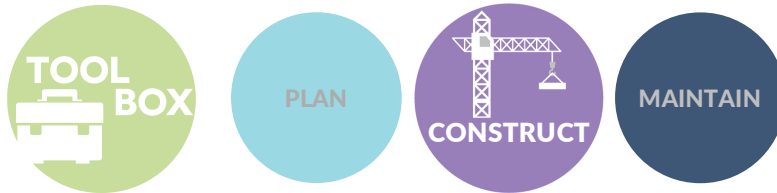


STRENGTHENING A PARTNERSHIP



As you may have discovered from previous development campaigns or events, the thrill of getting those first donations eventually wears off, and you are quickly looking ahead at how to replicate your success. While it's great to have a donor step up once, **the real key to sustainable funding is achieving long-term commitments to support your organization repeatedly.** This is why every potential donor is a partner, who gains from you as you gain from them. Taking money is simply a transaction; building a mutually beneficial relationship is something different. Below are methods for moving beyond a one-time donation and creating lasting partnerships.



Invite sponsors to become part of your Board of Directors or serve on various committees as appropriate.

This can keep committees fresh by bringing in new perspectives and ideas, yet also keeps your organization in touch with the community. Be sure it is not presented as an obligation since these individuals have already donated money or goods. Instead, make it an opportunity to be more involved and help make decisions about where their investment is headed. People enjoy being asked to contribute ideas and opinions, especially if they are considering contributing financially.



If there isn't an opportunity for formal boards or committees, simply ask for advice.

People like to be valued, and asking for an opinion in their area of expertise is a great way to show a donor they are worth more to you than just their money. If someone is a doctor, ask her for help developing a wellness training. If someone is a broadcaster, ask him to review your latest presentation. Do not forget to follow up to give thanks for the advice and report on how it might have helped!



Join Efforts

Join together your staff with a sponsor's staff in community events or competitions.

Sometimes simple visibility side by side can help raise awareness for both your organization and a sponsoring company. People who didn't know that a company supports your cause or that your agency supports their business will now make the connection. You might help each other run a booth at a fair, organize a combined softball team, join in an entry in a local parade, or serve together on a completely separate community fundraiser. This is a way to show genuine teamwork to the public – your clients and their customers.



Ask for Testimonials

Have community members give testimonials about how a company's support has helped the organization, and in turn, helped them.

Individual stories can be appealing to a company because they give a more personal connection to their charitable work than simply listing the name of your organization on a pamphlet. This highlights the broader impact across populations and shows cooperative links between different parts of your community. Further, if there are employees of the company who might not have been previously involved in the sponsorship efforts, this may help them see the positive influence and perhaps encourage them to take part in the future.



Open Your Doors

Have periodic tours or open times for observation.

While maintaining appropriate confidentiality, allowing your partners to see the actual work happening at your organization is a fantastic way of making them feel connected to the investment. Touring the sites, shadowing different positions, or just observing from afar for a bit can help them link their dollars to practical and effective use.



Make it Personal

Consider linking individual donors with a specific family, child, or client you serve who is benefiting from their contributions.

While again maintaining appropriate confidentiality, you can pair a sponsor with a special story of someone they are helping. This encourages a team atmosphere and adds an emotional quality to the partnership. As donors are able to see, hear, or read about their specific impact, it becomes less of a transaction and more of a collaboration.