

8 Fundraising

Higher education currently needs money. Its economics are perhaps no better today than when described in Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* ([1776] 1993) as, in fact, higher education has always needed money. Across the world, costs in higher education continue to increase due to infrastructural costs, academic support, competitive pressure and, of course, the costs of academics. Technological costs for cutting-edge research continue to rise and student demands for prestigious environments and celebrity lecturers mean that, for most colleges, fee income is just not enough to build laboratories and concert halls, furnish libraries with computers, expensive databases and books. The responsibility for raising this money falls upon the vice-chancellors. They are the leaders of the universities and the onus is on them to oversee plans for funding development, articulate their case to the board of governors and then engage fully with the process. They are the leaders in building the reputation of their university in the sense of selling for mutual gain. Their leadership adds legitimacy and creditability to the campaign; it demonstrates passion and inspires other to perform; it sets the tone and creates the spirit of the campaign.

The tradition of philanthropic giving in higher education is well established in the USA and is now growing in the UK. Most universities in the USA and now some in the UK too have development offices dedicated to raising donations and grants from private and public sources. Plans are drawn up of need from departments and approaches to donors are devised. Appeals to alumni are constructed and an integrated marketing approach is created, usually around the selling skills of the vice-chancellor, president or other 'appealing' personality.

The 2004 Report of the Voluntary Giving Task Force suggested that in the UK there is a real opportunity to increase income to universities through charitable giving. Such fundraising is a legitimate activity and the report claims there is evidence that the UK population may donate to universities in the same way as in the USA. Of course, the scale is very different. According to the Sutton Trust (2006), giving has recently grown in the UK, underpinned by increased investment in university development activities. The results of

these efforts are becoming apparent, with UK universities estimating that they raised £450 million in philanthropic funds in 2004–05. While progress in the UK is being made, significant fundraising activity remains the preserve of the academic 'philanthropic elite'; 13 UK universities raised more than £5 million in 2004–05. Only Oxford and Cambridge compare with American universities, raising £185 million in 2004–05, holding endowments totalling £6 billion and achieving alumni giving rates of 10 per cent. The remaining UK higher education institutions have a combined endowment of £1.9 billion, and on average raised £1.6 million each and have annual giving rates from alumni of approximately 1 per cent.

The UK Government's £7.5m scheme of matched funding, intended to build development capacity within the sector, has helped, but may be considered too limited to have a significant impact and hardly bears comparison with the USA. Compared with charitable contributions to colleges and universities there in 2006, the UK attempts are paltry. In the USA, donations grew by 9.4 per cent in 2006, reaching \$28 billion, according to the annual survey results from the Council for Aid to Education (CAE). The increase was fuelled by contributions from alumni and other individuals. Support from foundations, corporations, and other organizations increased also, but that increase was smaller. Stanford University raised more money from private donors than any other university and together with Harvard raised over \$500 million (Stanford University, \$911.16 million, and Harvard University, \$594.94 million).

Just over half of the \$28 billion raised in 2006 came directly from individuals. Alumni giving – the traditional base of higher education giving – grew by an impressive 18.3 per cent in 2006, while individuals other than alumni increased their giving by 14 per cent. Historically, alumni and foundations contribute the largest portions of charitable support of higher education institutions. Following this pattern, alumni giving represented 30 per cent and foundation support represented 25.4 per cent of the dollars contributed in 2006. Foundation giving increased by 1.4 per cent, after increasing 12.9 per cent in 2005. It is worth noting the effect that one single grant for \$296 million had on the foundation giving total in 2005. However, even if the value of that grant were removed from the 2005 foundation estimate, the 2006 increase would still have been an impressive 5.9 per cent. Also, the report found, 29.9 per cent of foundation giving is from family foundations, emphasizing the fact that individuals, whether contributing directly or through a foundation, are the backbone of voluntary support of higher education. Corporate giving represents a smaller share of giving to higher education institutions – 16.4 per cent in 2006, an increase of 4.5 per cent on 2005.

In the recent Council for Advancement in Education report – *2004–05 Survey of Gift Revenue and Costs* – the main conclusions are set out below:

- Larger universities – with correspondingly larger fundraising offices – raise greater amounts of money than other institutions.
- Fundraising at UK universities is cost effective. The average fundraising cost across all respondents is 28p in £1.

