Fundraising for a Meal Packaging Event

Thank you for your interest in hosting a meal packaging event and your dedication to fundraising for the meals you will package. We could not distribute the meals and aid that we do without volunteers, and on behalf of the hungry everywhere, thank you.

For many the hesitation with fundraising comes from really not wanting to hear “no.” We get that, but usually it’s not personal. People have a variety of reasons they may be unwilling or unable to give. Hearing “no” is OK, and it could mean anything, but it’s important that you ask. “No’s” are inevitable, but so are plenty of “yes.”

As you work through this guide, we encourage you to think about what you are asking. You will be packaging meals for the millions who are undernourished globally, and are looking for donations to cover the event. Asking for donations is really asking for someone to join you in ending world hunger. The money is the means by which someone will do so, but it is secondary to the goal of providing food to the world’s most hungry. When you think like this, you are really looking for partners in the fight against hunger--not just money for money's sake. Be clear about your intention and hope.

We believe in you. We think you’re great. We are excited about ending hunger together. Please don’t hesitate to ask if you have any questions. Remember: Every $0.29 is another meal for someone else who is suffering from hunger - it counts, it makes a difference.
Fundraising: Where to start?

Set your goal
Setting goals is a benchmark for knowing when you are successful. Event fundraising is really no different. You can think about this a couple different ways -- for example, maybe you want to package 25,000 meals and know that will cost $7,250, or you want to raise $10,000 to help end world hunger and package 34,482 meals. You should start with a goal in mind. Be ambitious but realistic. If this is your first time trying to raise a large sum, you may want to take that into account.

Break it down
Big goals require small steps. Whether you are raising a small or large sum of money, a gift chart can help break down your fundraising goal into manageable chunks. This can help you focus your time and choose where you will spend it. For example, if you have raised all the gifts in one row of the chart, you may move on to another.

Below is an example of a $3,000 gift chart with the goal broken down into a few prospects and higher gifts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of total needed</th>
<th>Gift Amount</th>
<th>Number of prospects</th>
<th>Number of gifts needed</th>
<th>Total gifts</th>
<th>Cumulative total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>$600</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$600</td>
<td>$600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>$300</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$600</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>$225</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>$675</td>
<td>$1,875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>$150</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>$600</td>
<td>$2,475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>$75</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>$600</td>
<td>$3,075</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following is $3,000 with lower gifts and more prospects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of total needed</th>
<th>Gift Amount</th>
<th>Number of prospects</th>
<th>Number of gifts needed</th>
<th>Total gifts</th>
<th>Cumulative total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>$150</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2%</td>
<td>$60</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>$960</td>
<td>$2,160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1%</td>
<td>$30</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>$960</td>
<td>$3,120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
$3,000 is a lot of money, but it’s also 30 people donating $100. To break it down further, if every volunteer for your event asked 5 friends for $20/person would you have enough to package? Manageable amounts are good amounts, and it’s important to remember that any amount is helpful. That $20 donation is 68 meals or enough food for one person for 22 days. That is a big impact!

Create a message
When you package meals with us it’s not just about you and the volunteers that will package with you, though that’s important to emphasize. It’s also about the lives that you will change through the experience. Tailor that impact story to your audience.

- Imagine a 10-year old deciding between going to work or going to school, and the deciding factor is the cost of one meal--$.29.
- Some of this food is given to hospital and medical clinics where there would otherwise not be enough food. Can you imagine being sick and not having enough to eat?
- Disasters strike food sources, often wiping out crops. These meals could be on their way to support someone in a time of great need.

We can point you to stories of how lives have changed with just a few meals so you can craft some ways of thinking about what you really are raising money for; it is important for people to understand that the meals you package are directly affecting the lives of the world’s poorest families today. See our current hunger facts and messages at http://www.stophungernow.org/learn/

Finding Donors
When you think of fundraising, do you think of events? Event-based fundraising can be successful, and we will offer some of the best ideas we have seen. Often, the most gifts come from individuals asking other individuals, because people give to people. The way you ask should be about the people who will be affected, and how your event is really giving a meal to someone in need. Furthermore, people give when they are asked by people. A personal relationship is key to that and events don’t really have a personal relationship component. If your friend asks for money to go change the world, what would you say?

