



CANADIAN  
PARENTS  
FOR FRENCH

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## A CPF Network Board of Directors Guide to

# FUNDRAISING 'AVEC PANACHE' A STRATEGY FOR SUCCESS

Canadian Parents for French (CPF) is fortunate in having a positive message to take to the broad community - Increasing access to quality French as a second language (FSL) learning opportunities for all those who call Canada home.

**For CPF volunteer leaders and staff, fundraising simply means applying structure and focus to what comes naturally, telling a story and asking for help in addressing a need.**

Fundraising is just another way of advocating on behalf of FSL learners and programs. The most important part about fundraising is HOW we talk about and communicate, and the best way is through personal stories and experiences.

- If you've ever talked about the number of people that are helped by CPF, then you've "advocated".
- If you've ever shared a story about one person facing a problem and brought that listener to empathize and ask how they can act to help, then you've identified a hero, a potential donor. And you are on your way with fundraising!

**Philanthropy** is motivated by values, beliefs, and emotional triggers. We can use values to engage emotions to inspire actions through storytelling. Philanthropy is driven by stories. These stories followed up by data sharing how past donations have increased the number of opportunities provided are a winning combination.

**Story telling** allows us to illustrate challenges and successes, to inform and influence, to raise and resolve issues, to seek allies and exert pressure: To reach people who matter. To identify champions who have the means to help us make a difference.

- Stories help highlight and naturally communicate values in action.
- Stories are an account of real events or facts told in a way to engage an audience.
- The donor sees the value of the story and then is inspired to help by donating to the cause.
- Good stories help donors connect with our cause and motivate them to give.

**Good fundraising** is not about asking for money, it is about first building a relationship. There is a world of difference between asking for money and presenting an opportunity.

- Our organization has no needs – just opportunities.
- Remember: The relationship is more important than the ask.



## HOW FUNDRAISING REALLY WORKS TODAY

Fundraising is well researched and professionalized these days. There are a lot of data about what works and what doesn't work to raise money. Fundraising is also highly competitive.

Fundraising is about creating and building relationships with individuals who may, with time, be like-minded and could become loyal supporters.

People are most likely to give to a cause that has personal meaning to them. People do want to give and be involved as it generates connections, pride, goodwill, appreciation, and the energy this builds helps make things happen. Individuals most likely need to be directly asked before they offer to give.



## SOME FACTS ABOUT FUNDRAISING TODAY

- > **Most non-profits lose 50% of their donors each year.** It's what happens between the asks that really influences donor renewals.
- > **It is easier to retain current and past donors than pursue new donors.** Staff and volunteer time spent on strengthening relationships with donors and building up donor loyalty is an important investment.
- > **Events are the least profitable way to raise money** of high overhead costs.
- > **Face to face asks of individuals are the most profitable way to raise money**, especially when the people being asked have a direct connection within our networks.
- > **There has been a trend of 30% growth in donations** from private foundations in Canada over the last decade.
- > **There is strong growth in social media philanthropy** as a conduit for information particularly with the millennial generation.
- > **Successful strategic fundraising campaigns have** strong leadership buy-in, clear goals and include donor recognition as part of their appreciation and development of donor loyalty.



## DETERMINING OUR OBJECTIVES

The largest fundraising pitfall is trying to do too much, too quickly. Try to prioritize one campaign to tackle now, matching the organization's time, energy, capacity, and abilities to one campaign with objectives focused on what is most critical in the immediate term.

CPF takes advantage of already recognized campaigns such as Giving Tuesday each year; this would be the perfect place to begin your Branch/Office philanthropy fundraising support efforts, helping the Mary Joyce Booth Fund become sustainable in perpetuity.

### THE MARY JOYCE BOOTH FUND, MORE FRENCH, S.V.P.!

The MJB Fund prioritizes youth directed projects. It provides annual grants to CPF Branches who offer additional youth French language learning opportunities in their province or territory. Our goal is to fundraise the equal amount that is distributed each year to replenish the Fund and ensure its sustainability.



# ESTABLISHING A FUNDRAISING TEAM

There is time and effort involved in each step of the fundraising cycle. Successful fundraising recognizes the complementary roles and responsibilities shared by staff and volunteer leaders and should be targeted and specific to each potential donor.