In the UK, the Ross Group's survey (2007) provides the first comparable figures from the UK sector on the percentage of former university students who donate to their university. It found that only nine universities reported giving rates of 3 per cent or more, and a sector average of 1 per cent. Oxford and Cambridge record giving rates of around 10 per cent. Importantly, very few UK universities ask their contactable alumni every year to make a donation. These figures contrast with much higher levels across the Atlantic. The giving rates for US state universities, for example, can be up to 30 per cent and are typically around 15 per cent, and most universities make a point of contacting their alumni annually. Meanwhile the Ivy League universities demonstrate levels of annual giving which place them among the most effective fundraising operations in the world. The latest statistics for Princeton reveal an alumni giving rate of 61 per cent, and Yale, Harvard and Stanford have recorded figures of 45, 44 and 39 per cent respectively. There is a cultural barrier to giving to higher education in the UK which is rooted in the notion of higher education as a merit right, not a privilege.

Unsurprisingly, the gap between endowment levels in the UK and the USA remains a gulf. As in 2002, the total value of the ten largest endowments held by American universities, at almost £54 billion, dwarfs that held by UK universities at just £6.9 billion. In fact, Harvard's endowment of £13.4 billion is £5.5 billion more than all the UK universities combined. Yale, Stanford, Texas and Princeton also have individual funds of over £5 billion – higher than any single UK university. Only two UK universities – Cambridge and Oxford – have endowments over £1 billion and would be placed seventh and eighth respectively in the US top ten.

How then can nations other than the USA lead such campaigns and how can they be conducted within the marketing and strategy model we have proposed? Is it, as the Voluntary Giving Task Force on developing increased funds suggests, merely because UK universities have not solicited donations with the professional and systematic manner habitual in the USA? We are not sure. Nor do we believe that high returns to investment in fundraising will be achieved equally by the whole higher education sector. However, UK government support in increasing matched funding of up to £200 million over three years, and its new scheme of providing an additional £7.5 million of matched funding, is certainly offering more than just rhetoric.

According to The Sutton Trust, an expanding cadre of development professionals across the sector is emerging, underpinned by the government's matched funding scheme, to develop capacity in this area. One concern

expressed by some of the leading fundraisers in the sector is that the rapid expansion of development offices has outstripped the supply of suitably qualified development professionals. It is currently an employees' market, with salaries rising significantly and universities having to recruit from the USA and Canada. In some universities this has had the unfortunate effect of fuelling further scepticism of the value of fundraising among academics – many of whom are paid much less than senior development professionals.

Another concern in this fledgling market is that very few senior university figures (such as vice-chancellors, chancellors and principals) have been given the clear fundraising remit that was one of the key recommendations of the Task Force's report. It would be a considerable boost to a university's fundraising efforts if, for instance, its chancellor was paid to undertake development activity for two or three days each week. Not only would such a move generate more revenue, it would also help to underline the key role of development work in delivering the university's overall academic priorities. There is a paucity of development professionals at the most senior levels. We could only identify two fundraising appointments at the pro-vice-chancellor level – at Oxford and Edinburgh Universities – in the sector. The current generation of vice-chancellors is generally well aware of fundraising opportunities, but more senior level appointments are needed to inculcate the cultural change needed at the very top level of university administration. Only then is it likely that fundraising will emerge as a centrally accepted activity in academic life in the UK.

In this chapter we will attempt an analysis of actions advocated by successful American fundraisers and then contextualize them in the marketing strategy and implementation model we have developed. We agree with the Task Force on the two key principles of voluntary giving. First, the role of voluntary giving should be to support the development of the university towards achieving excellence, not maintenance or core funding. It is not a substitute for other sources of higher education funding, particularly public funding. Second, universities have a responsibility to encourage commitment of stakeholders to their future success and to solicit donations from those that can afford it. Higher education universities invariably have a charitable role and should, in turn, take full advantage of this in asking for financial support.

To start with, universities need to develop a stance on receiving gifts, whether they are annual alumni gifts, endowments or capital gifts in forms such as cash, pledges, securities, property or gifts in kind. There is a wide range of guides and resources available, as one would expect, mainly from the USA. They cover such issues as campaign models, making a case for support, recruiting, educating, motivating and defining roles for volunteers, building an annual fund, cultivation and solicitation of major gifts, ap-

proaching corporate donors and concluding a campaign. A review of all these topics is beyond the scope of this chapter. What we can address are three specific aspects:

- choosing a campaign model and a case for support;
- donor motivation;
- realizing the gifts.

