



A New Slant on Grants

If you think writing a proposal is the most important part of getting grants, you're missing the big picture, as this "guerilla guide to raising money" points out.

BY TERRENCE FERNSLER

Secrets of Successful Grantsmanship: A Guerilla Guide to Raising Money

By Susan L. Golden. 165 pages. Softcover. Published by Jossey-Bass, San Francisco.

Available through the Society for Nonprofit Organizations' Resource Center (see the Resource Center Catalog, included in this issue, or call 800-424-7367).

Susan Golden calls her book a guerilla guide because you, the grantseeker, are working alone, largely on an ad hoc basis. Like a guerilla fighter, you hunt opportunities, calculate the odds of success, and marshal resources to offset your weaknesses.

As in guerilla warfare, the key to success is your approach. In fundraising, that means maintaining a dialogue between grantor and grantee. The backbone of grantseeking, Golden insists, isn't writing good proposals but building good relationships.

Golden gives you the background you need to decide when and where to seek grants, and her advice is sound as far as it goes. However, she places too much faith on the initial telephone conversation, which she advises using mainly to set an appointment. Unfortunately, she makes a huge assumption—that you'll get into the foundation's office if you ask—and doesn't describe how to build relation-

ships with grantmakers who don't want to be visited.

Nor does she put enough emphasis on researching foundations beforehand. Before you call, you must know what you're proposing and why it's of interest to the foundation. Otherwise the call will be a waste of time. Many, if not most, foundations won't want to meet with you until you've submitted something in writing.

Golden spends much time discussing how to work with an intermediary after you submit a grant proposal, but very little on when this isn't useful

or even appropriate. She spends no time on self-advocacy—updating a foundation on your efforts to raise funds elsewhere: decisions of other foundations, approaching foundations not previously mentioned, unexpected windfalls, fund transfers, unexpected equipment failure, the consequences of natural disasters, and so on.

Even though Golden explains her reason for using the term "guerilla," she glosses over the implications the term raises. "Guerilla" implies battling a monolithic, staid institution—not a healthy approach to grantsmanship. Her

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choice of terms throughout the book raises questions. She talks of building relationships yet also of “winning grants”—another phrase which connotes combat and competition rather than working for common goals. Development shouldn’t be a battle.

Golden provides many useful tactics, though they could be applied within a more cooperative philosophy than the one she conjures up. Her book would be most useful for an all-volunteer organization or a one-person development office, especially if readers applied its procedures toward relationship-building rather than competing.

She is correct in stating that grantseeking requires focus, discipline, and persistence—qualities of a guerilla as well. But

the similarity ends there. Grantsmanship is not warfare. It is an effort to direct the values of two organizations toward a mutually beneficial goal. ■

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Nonprofit World • Volume 16, Number 4 July/August 1998
Published by the Society for Nonprofit Organizations
6314 Odana Road, Suite 1, Madison, WI 53719 • (800) 424-7367

NONPROFIT WORLD CROSSWORD PUZZLE

We'll give prizes for the best answers (don't worry if you can't get them all). Send a copy of your completed puzzle to: Editor, *Nonprofit World*, 6314 Odana Road, Suite 1, Madison, Wisconsin 53719.

ACROSS

1. One characteristic of financial empowerment is that you have unrestricted income from _____ as well as income from grants and donations.
7. About 80 percent of most nonprofits' fundraising income comes from _____ donors.
11. Use this type of management style to empower workers and create efficient organizational processes.
12. International Association of Insurance Counsel.
13. Program indicator.
14. This type of organization—skilled at creating, acquiring, and transforming knowledge—is the organization of the future.
16. You can reduce your risk of these by having personnel policies in place to accommodate all people.
18. National information system.
20. Surveys show this is the best way to get someone to donate money to your organization.
21. This is your best response if someone wants to recruit board members with special conditions on their membership.

23. The mileage rate for use of a car by volunteers is indexed for this each year.
25. Another term for the nonprofit sector.
26. Appropriate technology.
28. Task unit.
29. National Center for Public Policy Research.
32. Money can come to you each month directly from your donors' bank accounts, using this method.
35. Be sure everyone on your board has one at every board meeting.
37. Research Bulletin.
38. You should have all new content for your mailings approved by the _____ and Classification Service Center.
39. This is the most important thing you can give your paid and volunteer staff to assure they will do a good job for you.

