

Building Relationships that lead to On-Going Sponsorships

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1. How do you begin a relationship with a sponsor?

- Networking events
- Facebook/LinkedIn
- Ask a friend/associate who works at a corporation to introduce you
- Talk to everyone you know about what you do and the people you serve.
- Have a passion for your agency.

2. What steps can you take to build on that beginning?

- Plan time in your day to call or talk to your contacts. An email can work, but it isn't a substitute for a phone call when it comes to building relationships.
- Don't rush out of events or meetings, talk to people but more importantly, LISTEN!
- Be in the moment, really listen to what people are saying, don't rehearse your response in your head.
- Know your agency's story, mission and its needs.
- Know your information so well that you can customize it to the person with whom you are conversing.
- Take your time to respond with correct information, don't rush an answer and then find out you have given false information. It is better to say that you will find out and get back to them. This also gives the opportunity for an additional conversation.
- Invite company contacts to your programs, allow them to see the difference their sponsorship dollars make to the agency.
- Ask if their company is looking for volunteer opportunities or if the company has a volunteering mandate that aligns with their sponsorship.
 - What type of volunteering? Hands on with participants, assisting with fundraising events, doing supplemental duties at events where participants are in attendance, etc.
 - What time of day are they available? Work-days, evenings, weekends
 - What season of year are they available?
 - How many do they anticipate volunteering at one time: groups or individuals?
 - What population are they interested in serving?
 - Create a profile for the company that includes the answers to the above questions.
 - Match the company's mission statement to yours-show how they align.

3. Moving to the sponsor stage

- Continue to call, email or send notes to contacts on a regular basis.
- When/if you see an article about the company or your contact in the paper, online, etc. send a note or call, include the article in the note if possible.
- Invite your contact and guest(s) to all of your agency's events.
- Inquire if the company has marketing dollars to use as a sponsorship for events of the type your agency provides.
- Schedule a meeting with your contact and the appropriate person to discuss sponsorship/marketing dollars.
 - Bring agency materials that discuss Mission, Vision and goals.
 - Bring information to support your agency's financial needs.

- Have a story to share that portrays the importance of your agency's services.
- **Bring sponsorship information.**

4. The company decides to sponsor

- Be certain a contract is signed so both parties are clear on expectations. (see handout)
- Work with fellow staff members to make certain your agency complies with all expectations.
- As soon as the sponsored event is over, set a meeting to evaluate their company's assessment of the relationship.
- Plan for the next year's sponsorship if appropriate.

5. On-going relationship

- Once you have received volunteers and/or sponsorship from a company, don't forget them. Continue to do all the calling, emailing, etc. that you did in the "wooing" stage.
- Ask if they know if any other companies with whom they work that are looking for a similar relationship and then start the process with them.

DO NOT FORGET YOUR FRIENDS-CONTINUE THE RELATIONSHIP!