Gottfried and Johnson (2005) undertook an interesting study into the drivers of gifting and the relationship of gifts and solicitation. Past literature in the field of giving in higher education has found that donations depend on particular college characteristics such as total number of students, and therefore future graduates, as well as many others. Baade and Sundberg (1996), for instance, found that these factors include the income of students' parents, the effort that universities make to solicit donations and the quality of their league tables. In addition to university-specific characteristics, success in athletics has been shown to affect donations. Coughlin and Erikson (1985), in a cross-sectional study, reveal that attendance, post-season play and overall season winning percentage all have been shown to have a positive effect on donations to the schools' athletic programmes. The effects of athletic success on non-athletic university donations are less convincing; athletic success has no effect on non-alumni donations and a somewhat positive effect on alumni donations.

Leslie and Ramey (1988) demonstrate that US colleges' efforts in soliciting donations have been shown to have a 'reactive' effect, meaning that increased donation solicitation may actually lead to lower levels of donations, although this result was not statistically significant. In Gottfried and Johnson's own study, with regard to their control variables the variable endowment is statistically significant at the 1 per cent level. They claim that their result refutes Oster (2001), who found that endowment had a negative 'crowding out' effect. We suspect that her result was limited by the fact that the sample size was significantly smaller and that the time period did not include major macroeconomic events that the former does consider.

Second, enrolment confirms our initial hypothesis that an increase in student body will yield an increase in the total sum donated. Third, football is predominantly statistically insignificant and negative in sign. This contrasts to previous literature in the field (Coughlin and Erikson 1985; Grimes and Chressanthi 1994; Baade and Sundberg 1996; Rhoads and Gerking 2000), which has historically demonstrated a positive relationship between football wins and alumni giving. In these, the authors examined a more extensive history of football wins and observed a positive effect of football on alumni giving. Fourth, ranking is significant and positive in the econometric regressions. There are two likely explanations: alumni reward a school

for landing itself in the top tiered ranking, and the rankings provide additional visibility for those schools recognized. Although there are not many recent studies replicating these findings, until there is evidence to the contrary, we believe that these factors continue to exert an influence on alumni-sustained contribution to their *alma mater*.

As in all marketing activities, the premise upon which a campaign is built is a feasible proposition that is appealing, morally sound and representative of the ethos of the initiating university. It is at this very first step that the link with our notion of pro-educating is forged and we will clarify this in the final section of the chapter.

Choosing a campaign model and building a case for support

The campaign model is chosen to deliver the overall fundraising strategy. It is intentional solicitation from those who might share an interest with the university in developing its resources and satisfies the intrinsic and/or extrinsic needs of the donor. As Dove describes, a campaign 'delineates publicly a set of priorities to be met and dollars to be raised in a specific period of time' (2001: 25–6).

There are several campaign models in circulation. There are traditionally four: annual, capital, comprehensive and single-purpose. They differ in that the annual model (somewhat overtaken by relationship management) seeks to match income and expenditure by increasing funding in that year. Its value is for small-scale research activities or centres, but unlikely to be the core of any major institutional strategy. Capital campaigns are related to a specific and high value campaign designed to generate resources for capital expenditure. This expenditure helps the university to retain its lead or reposition itself, and to involve highly motivated professional and volunteer fundraisers in focusing attempts to raise money from existing and new donors. The third form of campaign is the comprehensive campaign, which integrates elements of annual, endowment and capital gifts. This is the most common approach, for it links new and established donors rather than neglecting the latter and builds a spirit of empathy and loyalty with the university. The final campaign model, the single-purpose, appeals to a specific segment of the donor community. It identifies a project to be funded – library, laboratory or business school – to those whose motivation is likely to be most engaged and then directs the campaign towards them.

These distinct campaigns focus on the donor as the subject, albeit a potentially different subject for each call for funds. Following the shift in emphasis in the marketing literature to relationship marketing, far more sophisticated marketing campaign models built on lifetime giving can be

constructed. In these, the relationship between the alumni or corporate donor is followed, enhanced and nurtured so that the interests and the gifting potential of the donor are recognized and rewarded for increasing commitment to the university through increased gifting. As Table 8.1 shows, as the wealth of the individual grows, so does the potential for increased gifts.

