



Strategies for Success

Smart fundraising ideas from Hartsook

Time to STOP



You've heard of a SWOT analysis, but have you heard of STOP?

STOP stands for Situation, Threat, Observation and Plan.

It is a survival technique used by military members and survival enthusiasts. It is also useful for organizations experiencing hardships or increased challenges in their development endeavors.

Undergoing a pro-active, Strategic Plan is preferred, of course. But organizations needing immediate direction and guidance with any unusual circumstances may need to STOP first.

Identify the situation

Access the situation with honesty and humility. The fastest way to fix an issue is to acknowledge it. Don't spend weeks or months talking around the problem. Address it directly now. If you know you have a problem but can't figure it out on your own, enlist an objective third party.

Consider the threat

What are your most immediate concerns? If you're not sure what they are, ask yourself this question, "What's worrying me most about this situation?" Is it a board relationship gone bad, a funding deficit, or the potential of a negative public relations? Identify the threat or threats by name. Naming them empowers you to take action.

Observe your surroundings

Take inventory of your assets and organize your resources. How can they be used to eliminate the threat? If there is dissension among board members, consider board development training to get everyone moving in the same direction on inspiring, yet feasible goals. If funding is a worry, take the very first steps to tackle the problem, and turn it into your best fundraising year ever.

Make a plan

A good plan today is better than a perfect plan tomorrow. Start with where you want to be in a year and work backwards to create milestone goals. Now, turn those goals into action steps. Then, turn the action steps into small tasks. Add a timeline, and you are ready to determine your own future.

Remember, a plan will not change the situation. Implementation of the plan will. If your organization is struggling with challenges, big or small, just STOP. And then get started!

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