



See the big picture and hit your ambitious fundraising targets with style

## Fundraising planning

Created: 17 December 2007

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Fundraising planning is different to the planning you need to do to run a successful fundraising activity. Throughout the how2guide section of this website you will find lots of advice on 'planning for' fundraising activities, but what if one activity is not enough to reach your fundraising target?

This is when fundraising planning comes in, because it is about planning a series of activities that will enable you to reach your fundraising target.

### THE GIFT PYRAMID

A favourite tool for many fundraisers is the gift pyramid and there is some useful advice on using them on the [Nonprofit-innovations](#) website. The basic idea is that you need to raise a few large amounts at the beginning to make reaching your fundraising targets seem possible in the timeframe you have set. So your pyramid may have a few fundraising activities that bring in a relatively large sum at the top, (anything from a jumble sale to a masque ball) and then lots of little quick and easy activities at the bottom (cake sales to selling 100 Club tickets). Depending on the size of your target, you may have a range of mid size activities in between.

There is an online tool to help you build your gift pyramid kindly supplied by [Blackbaud](#). But don't become a slave to your pyramid, you may be able to achieve your target with fewer fundraising activities. The smaller your target you more you can aim to achieve it with a collection of activities that raise the same amount.

Another essential thing to consider when planning which activities to include in your gift pyramid is who you will ask to sponsor you, or attend your fundraising events or event make straightforward donations, the bigger your target, the more you need to spread the load.

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### SPREADING THE LOAD

The more money you want to raise, the more people you should [aim to ask](#). In fact, getting new people involved in supporting good causes is something of a [service in itself](#).

So you should try to build a collection of activities that will appeal to different audiences. [Sponsorship](#) is most likely to come from people you know, while services, [sales and auctions](#) may attract a whole new audience. But if you are entertaining people in some way, they may not mind dipping into their own personal '[entertainment](#)' budget and so you may be able to ask more frequently. Which may enable you to raise the funds over a shorter period; if you have the time to organise all the different activities of course!

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### GETTING THE TIMESCALE RIGHT

We've tried to give an indication of how long it will take to run different types of activities in our how2guides. It is really important that you don't underestimate how long each one will take for you to deliver because you really won't enjoy having to stay up all hours to meet your deadlines and your activity may suffer if it does not offer enough advance warning to participants.

You might try to make more time for yourself by getting support from others or [asking for a secondment](#). When you know how much time you can spare each week to carryout your fundraising you might want to use a simple Gantt chart (timeline) to ensure you don't overstretch yourself, or you may prefer to just plot the activities out in your diary.

Always allow lots of time for coordinating and supporting other volunteers if you have recruited them or are leading an activity. If you feel rushed you will give people the impression that you 'don't have time for them' and you are likely to lose some the support you have worked hard to gain.

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### GANTT CHARTS OR TIMELINES

[Gantt charts](#) enable to make a visual representation of the things you need to do and when you should do them. You can buy some very sophisticated project software that enables you to generate Gantt charts and other resources that will automatically adjust all other events when you miss a deadline, but

all you will probably need is a table on a sheet of paper, a computer document or spread sheet.

Write the timeline across the horizontal top line of the sheet, dividing it either into weeks or months as you prefer. Down the left-hand line of the sheet list all the tasks you will be carrying out. Decide how much time each task will take. Now block out each of the cells in the row relating to the task you are planning for the period you will be involved in doing it. You can quickly judge whether you are giving yourself too much to do at any one time.

If there is a group of you, you can have a separate chart for each person and one that shows the overall plan.

If you want to try something more sophisticated, there is a range of [free software](#) on line, just type Gantt chart into your search engine!

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## BUDGETING

It is very important to err on the side of caution when putting together a budget. Underestimate the number of people who will attend and how much they will spend, don't be tempted to overestimate. We try to give some hints in the how2guides and with such a wide range of activities to choose from there is no one budget template that will fit all. But basically, and obviously, you're looking to bring in more money than you spend! Though some fundraising seems to offer a poor return it may have [other benefits](#).

Funderfinder offer an [online budgeting tool](#) that is designed to help not-for-profit organisations budget for their programme. Not every aspect of it will be relevant to your needs, but you may find it helpful in prompting you if you prefer to adapt things rather than start from scratch.

Even if you know you are getting something donated for free, it is better to include it in your initial budget. When it arrives, free of charge you'll be delighted at how much more you have fundraised as a result. If it doesn't transpire and you have to pay for it in the end then you still know your event is going to be a success. Of course, if the success of your event is dependant on getting something for free, including it in the budget will help you to spot this.

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Easy money or big bucks?

- £500 to £5,000
- £5,000 to £10,000
- Over £10,000