Table 8.1 Individual wealth and size of gift

<i>Form and increasing size of gift</i>	<i>Life stage (indicative age)</i>
Annual gift	30
Upgraded annual gift	40
Special gift	50
Major gift	60
Capital gift	70
Estate gift	80

Source: Adapted from Dove (2001).

Understanding the alumni for whom the model works best is critical to the success of this type of campaign, but it requires detailed segmentation of the alumni base. Thiede (1998) offers a mechanism for organizing such a programme. This five-part programme requires:

- gathering information on current and prospective donors;
- identifying donor segments;
- fostering lifelong donor relationships through consistent, targeted communications;
- tracking performance through systematic analysis;
- ongoing evaluation and approval of donor performance.

This may or may not translate into other cultures but, in the USA at Indiana University Foundation, a simple segmentation model of age – under 45, 45–65 and over 65 – married or single, and over or under \$75,000 annual income, created a segmentation matrix which reveals effective targeted campaigns when applied to benefactors.

Building and promoting a case for support

The case for support is the key document to a successful campaign. It explains the proposed plan for raising money; what it will be used on and, most importantly, who will lead the campaign. This document has to be clear and draw links between what the university is and what it will be, and

how the planned campaign will enable this to happen. It needs to state the philosophy and values of the university and of those involved in the university as supporters of the campaign, most specifically its senior members. It should contain a summary of the university's social and academic accomplishments, statements about its new future and how the money will enable that vision to be made reality. After providing this background, the document needs to discuss the immediate and long-term development objectives and the plans for action on behalf of the donor to achieve this.

This document gives confidence to donors provided it is well argued, supported by those with integrity and speaks to them, bringing them into the community of common identity with the university. This of course is easier, as we have seen above, when that community carries endorsements of success from its local, national and international community. It thus links straight back to the nature of the university and what it really stands for. If its mission is indistinct and its culture not one of meritocracy, it has little to offer donors. Why should they identify with a university that gives them no added value? Raising funds is like the development of the overall marketing strategy we have explored in previous chapters. If it is based on deception it will not prompt the support of the alumni it has let down, nor the community that is its host. It must give the students more than the cost of education if it is to share the benefits of their subsequent success.

Donor motivation

Donor motivations for all causes have much in common and indeed are in competition. Greenfield (2002) suggests 11 reasons why people give to non-profit organizations:

- a desire to act charitably;
- ego satisfaction;
- public acclaim for philanthropists;
- religious directives;
- the worthy cause;
- the commonality of humanity;
- organizational public image;
- trust in the use of their money;
- good leadership in the recipient organization;
- the organization is financially sound;
- they were asked!

Donors **achieve personal value** from giving which exceeds their tax deduction - **although this can help!**

Specifically in higher education institutions in the USA, mutual self-interest seems to be the central theme of alumni giving. Seeing your school reach new heights of academic excellence certainly reflects well on those who have previously attended the school. For large corporate and individual donors there is the issue of immortality, civic responsibility and self-aggrandisement that many find irritating. So why doesn't it happen in the UK?

According to the Voluntary Giving Task Force, donors are unwilling to give unless they are convinced that their donations will assist the university in reaching its idealistic ambitions. Furthermore, donors will not give if they believe their money is replacing state support, so it is essential that substantial public investment continues alongside charitable giving. Importantly, philanthropic giving does not support the core activities of the university. Almost invariably it adds value and increases excellence that is rooted in adequate public support. In a recent US study, donor motivation was found to be highest when donors believed that the university would be a good steward of the gift and would use it wisely. They were motivated by their gift-giving to sustain academic excellence and to preserve the core values of the university, manifested in belief in its mission. The university needs to inspire them with its stability of fiscal leadership. Moreover, donors had a sense of loyalty to the university derived from the intrinsic joy of giving and knowing that it would make a difference.

