LIBRARY FUNDRAISING: THE FIVE-MINUTE COURSE

1. Create a separate 501(c)(3) organization distinct from the library to conduct fundraising activities. A library Friends group or a library foundation is appropriate for this. Donors who make larger gifts like the separation from a government agency.

2. Be certain that only one group exists for fundraising for the library. All fundraising efforts should be centralized to avoid confusion in the general public. The library, The Friends, and a library foundation all have the potential to raise private funds. Develop an agreement about who does what.

3. Recruit the very best and most influential members of the community to serve on the Board of Directors of the fundraising organization. Don’t recruit just “book lovers.”

4. Focus your fundraising activities on individuals, not on corporations or foundations. More than 80% of philanthropic dollars come from individuals each year. These funds also typically have the fewest restrictions.

5. If you have a membership organization such as a Friends group doing your fundraising, conduct the membership campaign in mid-year (May or June) so an additional solicitation can be conducted in November or December.

6. Personalize your solicitation of individuals by having people who know them ask for a contribution rather than just sending a letter requesting a gift.

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For more information, contact Library Strategies (651) 287-0060
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