**The role of the fundraising team** is to help people to see why they should care, to feel moved to act, and to make their own decision to give. Two or three core members will suffice.

## **Choose:**

- > the CPF staff leader.
- > the CPF volunteer leader designate – one who has the recognized status and authority to speak for CPF in your community.
- > the individual who has direct contact to the prospective donor, or someone who has something in common with them, who knows them socially or has a family connection with children in the same school.

**Volunteer leaders are the best ambassadors** with the greatest influence and most opportunities to reach out. They give credibility, inspiration, and continuity to each encounter.

## **To be successful, leaders need to know:**

- > The CPF mission, vision, and values.
- > Why they are proud to volunteer within the CPF Network - share their own story and the inspiring impact stories of others.
- > Three facts highlighting the work and accomplishments of the CPF Branch, Office and Network.
- > The fundraising campaign objective and case for support.
- > Three common misconceptions and how to respond.

# IDENTIFYING “TARGETS” and “PROSPECTS” – TAPPING INTO PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL NETWORKS

Ideally, we would like everybody to be aware of Canadian Parents for French and its concerns. However, grassroots organizations such as ours have limited human and financial resources. There are nonetheless some key allies as our fundraising “targets” and donor “prospects”. Most successful fundraising operates at multiple levels of influence.

## **To solicit one time campaign specific donations, smaller commitments:**

- > Craft an engaging email, letter, or telephone script.
- > Identify and create a ‘potential donor’ contact list.
  - Include people in immediate networks - family, neighbours, friends, church, as well as allies within professional networks - peers, work, school, etc.
  - Consider people in your community known to be supportive of official languages, linguistic duality, bilingualism and learning French or languages in general – local celebrities, media journalists, former politicians, community, business leaders and educational leaders such as trustees, etc.
- > Mobilize with one-on-one conversations in person or by telephone, send personalized emails or letters. Clearly share the need, the purpose, and the timeline for the requested gift.

Strange bedfellows make for effective coalitions. These people can become valuable allies and important sources of information if we tailor our message to take their interests and passions into account.

- > A Chamber of Commerce or Board of Trade may be convinced that providing additional FSL resources will attract new businesses or families to the community.
- > Realtors and their associations understand the impact on property values and ratepayer associations may see expanded FSL programs as a way of revitalizing a neighbourhood or stopping a school closure.
- > Childcare centres or special interest groups such as Junior Achievement or Toastmasters may see expanding programs as a new source of revenue.

# THE ROLE OF SENIOR STAFF IN SUPPORTING STORYTELLING

**Lead by example.** Write and share your own story. Collect sample stories from volunteers and members. Share these with the Board on a regular basis, at the beginning of Board meetings.

**Create a reference toolkit** of sample stories from past volunteers to share as models or examples.

**Empower and encourage Board members and volunteer leaders** to tell stories by facilitating a culture of sharing and documenting stories.

- Guide them in finding their comfort zone in telling their stories.
- Help support them while they explore and practice theirs, in telling the appropriate story to the appropriate audience.
- Offer opportunities to practice. Cheerlead, encourage, and reward.

**Be proactive and give Board members clear directives to share their stories.** Choose a particular story and have board members share it by email with five friends.

**Share donor stories regularly and in various ways during CPF work** – at family or community events, at the end of youth events, during stakeholder meetings, in social media posts, on website biographies and in monthly newsletters.

## STORYTELLING TIPS

**A good story structure includes connection, character, resolution, conflict, and call to action.**

- Make it relatable. Tell a story your audience can see themselves in. What universal truth or need are you tapping into, that your audience can connect with?
- Make it specific. Include details and descriptions that make it tangible.
- Make it authentic. There's no need to embellish your story. The truth is a powerful tool!
- Aim for the heart. Capture your audience's emotions and imagination. Numbers don't make people act; emotion does. Use data and statistics to support your narrative, not lead it.
- Connect to our mission. Whether it's how CPF began, or a story about the community you serve; everything comes back to our mission.



## THE ROLE OF THE BOARD

Above all, board members carry the legal responsibility for the fiduciary care of their non-profit organization. In that vein, it's their responsibility to ensure that the organization has the funding it needs to carry out its mission.

