutions do you personally resolve to put in place at your “place” during the New Year?

* Note: SYBUNTS (“Some Year But Unfortunately Not This Year”) and LYBUNTS (“Last Year But Unfortunately Not This Year”) refer to past donors who you should be re-cultivating.

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