IDENTIFYING CONNECTIONS TO CORPORATE FUNDERS*

DESCRIPTION

The purpose of research is to get to know current donors better, to discover likely donors, and to rule out those unlikely to support your cause.

Use this activity to research potential corporate funders for your nonprofit.

ACTIVITY: Identify board connections to new corporate funders through LinkedIn

Part 1. The more active your board and staff are on LinkedIn, the more useful this will be.

A. Get the list of your fellow board members.

B. Invite them to LinkedIn, explaining that this will help your nonprofit identify connections to current and prospective donors.

C. Get the list of your nonprofit's senior staff and invite them as well.

Part 2. Wait a few weeks to allow folks to accept your invitations.

A. Select two to three companies you'd like to approach for your nonprofit.

B. Go to each company's LinkedIn profile. It should tell you "## of this company's employees are on LinkedIn; you are connected to ## employees."

C. Those you're connected to: You might know the friends/colleagues who work for these companies, but you may have connections that will surprise you. For example, your fellow Little League parent may be head of corporate giving for their employer.

D. Let's say you don't have any first-degree connections. Click on the list of all the company's employees and look for second-degree connections. Second degree means you know someone who knows someone at that company, someone who could introduce you.

Part 3. Bring your list of connections to your next board or development committee meeting and ask your peers to do the same. At least one of you will likely have a connection to the funders you want to approach. If none of you has a first-degree connection, you may wish to look at some of the second-degree connections. For example, your board chair's partner (first-degree) may be able to make an introduction to the CFO at the company you seek to reach.

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* From _Nonprofit Hero, Five Easy Steps to Successful Board Fundraising ©_
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