### Here's our list of fundraising activities that everyone on the Board can help with:

> **Understand CPF's fundraising plans and strategies:**

- Pay attention to the annual Giving Tuesday campaign and how the Branch / Office uses the grants offered by the Mary Joyce Booth fund each year.

> **Help thank donors, tell them about our organization's great work.**

- Ask to review the Branch donors list each year.
- Volunteer to make some phone calls. A template script is available to guide your conversation with the donors.

> **Allocate time at Board meetings to discuss fundraising progress annually.**

Ensure that fundraising initiatives have adequate resources and support. This is part of the "core" work of the organization within the CPF Network strategic plan. Assign budget, identify staff responsibility, review priorities, progress, and reporting annually.

> **Support and encourage the CPF Branch and National staff by:**

- Telling stories!
- Identifying prospective donors and opening the door with introductory emails.
- Bringing prospects and friends to CPF events.
- Making a proud, personal annual gift. This can be made within expense claim reimbursements.
- Sharing annual CPF campaign posts on personal LinkedIn profiles or other social media pages.



## MAKING YOUR OWN ANNUAL GIFT EACH YEAR

Fundraising must be a priority for long term sustainability. Each of us needs to make our own proud, personal gift each year. How else can you have credibility to ask others for gifts? As a leader, you can inspire others to give by demonstrating your own philanthropic commitment

If you value being a donor, so will others! Everyone involved in the organization needs to embrace the importance of creating a culture of joyful philanthropy. It is not about the amount, but the annual commitment!



## THE FUNDRAISING CYCLE, SHARED ROLES, AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### Identifying Prospects - *volunteer led, staff supported*

- > Open up to my personal and professional network - Tell them a CPF story to inspire their engagement.
- > Who can I introduce and set up a meeting with this year? Who can I bring to our next event?

### Cultivating and Involving - *staff led, volunteer supported*

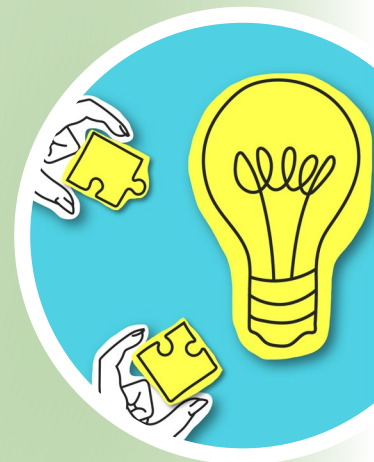
- > Research - What aspects of our work interests this person? How might they want to be involved? What might they like to see accomplished?
- > Make my own personal gift each year.
- > Embrace a joyful culture of philanthropy. Encourage others to embrace their personal philanthropy and giving.

### Asking for Support - *staff led, volunteer supported*

- > Meet to strengthen the relationship, inform and respectful influencing.
- > Share the impact, organizational pride, and positive benefits. If you see the benefits, so will others!
- > Confirm the gift and follow up actions.

### Thanking, thanking, and thanking again - *volunteer led, staff supported*

- > Make phone calls and send thank you letters/emails.
- > Recognize the gift.
- > Stay in regular contact, sharing updates, checking in with new information.



# TYPES OF STORIES TO SHARE – IMPACT, PERSONAL AND WHO WE ARE

## The Impact Story

- Shows what donors and the organization can do together and highlights the impact by donating.
- Shows donors how their donation is used and the impact of it.
- Shares a story with three points: the problem, the solution, and the impact.

## The Personal Story

- Articulates one's values and beliefs and the action they have inspired.
- Shows donors a good connection to why volunteers are doing the work.
- Shares a story with three points: the challenge, the choice, and the outcome.

## The CPF Who We Are Story

- Concisely describes the organization, who we are and what it stands for: Proud volunteers are at the core of what CPF does. Volunteer leaders are the CPF ambassadors who advocate for universal access to quality French learning opportunities for all those who call Canada home.
- Shows donors the CPF Who We are Story video, the How It All Started video, and other tools developed to support CPF storytelling.
- Shares a story about problems our organization solved. Shares our values and our vision for the future with expanded programs and services

## Everyone needs to join in and help make fundraising successful!

**A good fundraising plan spells out an exact mix of targets, strategies, roles, and responsibilities so everyone can work towards a common goal. Together, we can create a realistic roadmap that will help us grow the financial sustainability of our organization.**



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