FIRESIDE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Fireside development strategy gives board members and other key volunteers a way to educate multiple people about an agency in a social setting. The strategy includes an “ask” which can be facilitated by the host at his or her comfort level. The steps to a Fireside are as follows:

1. Volunteer designs and hosts a social event that fits his or her personality and the individuals being invited. Events can be co-hosted. Think about:
    - What would motivate guests to attend beyond learning about the program? Networking opportunity? Seeing family? Fabulous goodies? A house everyone wants to see?
    - Examples could include:
        - Appetizer or wine party at home, work place, or public venue
        - BBQ in the park
        - Desserts at one of the program locations
        - Church or community center

2. Volunteer creates invites and tracks attendance.
    - Think of how many people you want to attend. Invite twice as many assuming half will not attend – even if they RSVP.
    - Do not hide the purpose of your get together. Look at using verbiage such as “I would like to tell you more about an organization I believe in.” “I want to invite you to be a part of something important to me.”
    - Consider inviting neighbors, friends from church, co-workers, family, close friends or social circles. Where are groups of people who already come together? Do you want to have couples and/or individuals? Certain demographics?

3. Coordinate details with the organization’s staff.
    - Ensure the needed staff can attend.
    - Do you want a client testimonial?
    - Do you want to show the program video?
    - Do you want folders? Envelopes w/cards? Nametags?
    - Set up assistance.
    - Agenda. Length and start time of program. Who is saying what?
    - Do you need a microphone, computer, projector?

4. Host event.
    - Know what time you want to start the formal part of the meeting.
    - Have a fun way to get everyone’s attention.
    - Be prepared to share how and why you are involved with the organization.
    - Introduce staff.
    - Make the ask. Be specific. What is the goal? What do you expect of them?
    - Hand out Pledge or Giving Form. What do you want them to do with it?
    - Follow –up with both individuals attending and those who could not attend.

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BUDDY SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Buddy System development strategy targets asks to businesses versus individuals. Two individuals partner on all aspects of strategizing and soliciting prospective businesses.

1. Identify your "Buddy!"
   - Choose someone you know.
   - Think of someone you have worked with in other capacities. This person might be a board member, a current donor, a colleague you have worked with on another community project.
   - Prioritize traits that compliment your strengths and comfort level.

2. Brainstorm list of 3-5 businesses.
   - Think of businesses in which one or both of you personally know the CEO or decision maker. Can be personal or professional relationships.
   - Consider businesses that might have a connection or a past relationship with the organization.
   - Review businesses that have staff currently volunteering for the organization.
   - Look for businesses that have a philanthropic mission but are not over- committed to other organizations.
   - Identify financial institutions that need to fulfill CRA requirements.

3. Check with program staff to avoid duplication. Contact program staff to determine if one of their staff will accompany you to the meeting. Discuss any specific strategies. Determine specific ask amount.

4. Review provided materials. Typically each call will have a personalized folder of information. The folder may contain statistics, outcomes, and other motivating factors. Each caller may also receive auxiliary materials to assist with questions. *Staff may facilitate a training that provides program education, reviews materials, highlights timelines and expectations, and allows for additional planning.*

5. Determine which Buddy contacts the appropriate business staff to set up meetings.
   - Be honest about intent.
   - You may also choose to send an introduction letter prior to calling.

6. Attend meeting and be prepared to share how and why you are involved with the program. Introduce program staff. Determine in advance who will talk about which points.

7. Make the ask. Be specific. Determine the next steps and follow up with the business as appropriate.

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