Realizing the gifts

As Table 8.1 shows, the most important type of gifting is the annual fund. The annual fund is the foundation of fundraising efforts. To be successful a campaign needs to be personal. It should talk rather than seem to be mass marketing. It must be empathetic. It is not about what the university needs so much as why the alumni want to give. It must be professional, for there will be numerous other calls on the donors' generosity. Given these principles, the development of an on-going relationship based on the past, but building up a lifelong association, needs careful planning. The use of direct marketing, telemarketing, Internet, face-to-face contact through affinity groups (sports teams, graduation years, academic discipline and selection of profession) and special events (dinners, dances, tournaments, sales and auctions) all need to be built into a campaign, costed and implemented.

All these engagements are expensive. Annual fundraising requires rigorous budgeting and effective monitoring. As in all planned expenditure, critical performance indicators need to be developed to evaluate the success of the programme. Furthermore, if the American experience is anything to go by, they need volunteers to supplement and, in some cases, lead aspects of the campaign.

Volunteers offer help and influence and are often donors themselves. The tasks volunteers may undertake include assistance in planning and making arrangements for activities, identifying potential donors, contacting media to bring new networks to the universities, acting as hosts at events and thanking donors. The volunteers' recruitment depends upon the task. For instance, there is a need for high profile candidates for capital campaign leadership, while administrative help delivering the annual campaign needs volunteers who can commit time and dedication as well as being team players. As advocates of the donor programme, volunteers are also the strongest endorsers of the gifting plan of the university. Their contribution is valuable and, of course, some are more valuable than others. Those who are visible, successful, have peers in the other financial leaders of other communities and are self-assured about asking for contributions are the volunteers a campaign leader needs. Volunteers' good will is not enough; they must be part of the planning process and committed to the goals as well as the process of the campaign.

Volunteers need support from the development staff. The extent of the support depends on the experience of the university and its current culture, style and history. For this to happen, university development staff can act as mentors and then as advisors to volunteers' projects. They need to be educated in the ways of fundraising and the programme's objects. Their main need is to be trained in the tasks they will be asked to perform.

Planned giving, or a pledge, is deferred gifting and can be a stable and long-term source of income. Its value is in allowing institutions to plan when revenue will arrive. Pledges come in many forms; in response to solicitation by direct mail, telephone or Internet campaigns asking for pledges in the future, and from payroll deductions and alumni fundraising club fees – with associated privileges. To develop such a plan, sufficient numbers of target donors must exist, for instance, over 60, and the university must have coherent, moral and legal ways of accepting these donations. Evidence in the USA (Dove 2001) suggests that the motivation for such gifting can be religious conviction (Notre Dame University), gratitude for the benefits of the education gained, the desire to be recognized and the desire to leave a legacy. There are also the direct financial benefits of tax relief to the donors themselves. In the USA, where there is a tradition of philanthropic giving from the general public as well as the very wealthy, the tax laws are both rewarding and simple. The principle for gifting is being encouraged in the UK but the tax aspects are still somewhat complex.

Implementing such a programme requires professional help from lawyers and accountants to keep records. A heightened relationship needs to be built to ensure that donors realize the potential benefit of their gifts during their lifetime. Put bluntly, one needs to ensure they do not change their mind, for they may leave more! The importance of maintaining this

relationship means nurturing both commitment and coherence of approach from senior managers – indeed, all staff, whether academic, administrative or voluntary – in helping to solicit gifts.

Communication with current and prospective donors is therefore critical. Their value to the university, the value of their gift and the impact of their legacy must all be brought from the future to the present. In such communications the message should be that it is their gift that is important, not their death. It may take the form of brochures, newsletters (both general and targeted mailings) and seminars. Much of this information may also be sent to professional advisors informing them of the security and financial responsiveness of the university and of the tax advantages that exist for their clients. This approach is clearly best where the advisors are alumni or practise in the locality of the university.

Major gifts are a matter of 'hard work, imagination, and good taste', says Dove (2001: 183). The hard work is evident in the identification and tracking of major gift prospects and their cultivation. This is a labour-intensive, personal programme performed by leaders of volunteers, the director of development and the vice-chancellor. It is a long-term task and needs to have its momentum maintained. Prospects need to be prioritized and effort put into soliciting their financial involvement in the university based on personal knowledge of the individual, their organization and their values. Engagement with these prospects requires good planning, well-prepared proposals (statement of need, proposed action, financial data and donor benefits) and good timing and closing skills. The most common errors are either to fail to ask for a gift or to ask for one that is not large enough. Furthermore, having made the proposal flexible, the development team needs to adjust to the newly discovered needs of the prospect.

