

Volunteers in Service (VIS) may have been in existence for twenty years, but before fundraising, they need to ensure they have clearly defined goals and evidence-based strategies. This is integral for developing a case for support. The case starts with the cause, differentiates the organization, describes program goals, justifies financial need, and appeals to emotion (Worth, 2016). Samantha should work with the board to set particular fundraising objectives and a timeline. The ability to track and communicate progress will be essential to ensuring that they meet their fundraising goals, and can be communicated online through their website and social media. Because VIS is just beginning to organize fundraising efforts, it is crucial that they be selective, identifying only those fundraising programs and constituencies most appropriate to meeting their most critical needs. Samantha should recruit the help of the board throughout this process, as well as any other volunteers who have a good understanding of the cause.

To meet its initial fundraising goal, VIS should focus on soliciting individual donors for annual and program support gifts, targeting entry-level donors or those that may have given in the past, with ideal gifts being Leadership annual gifts of \$1,000 or more. Using sequential fundraising, they will start looking for prospects from the top-down and inside-out, starting with those most closely connected to the organization and its cause. The board is a good place to start, establishing a base for others to follow. An organized campaign would be ideal but limited time and staff capacity may not be able to provide the necessary structure. The first step will be to identify a target audience. In this case, that would likely be an older audience who is not yet retired but can more easily identify with the cause. Fortunately, VIS has likely already developed a constituency and modest support base from which it can draw. Samantha might also consider corporate support as well, being mindful that their interests must align. She must then qualify and research prospects, ensuring that these individuals meet the three qualifications of linkage, ability and interest. This begins with screening using available resources, then prospect research to clarify capacity for giving, and culminates with a discovery call or visit to determine interest and inclination (Worth, 2016). Samantha and the board must work to establish relationships with prospects, and only after developing a positive relationship, move to solicitation, which will likely entail more traditional direct mail methods and personal contact. The final step is donor acknowledgement and recognition. Samantha should also seek foundation and grant support.

Once VIS has reached its goal, Samantha and the board need to develop a fundraising plan for long-term stability. This plan should be devised of continuous programs including the annual fund, corporate and foundation support, and major gifts program, but should also utilize targeted campaigns for specific programs and organizational objectives. They should eventually hire dedicated development staff committed to the sustained growth of the organization, and conduct research and training in development for the staff and board. Moving from short-term fundraising goals to philanthropic investment, VIS should work to diversify its funding avenues, looking not only at individual gifts and corporate and foundation support, but also to other grants, gifts-in-kind, major gifts, including capital gifts, and even establishing an planned giving program. This development should happen sequentially, with increased efforts in individual giving happening first, then nurturing donors to move them up the ladder towards larger, more regular gifts. VIS must work to establish a culture of philanthropy within and outside the organization by producing short term successes, expanding development throughout the organization, building a fundraising team, involving the board and establishing specific policies (Worth, 2016).