



Development—It's More than Fundraising

Here are the steps you need to go beyond fundraising.

BY TERRENCE FERNSLER

Beyond Fund Raising: New Strategies for Nonprofit Innovation and Investment

By Kay Sprinkel Grace. 288 pages. Hardcover. Published by John Wiley & Sons, New York. Available through the Society for Nonprofit Organizations' Resource Center (see the Resource Center Catalog, included in this issue, or call 800-424-7367).

Books needn't be voluminous to be good, as this crisply written, useful book affirms. Its foundation is that successful organizations operate at three levels: philosophical, strategic, and tactical. Grace demonstrates how these levels work together to drive an organization. She moves from the broader scope—philosophical—to the specific—tactical—but, as the title indicates, focuses on the strategic. An organization's philosophy is reflected in its strategies and tactics, she points out. Without a philosophy, an organization founders, or, at best, jumps from project to project.

To Grace, "beyond fundraising" means development (building a constituency of support) and stewardship. She shows how to establish a stewardship plan, create a mission statement, and use both to pinpoint your organization's values and guide your work.

Insightful as her message is, she could have strengthened it by choosing her terminology more carefully and clarifying her points more fully. For example, she overlooks an important distinction between values identification for donors and for the organization. She states that values identification comes

port the organization. Values identification for the *organization* comes after the first gift. When contributors make their first gift, it means they already agree with the organization's values and want to learn more. It's up to the organization to follow up and discover the depth of the shared values.

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after the first gift and inspires future gifts. What she doesn't make clear is that, while this is true for the *organization*, it's not true for the donor. In truth, values identification for donors comes *before* the first gift; that's why they sup-

port the organization. By not exploring this distinction, Grace misses a key point, because if the organization fails to follow through, it may lose potential support. Moreover—and perhaps even more regrettable—it may deprive contributors of the most



Development helps people act on their values but only if nonprofits take an active role.

valuable thing it has to offer them—the opportunity to live their values.

Also troubling is Grace's use of the term "donor-investor" throughout the book. While this moniker has the advantage of stressing the dynamic relationship between giver and nonprofit, it has unfortunate implications. The word "investor" has strong financial connotations and suggests an expected return to the investor. Donors sometimes receive a tangible return but not always, and they certainly shouldn't expect financial dividends. A better word is "contributor," which indicates participation in an organization without the expectation of monetary payback.

Despite these problems, the book delivers a powerful message to fundraisers, making clear the need to build relationships with contributors. Grace is cogent in describing how developing relationships intensifies connection and concern. The share of wealth contributors will give increases as their connection to the organization grows, she explains. The return they seek is the knowledge that the nonprofit will act upon their values. This premise has the potential to shatter the myths that keep nonprofits in a supplicant posture. Knowing what motivates donors goes a long way toward feeling comfortable about raising funds.

Grace outlines a 10-step process for donor development which includes creating plans, soliciting, follow-through,

stewardship, and renewal. She emphasizes informing all employees, including volunteers, what development is, why it is beneficial to the organization, and how they can help.

To keep themselves on course while gathering support, organizations need pragmatism and passion. Leadership should reflect both. Inspiring and filled with helpful guidelines, this book provides the tools to do so. ■

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