If the major donor is cooperative, then their corporate motivations are likely to relate to the enhancement of their reputation, recruitment and social responsibility. In delivering their social responsibility, they may donate to a programme on child care, children at risk, cancer research or any other socially desirable activity undertaken by the university on their behalf. Donations can be indirect cash, allocation of their shares, benefits in kind, encouraging and supporting volunteering programmes, their professional services and sponsorships. Other major donations can come from foundations which might be independent, such as the Lilly Foundation, or corporate, such as the Exxon Foundation. In the same way as organizations need to be researched, so do foundations and although they may have explicit application procedures to follow, it is as important to take as much care in constructing proposals as when approaching organizations directly.

In all fundraising, there are ethical issues and a risk, particularly in major funding, that the amount offered infringes the university's ethical standards for receiving donations and that the fundraising activities may

themselves overstep the mark. Policies and ethical standards equally apply to soliciting donations, where no undue pressure should be brought to bear on potential donors. Attendance at a university does not require gratitude in terms of time and money, even if the university so desires. There is a danger that the rights of donors and potential donors are overridden in the enthusiasm to achieve a campaign goal. These rights include knowledge of the destination of their donation, how it will be used and accounted for, and whether their name will be used or not. Other issues arise from major donations where the donor makes demands. Interference with academic freedoms to publish freely, suppression of research findings and unwarranted interference in research agenda need to be resisted by the institutional internal policies. In the USA, there are professional guidelines issued by the Association of Fundraising Professionals and these offer advice not only on the form of solicitation that is appropriate, but also on the motivation behind the fundraising.

The campaign development and types of donors have only briefly been discussed here and there is a range of literature that can be consulted which offers insights, practical discussions and actual processes to develop a gifting plan. We have focused on gifting that is relevant to the goals of the university, not metamorphosing the university's values into a compelling commodity to be sold for the donor's self-gratification. Universities that believe in themselves, offer worthy educational experiences to their students and are well led tend, in the long run, to attract funding of a type that is appropriate for their values. The rejection by Nottingham University of money from a cigarette producer to fund cancer research is a case in point.

However, there is always a risk to the values and reputation of an institution in accepting donations and, indeed, in seeking them. The university development team is there to support the goals of the institution, not have their fundraising successes determine the nature of the institution they are seeking to help. Clear guidelines are essential on whose money is acceptable, which industries (sex, weapon, cigarettes or alcohol) or countries (apartheid South Africa) are taboo, and what conditions can be attached to gifts to prevent future problems and disharmonies in the university communities that are being supported.

Summary

In the context of our pro-educating model, a fundraising campaign needs to embody the temporality of giving to a university whose own temporal existence ought to transcend the present. This is difficult in the consumer-led immediacy of our current society, as gifts are for the unknown future, one when the giver believes can be shaped by the values of the institution in

ways they find agreeable. This requires, as we have seen, fundraising leadership and adherence to a form of education that has worldly benefits. Donors need existentially to trust in the learning process provision of the university and in those who are currently involved in the learning process. Their money may provide a physical manifestation for the university, but its value is with bricks and mortar, the use to which the books and software are put, and the social contribution to be made by graduates to their way of being. This trust is at the core of the campaign plan. It shapes the approach to donors and it gives a reason to believe in the unknowable from which the legitimacy of the university is given and taken. Finally, if we market in a way that encourages learner self-trust, fundraising campaigns must convince donors that they should sacrifice their consumption, bought with their income, for the betterment of others in the future. This is a tall order and requires cultural change as well as persuasive argument. Besides that, donors must be convinced their sacrifice better serves their goals for a brighter future than by being donated to other good causes or communities to which they belong.

In the UK, the argument that a university degree gives greater economic pay-back is just as valid as it is in the USA. However, there the gifting ideology is more grounded as a substitute for welfare economics and because of this American generosity is great. If the only reason to give to a university was to enable another generation to become richer, as this might include their own children, a sense of self-interest would be apparent; gifting would be merely to satisfy the future enrolment of their children. This is not true of the USA, where the higher education system does mainly retain a strong liberal arts undergraduate ethos. The message that needs to be imparted to the UK is that education for the sake of money will not lead to donating; education for all our futures might.