DOWN

1. Passed in 1997, the _____ Protection Act guards against the rise in litigation against nonprofits.
2. Editorial pro-

- jects in education.
3. This is the best place to start looking for major donors and in-kind contributors.
4. Trainer.
5. Real estate investment.
6. Your fundraising mailing will be more effective if you use a different-colored ink for the _____.
7. The first step in a strategic plan is to revisit and update your organization's _____.
8. Association of Computer Users.
9. Office of Program and Technical Services.
10. The Nonprofit _____ Management Center cautions nonprofit organizations about the need for liability insurance.

15. Northbound.
17. Interagency Noise Abatement Program.
19. Information technology.
22. Overhead.
23. Organization that decides if a nonprofit organization can have and keep tax-exempt status.
24. Latin American Trade Union Federation.
27. Brenton Banks, Inc.
30. Board members may be reimbursed for this when attending board meetings.
31. Commission responsible for many of the increases in nonprofit postal rates.
33. Financial advisor.
34. Teacher training.
36. Nonessential.

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❑ *Too Late to Cure the Year 2000 Bug?*

If you're thinking that the so-called Year 2000, or Y2K, bug won't affect you, get ready for a shock. Experts say it may already be too late for organizations—even small ones—to fix their computers and software in time to avert a crisis.

Over 350,000
computer
jobs are
going unfilled.

Unless corrected, any program with a date—billing, payroll, bank accounts—will interpret the year 2000 as 1900, since the last two digits are the same. Thus, they could crash or give

misleading information on January 1, 2000—or before, since programs that do scheduling often use dates a year or more in the future.

You may actually be one of the luckier ones if your equipment shuts down. Otherwise, you may receive and pass on bad information—sending out inaccurate invoices or adding up budgets and bank balances incorrectly—that may take months to untangle.

One of the biggest problems is testing Y2K fixes once they're made. Such testing is time-consuming yet crucial. If you haven't already begun such testing, you'll have trouble meeting the deadline, experts say.

Another challenge is finding someone to help you. An Information Technology Association of America study shows that over 350,000 computer jobs are going unfilled. Those skilled in Y2K problems are even harder to find.

For more information, contact *BusinessWeek*, P.O. Box 506, Hightstown, New Jersey 08520-9470, 800-635-1200, www.businessweek.com. ❑

❑ *More Nonprofits Are Using Innovative Compensation Plans*

What types of innovative compensation plans are nonprofits implementing? A recent survey discovered 28 types of innovative compensation and recognition plans used by nonprofits. The most common, in decreasing order of prevalence are:

1. Bonuses: Awards paid at management's discretion to acknowledge outstanding job performance.

2. Incentives: Cash awards to recognize achievement of predetermined performance objectives, usually calculated as a percentage of salary and paid annually.

3. Special Noncash Recognition Programs: Awards in the form of merchandise or gift certificates, given to recognize contributions of staff below a certain managerial level.

4. Team Incentives: Awards based on achievement of a team's predetermined performance objectives.

5. Spot Awards: Cash payments to provide immediate recognition of accomplishments by staff below the managerial level. They are intended to reward risk-taking, creativity, and

productivity. Awards are smaller than bonuses and typically range from \$250 to \$500.

6. Special Cash Recognition Programs: Similar to spot awards, these are cash awards granted on a discretionary basis to employees who demonstrate exceptional performance. Awards typically range from \$500 to \$1,000 and are paid quarterly.

7. Lump-Sum Merit Increases: Cash payments made in a single sum for performance effectiveness. Unlike traditional merit increases, they don't roll into base salary.

The survey was performed by the Applied Research and Development Institute (ARDI), and the results are published in the groundbreaking *Nonprofit Compensation and Benefits Practices* by Carol Barbeito and Jack Bowman. For ordering information, see page 29 of this issue. ❑

❑ *Is the Internet Overrated, and What Can You Do About It?*

The Internet is both overrated and underused by nonprofits, according to Marilyn Gross of Educational Funding Strategies.