For this reason we advise you to go ask the people you know for help raising money for your event. Friends and family are easy places to start. You can also ask your favorite businesses, like the neighborhood restaurant or pizza shop. Are you associated with a sports team? Go to a dentist, doctor, lawyer? Is there a Rotary, Lions, or Kiwanis club in town? Write all of them down-- anyone you know or any group you know.
**Make it personal**

You have all your names listed out. Now we have to contact them. Make it as personal as possible. Before you start asking, write next to each name on your list how you will contact each person and keep track of what days you do it.

1. **Can you meet them in person?** You will see some of your contacts no matter what—neighbors, people at the gym, co-workers, fellow students, etc. Ask them in person with a letter and give them a way to donate. This emphasizes that person-to-person connection.

You will want to meet some people in person because of the meaningfulness of their gift. These may be family members or people who can give large gifts. If you can meet someone in person, do it!

2. **Should I call them?** Here, too, there are some people you should call before or after you send their letter/e-mail. Maybe it’s to follow up and see if they have any questions, or if you can provide more details. Maybe you want to give a family member a head’s up that they will get a letter from you asking for support; this way you can talk to them on the phone about how meaningful their gift would be to you. Whatever the case, if you think you should call someone, then definitely do it.

3. **What’s this letter?** A letter and/or e-mail is one of the most important components of individual fundraising. This is where you will be sharing the why and how of your effort. This is the physical and tangible connection between you, the donor, and the lives impacted. It’s personal and effective, because a letter from a friend or known person has a large impact. It says you are taking the time to think about that individual and their potential contribution to your effort.
Sample email/letter to solicit funds for meal packaging event*

Dear XX (It’s important to use people’s names, if you have them, because personalized messages always raise more money. If you do not have names, use “Dear Friend”),

For Samarah Joacchim, a 7th-grader in Haiti, school means life and hope for a future. But not just because of the education she will get there. For Samarah and millions of children around the world, attending school also means she will eat that day.

“Without food I would be starving and my grades would be lower. Most of us rely on the food served at school to survive; this is the only meal we get for the day. I hope the feeding program will continue.”

More than 40 percent of Stop Hunger Now’s meals are distributed to school feeding programs around the world. Those meals encourage school attendance and help put these children and their families on a path out of poverty.

On DATE, GROUP NAME will package XX meals with Stop Hunger Now, but we need your help. Please consider contributing to our event. You can help make sure children get the nutritious meals they need to grow and succeed.

Please visit URL to contribute to our meal packaging event. No gift is too small--every $0.29 makes a difference in the lives of children and families around the world.

Thank you,

YOUR NAME

*It also helps if you tell the story of why you have decided to participate in a meal packaging event with Stop Hunger Now. It is important that you make your message to donors as personal as possible, while making sure you let them know that any size donation helps, whether $5 or $500.
Fundraising webpages
We will set-up a fundraising and registration page for your event that you can use. This is a helpful resource because you can share this webpage through social media or e-mail and contacts can donate using a credit card while also learning more about the organization. Note that there is no fee for this service while sites like gofundme.com do charge fees for the service.

Consider social media pleas such as,
“I need your help to provide XXX meals to people around the world who suffer from hunger. Will you help me do this with a donation?”
“Could you eat lunch today for $.29? Donate here and change lives one meal at a time!”
Event-Based

True event-based fundraising has the benefit of raising awareness for the meal packaging event and both organizations. The real trick with event fundraisers is to make sure that the amount and time spent is not more than will be raised.

Here are some of the ideas we have seen:

- **Dinner Party.** Host a dinner for hunger, possibly serving the meals you will package as a component. This can be done in small groups or as a large banquet like a spaghetti dinner or pancake breakfast. Large events typically charge $10/person, while small dinner parties will ask participants to think about contributing and having a card to take away with donation instructions.

- **Talent show/Concert.** One school had a faculty talent show selling tickets to see teachers do improv skits, lip syncs, and perform their own art. Another group holds an annual concert, and in both cases the admission tickets help fund their meal packaging. Typical ticket costs are around $10.

- **Golf tournament.** Golf tournaments can take some work and an agreement from the course, but essentially teams are charged a fee and the competition is managed by the organization. An example can be seen [here](#).

