

Fundraising Tips and Tools for walk MS

Fundraising is easy when you find the best method for you. From making phone calls, to selling candy bars, to hosting fundraising events; there are unlimited possibilities when it comes to raising money for the National MS Society-Ohio Buckeye Chapter.

Rules for Successful Fundraising

1. Set a fundraising goal

Make your goal HIGH (but realistic). For example, if you typically raise \$250, don't be afraid to create a new goal of \$300-\$500. If you are typically a \$1000+ fundraiser, keep setting your goals higher and higher each year. HIGH GOALS=HIGH FUNDRAISING. When donors see that you have challenged yourself by setting a high goal, they may be more inclined to donate more than they have done in the past.

2. Don't be shy!

Besides telling your family and friends about your fundraising goal, go out into the community and tell others. Usually the most unlikely people become your largest donors. If you frequent a restaurant or store on a normal basis, ask to talk to the manager and let him or her know about your endeavor. Going to the doctor? Tell them too. Don't be reluctant around anyone...a perfect stranger could be the very person to take your fundraising to the next level.

3. Be assertive; not aggressive

Realize that not everyone has the ability to donate due to financial reasons or because they are involved in other organizations. It is important to be aware of others feelings and realize that it is okay for someone to say "no". Badgering and annoyance can be detrimental to your efforts and typically give you (and the National MS Society) a bad rap.

4. Obey the law

Take precautions with your fundraising efforts that they do not conflict with any rules or laws. Many cities require permits for soliciting donations in public areas. Without a permit, you may end up losing more money than you have collected. Check with local authorities, neighbors, business owners, etc before participating in a fundraiser NOT on your personal property.

Questions ? Suggestions? Ideas?

If you have questions or ideas for new fundraisers, please contact Matt Faulkner, Development Coordinator at 614-515-4629 or matt.faulkner@nmssoha.org. You can also visit us 24/7 at www.MSohiowalk.org.

Successful Fundraising Methods

Publicize!

- The National MS Society provides you with great tools to publicize your fundraising efforts. Request event posters and brochures to display at work, at school, at your place of worship, at the gym, at local businesses, etc (Bathroom stalls are great ways to reach a captive audience!).
- Talk to the media. Send local newspaper, radio stations and TV stations information about the MS Society and your team. If your team has a unique story, the more likely you will be to be featured in the media.
- Create a Team Jersey, Bumper Sticker, coffee mug, etc and display them proudly.

Hold an Event!

- Local restaurants and bars can be great locations for a fundraising event.
- Max & Erma's, City Barbeque, and other casual dining restaurants feature fundraising nights for non-profit groups to raise money.
- Shopping Malls often rent out kiosk space for little to no charge for non-profit groups.
- Many groceries and superstores (Walmart, Target, etc) will allow you to distribute information and solicit donations outside of their locations. Be sure to gain permission from the store manager.
- Organize your own event at a unique venue. Hold a silent auction, host a party or simply walk around asking for donations. The opportunities are endless.

Simple ways to promote your fundraising (FOR FREE!)

- Include your personal fundraising site in your email signature. Keep a tally of how much money you have collected and how much you have left to reach your goal.
- MySpace.com and Facebook.com.—Include information in your profile about your event and fundraiser. Send messages to your friends asking them to donate!
- Change your voicemail message to include information about your fundraising.
- EMAILS! Use the tools in your participant center to send emails and thank your donors.

Letter-Writing Campaign

- Simple pen and paper letters can boost your fundraising efforts. For new teams, set a goal to mail out **25-50 letters** a month asking for donations.
- Include a pre-addressed envelope for ease in sending donations
- Personalize your letters with photos and a unique story to engage your recipients. The more comfortable someone feels with you and the MS Society, the more likely they are to give.

**...and most importantly,
THANK EVERYONE THAT DONATED TO
YOU!**

Every donation (large or small) deserves acknowledgement. Be sure to send thank you notes and follow-up phone calls with every donation.