It's overrated because:

- It's still too passive a medium to attract volunteers, clients, and large donors to specific charities' Websites—*unless they know the Websites are there.*
- Funder information is often spotty and unrepresentative. (For example, less than 250 of the over 40,000 foundations in the U.S. have Websites.)

It's underused because:

- Many nonprofits feel intimidated by their lack of experience with the Internet.
- Many nonprofits can't afford the fast modems or staff training needed to use the Internet.

If you've been turned off by the Internet's shortcomings or by your lack of access or experience, take heart—you're not alone. There are many ways you can benefit from the 'Net *right now*—quickly, cheaply, and (almost) fearlessly!

If you don't have Internet access, ask a friend, colleague, librarian, or student who's online to access sites and print out pages for you. Each of the following tips will point you to good Websites and help you learn more *before* you expend a great deal of time or money:

1. Use the Internet to learn to use the Internet. Many online courses are available to help you understand the World Wide Web. See, for example, LearnTheNet (<http://www.learnthenet.com/english/index.html>).

2. Find a mentor. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), newsgroups, and chat groups on nonprofit subjects abound. The Foundation Center's Electronic Librarian (<http://fdncenter.org/onlib>) accepts questions and e-mails responses. Charity Village's Online Discussion Page (<http://www.charityvillage.com/charityvillage/stand.html>) lists discussion groups.

3. Take a home reading course—for free! Many print-based publications have free online versions and let you access back issues. *Nonprofit World* (<http://danenet.wicip.org/snpo>) has an online index of all past articles which you can *search* by specific subject or author.

4. Locate other nonprofits. Many services let you reach other U.S. or foreign nonprofits. See Internet Non-Profit Center Non-Profit Locator (http://www.nonprofits.org/library/gov/irs/search_irs.shtml) and Action without Borders (<http://www.idealists.org/>).

5. Promote your organization. A number of projects will help you create your own Website, which you can use to provide up-to-date news about your organization. See the Earth Pledge Foundation (<http://www.earthpledge.org>).

6. Attract volunteers. Countless services exist online to help nonprofits and volunteers come together for mutual help. See, for example, Impact Online (<http://www.impactonline.org/>).

7. Share training with board and staff. Many training devices are scattered throughout the Internet. Use them to learn about management and leadership issues. Then share this information with your board and staff. See, for example, the National Center for Non-Profit Boards (<http://www.ncnb.org/home.html>) and the Learning Institute for Nonprofit Organizations (<http://www.uxex.edu/li>).

8. Keep up with trends. Access the latest nonprofit research, and sign up for "alerts" delivered right to your e-mail-box. Philanthropy News Digest (<http://fdncenter.org/phil/philmain.html>) issues e-mail alerts on important happenings in the field of philanthropy. Also see HandsNet Action Alerts (<http://www.igc.apc.org/handsnet/hn.action.alerts/>).

For more information, contact *Non-Profit Nuts & Bolts*, 4623 Tiffany Woods Circle, Oviedo, Florida 32765 (<http://www.nutsbolts.com>) or Marilyn Gross at Educational Funding Strategies (<http://www.icu.com/efs/home.htm>) at mlgross@aol.com. ❑

❑ *Over Half of Americans Volunteer*

In a recent survey, 1,000 randomly selected Americans provided some interesting information and attitudes about volunteering:

- In the past 12 months, have you volunteered with a non-profit organization, church, or school?
 - * 52% have.
 - * 48% haven't.
- If you have volunteered in the past 12 months, did you do so with your spouse, children, or a friend?
 - * 34% volunteered with a spouse.
 - * 30% volunteered with a friend.
 - * 24% volunteered with their children.
 - * 29% volunteered alone.
- In general, why do you volunteer?
 - * 71% say they volunteer because they enjoy it.
 - * 7% say they feel obligated.
 - * 22% say because of both.
- Is it more important to volunteer time or to give money to a charity?
 - * 53% say time is more important.
 - * 23% say money is more important.
- Do you think community service or volunteerism should be a requirement for high school graduation?
 - * 49% say yes.
 - * 46% say no.
 - * 5% are unsure.

The survey was conducted by Yankelovich Partners for Lutheran Brotherhood, based in Minneapolis. For more information, contact Lutheran Brotherhood at 612-340-7037, <http://www.luthbro.com>. ❑