- **5k run.** Organizing a run on your campus site or in the area with registration fees funding your event can be a great way to help fund an event. Your organization will need to figure out the logistics like time keeping, bibs, the course, etc., but the competitive component can attract people to the organization.
**Donation for Service**

The fundraisers that fit into this model take the approach that something you would pay someone else to do is done by volunteers in exchange for a donation. In this way it is simultaneously a fundraiser and a volunteer event.

Many groups fundraising this way find that they are more successful if they offer the service for free but ask for donations of any amount. This allows donor to give what they feel comfortable with, joining you in support of your cause, and, in some cases, it could be more than what the group would have “charged.”

Ideas:

- **Dog or car wash.** The car wash idea is popular, but the dog wash was inventive. To do this event successfully, you need marketing and a public space to host the washing. This may be on your organization’s property or a local institution that has agreed to host.
- **Yard work.** Raking leaves, mowing lawns, putting down mulch, shoveling snow, etc., is all work that could be expensive and time consuming. Many people will be glad to have the help for less expense.

**Challenges**

Challenge fundraising works best when you have a set volunteer group for the event and you want to encourage them to raise money for the event. For example, if you have 55 volunteers, and you know they could packaged 15,000 meals in two hours, you need to raise $4,250 or $77/person. When you start to break it down there are simple ways to raise these funds.

- Use the slogan, “Eat one, give one” and ask volunteers to put $1.74 aside for every meal they eat--this is 6 meals in one of our bags. Doing that for 14 days is $73.08.
- Skip a meal/coffee. Skipping a coffee or a lunch out in favor of packing a lunch can save around $3/day. Over the course of 30 days, volunteers can save and donate $90/person.
- Many of the hungriest in the world today live on less than $1/day. Sixty days before the event, set out a jar and add $1/day. This will almost raise the total and raise awareness.
- Instead of gifts, ask for donations toward an event. We have volunteers that do events for their birthdays, and even a couple that asked for their wedding gifts to be donations toward an event.
Sponsorships

There are two types of this kind of funding. The first is based on the premise that someone will give to the event based on an activity you will do. Essentially it boils down to, “For every $XX, I will do [activity] and that will help to send XXX meals to the undernourished in the world today.” This can work for the event itself, “I will be packaging (activity) 300 meals for the hungriest in the world for two hours on Saturday the 15th. A sponsorship of $87 covers the entire event as each meal is only $.29. Would you consider sponsoring me for this event?

Examples of other sponsorship ideas are as follows:

- **Fun Run.** Volunteers have sponsorships to do some style of run with a purpose. Maybe it is up the highest hill in town, or from one notable place in town to another.
- **Pie in the face.** Designate a jar for each contestant and have volunteers vote for their choice by making a placing a donation in their jar. The “winner” receives a Cool Whip pie.
- **Waxing.** One volunteer took donations for each peel of wax on her husband’s back and did it publicly.

The second type of sponsorship fundraising is for the whole event. This is typically done with businesses in exchange for name recognition and thanks. They may want to put their logo on a banner of yours or something to that effect, or they may sponsor you with a gift-in-kind. For example, a pizza shop may offer to give you pizzas for the event. Some restaurants may be willing to donate the proceeds from one night if you help them attract customers for that night. This can be a very successful way to fund your event, thinking about all the local businesses you use--car dealerships, mechanics, bank, grocery stores, etc.
**Silent Auctions and Raffles**

These fundraisers are popular in larger institutions and with a high level of exposure. A caveat is to check with your state about any rules or regulations for these types of fundraisers, particularly if you are a nonprofit organization\(^1\).

Some things which are raffled or auctioned:
- Gift cards, products, or services donated by local businesses.
- Concert or sporting event tickets.
- Experiences. For instance maybe a chance to fly in a hot air balloon is the prize.

Make sure that if you are going to spend money for the prize that you will raise money through the raffle or auction. There is a risk with doing this! For example, if you spend $100 for two concert tickets and only sell 20 tickets, you broke even without even considering the amount of time.

**Employee-matched giving and Grants**

There are many employers that will match employee giving to a 501c3 nonprofit. Those employees can donate to us, and we verify that donation with the corporation who then matches that gift. This is a very simple process, and groups should be encouraged to check with employers about matched giving.

Some corporations also have grants for these types of events, and may look to employees to identify the opportunity and share it. If you do come across a grant opportunity, contact the Program Manager for the event and they can assist you in applying for the grant through their foundation relations.

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