



Strategies for Success

Smart fundraising ideas from Hartsook

From the Back of a Napkin to the Head of the Table



We can all do better.

April always marks a very special anniversary at Hartsook Companies, Inc. Over thirty years ago, Hartsook's professional consulting firm began as an expression of my belief about the fundraising profession: "What we do matters, a lot."

Although we've certainly come a long way, every year I still think, "We can do better."

Each year around this time, I still reflect on Hartsook Companies, Inc.'s achievements and the fundraising sector's challenges and opportunities. I consider how we can optimize our strategies to provide the very best counsel for nonprofits around the world. A few thoughts on that:

What will you do?

The original vision for this company literally was sketched out on a napkin, well before we launched the firm on April 1 over three decades ago. Now, it is clearer than ever that fundraising needed someone to shake things up a bit. We have done just that, and we will continue to do so. Each of us has a role in growing philanthropy. What's yours?

"Nobody wants to give money away!"

It is true that donors are not waiting around to write checks, but they are ready to be inspired. Don't just tell donors what you're going to do. Tell them what you've already done. Don't tell them you hope to do this or that. Show them you are an organization that has a plan and knows how to get things done.

Do more than raise money: grow philanthropy.

Our firm has challenged the status quo by investing in research-based fundraising education and training for fundraising professionals: the Hartsook Institute at Avila University, the Hartsook Chair at the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy and the Hartsook Centre for Sustainable Philanthropy at Plymouth University in the U.K. We didn't just point out a problem, we provided a solution.

To grow philanthropy, invest in your own growth as a professional and encourage your organization to invest in fundraising. As Hartsook has demonstrated, big dreams start small. Dream big, then go do it!

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