



INSTITUTE OF SCHOOL & PARISH DEVELOPMENT

Bringing People, Process, and Ministry Together to Build the

Kingdom of God.

Institute of School and Parish Development (ISPD) June 2010 Development Directions Newsletter

GETTING A HANDLE ON ALL OF YOUR FUND-RAISING EVENTS/ACTIVITIES

by

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How many times have we heard the statement from Catholic school parents, alums, parishioners and others, "All they do is 'nickel and dime' us to death at that school. It is one fund-raiser after another, after another."

Or, the potential \$1,000 major donor to the parish/school Annual Fund says to the principal, "Bob, I would love to participate, but my wife just bought two raffle calendars for \$100. We already gave."

Or, the parents of the quarterback on the football team, who are potential \$50,000 lead donors for the school's capital campaign say to the president after he invites their gift, "Father, we would love to get involved, but we just gave \$5,000 to the football program when Coach Stevens asked us to help pay for the new scoreboard."

Stories like this go on and on in Catholic institutions. As we have said in recent newsletters, the financial model of tuition, subsidy and fund-raisers leaves a lot to be desired. Although we have explained it before, I do believe it is worthwhile to explain again: **There is a huge difference between Fund-Raising \$\$\$ and Development \$\$\$.** Let's look.

Here at ISPD, when we speak of Fund-Raising \$\$\$ we mean "buy and sell." I am going to sell you a BINGO card, and you will buy it. I am going to sell you a raffle calendar or a Christmas tree or Christmas wrapping paper, or a Heath candy bar or a T-shirt or a raffle ticket or the sponsorship of the 18th hole of the golf tournament. These are special event fund-raisers - car washes,

walkathons, washathons, etc. Most of the people who buy the ticket are not interested in the vision, mission, goals, and plans for the future of your Catholic parish and/or school. They simply want their wrapping paper.

Is there anything wrong with this?

No. However, it does become a problem when we do one fund-raiser right after another.

Now, let's talk about Development \$\$\$\$. This is philanthropic giving; this is stewardship; this is investing in your Catholic institution and expecting nothing in return. No wrapping paper, no candy, no popcorn. People who think this way invest in the annual fund, the capital campaign, the endowment campaign, the memorial gift program, and/or consider a planned gift for the parish. Buy/Sell vs. Being a Steward.

Yesterday here in New Orleans at Mount Carmel Academy, a number of Catholic leaders got together to discuss topics and presenters for the 2011 NCEA Convention here in the Big Easy next spring. We conferenced in Regina Haney at NCEA and Cathy Donahue with the National Alliance of Catholic School Marketing. One of the attendees was Ken Tedesco, president of De La Salle High School here in the uptown area of New Orleans.

A lot of the talk centered on CHANGE and the fact that if Catholic schools are going to prevail and not just survive we must start doing things that are quite different - namely not just depending on tuition, subsidy and fund-raisers. Ken got the ball rolling by telling the story of his first visit with his future in-laws. It is a story whose theme is familiar; this is Ken's version.

"The first time I was invited to my future in-laws' house for Sunday dinner, they served a roast beef. I was engaged to their daughter and at the Sunday dinner I met my wife's grandmother. When they served the roast beef I noticed that both ends were cut off. Unusual. So I asked my finance if, when she made roast beef, did she cut off both ends. She said yes. I then asked my future mother in law if, when she made roast beef, did she, in fact, cut off both ends? She said, 'Yes, of course I do'.

I then asked Grandma if when she made roast beef if she cut off both ends, and she said, 'Of course I do'.

I then asked, Why would you cut off both ends of the roast beef?

She replied, 'I never had a big enough pot!'

For no apparent reason, we continue to do things without any reason, except, "That is the way we have always done it." Parish and school fund-raisers are no different.

Over the past couple of months, as schools and parishes evaluate their 2009 -2010 development efforts, in so many cases we hear the same thing: "We are doing too many fund-raisers, and we have no control over who does what. Plus, how in the world are we going to tell the band boosters that they can't raise money, or tell the cheerleaders that they cannot hold bake sales and car washes? And, are you going to tell the athletic boosters that they can't sell ads for the football program all over town?"

The sad thing is that this way of thinking is built around a year to year modus operandi. No plans, no vision, and no way for the investment processes like the Annual Fund to even breathe. And, the thought of a capital campaign amid all of this is way too much to think about. It will hardly get out of the blocks.

So, how do we break the cycle? How do we stop the short term thinking? How do we approach all of this from a systemic point of view? We have five suggestions for the 2010 - 2011 school year.

1. Visually, create a chart on poster paper. (I've actually taped four sheets of poster paper together). Using a chart, write down EVERY fund-raiser that your parish and/or school conducts. This includes all clubs, organizations, sports teams, school sponsored events, etc. On this chart have the following categories:

- Name of the fund-raiser
- Time of the year
- How long it took to organize and conduct
- Gross amount collected
- Net amount raised
- How many people it took to organize it
- Approximate number of "people hours" it took to make this event happen
- Who was asked for the money
 - Parents
 - Parishioners
 - Faculty and Staff
 - Students
 - Alumni
 - Friends

- Others:
2. Begin educating your leadership groups of the present reality.
 - Present this visual to them and explain the challenges.
 - Have your boards, your coaches, your faculty/ staff, your student leaders, your PTA, and others realize how harmful it is to “nickel and dime” people.
 - Explain the differences between Catholic Development and Fund-Raising Events.
 - Explain the need for change by all, and that by July 2011 you will have in place a process for groups, clubs, and organizations to apply to conduct a fund-raiser.
 - Explain that you are going to center the development and/or advancement efforts around the Annual Fund and 3-4 excellent fund-raisers that: a. Raise good net dollars; b. Build new leadership; c. Bring people together.
 3. Put together a Screening Committee of 5 people who will screen, reject and/or approve all applications for clubs, groups, organizations to conduct fund-raisers during the 2011 – 2012 school year.
 - Principal and/or Pastor and/or President
 - Person working in development/advancement
 - Parent leader
 - Board member
 4. By April 15th, present the application form to all people at the parish/school, indicating that any and all applications need to be handed in by June 1, 2011.
 5. Have the Screening Committee meet during June and select the 3 or 4 fund-raising events that will be accepted for the next school year. Once again, the Annual Fund is NOT a “fund-raising event.” It is “Development \$\$\$.”

The leaders of the schools and/or parishes who move in this direction (and it may take longer than one year) are also aware of the financial needs of the clubs and organizations. Oftentimes, percentages of the Annual Fund are devoted to those groups, and/or percentages of net dollars raised in the 3-4 fund-raisers are allocated to clubs and organizations. The bottom line is this: if ALL fund-raising efforts are not coordinated throughout the SYSTEM, then there is no way that the parish/school is going to be successful in moving forward with Development \$\$\$ (Annual Fund, Capital Campaign, Major Gift work, etc.)

Change is onerous, and many times we don't change unless the pain gets so severe that we are forced to change. Here at ISPD, we believe the pain in Catholic institutions is acute.

If old ways of thinking and doing the same old thing over and over again are allowed to prevail, we will continue to get the same short term results. New wine needs to be poured into new wineskins.

"Jesus told them of this parable, 'No one tears a patch from a new garment and sews it on an old one. If he does, he will have torn the new garment, and the patch from the new will not match the old. And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins, the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, new wine must be poured into new wineskins'."

- Luke 5:36-39