

EVENT FUNDRAISING - MAKE IT WORK FOR YOUR BUSINESS

Your guide to
getting started with
event fundraising

Most responsible business strategies incorporate some element of community engagement activities, from fundraising through to strategic charity partnerships. We're often asked about how to make event fundraising inclusive and work for everyone in your business, so we're sharing a tip sheet to help you get the most from this. The power and impact for charities of raising and donating charitable funds cannot be overstated - you know your efforts are making a difference.

In this tip sheet we help you to analyse six areas to help you get the most from your organisation's charitable fundraising activities. Event fundraising is not only a great way to raise vital funds for charities, it can also act as a great personal development opportunity, team working practice, boost employee pride, community and wider profile.

EVENT FUNDRAISING - GETTING STARTED

The potential benefits to you as a business are great. Getting your team to work together to achieve a target with a social purpose can really energise and draw out overlooked abilities in a team. Taking on a completely new type of challenge can allow people to step outside their usual roles, get to know each other's strengths and personal qualities. This translates into better teams and co-working in everyday operations.

But if you've never organised fundraising in your team before, where do you start? There are no right or wrong answers but thinking through your options will help you get the most from the experience, for the charity and for your business.

1. WHICH CAUSE DO YOU WANT TO SUPPORT?

With over 167,000 charities in the UK, you have a lot of choice, but what makes a cause or charity the right one for you? The answer really lies in your business practice, culture and strategy. Are you looking to focus locally? Are there strategic reasons to educate your team about a social issue that may impact your business? Is there an industry-relevant or personal cause that your team is passionate about? Think about your key motivations and the added value supporting a particular cause could offer.

And why not use the selection process as an engagement exercise too? Make sure everyone is included by using an online voting system via email or [Doodle](#) poll; build more face-to-face interaction and public speaking confidence by getting



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people to pitch their suggestion, Dragons' Den style; or hand pick a committee of people who wouldn't normally interact and put them in charge of the decision. Each of these methods has different benefits and will deliver better results than a hypothetical scenario in a training day!

If you're worried about doing due diligence on charity, a good rule of thumb is to look for charities which have recently received funding from a reputable trust or foundation such as [City Bridge Trust](#), [Lloyds Bank Foundation](#) and [Trust for London](#). You can also check the [Charity Commission](#) website.

2. WHICH FUNDRAISING EVENT?

Instead of arranging a fundraising event from scratch, why not join an existing one? Outsourcing the hassle of event management gives you time and energy to focus on what you're really trying to achieve - great team building and raising as much money as you can.

For the competitive, sporty employees, you could join an organised challenge or event and use it as a fundraising opportunity. This could be a [10k fun run](#), a cycling event like the [Ride London-Surrey 19](#), obstacle-laden courses like [Tough Mudder](#) or a stair climbing challenge like the [Broadgate Tower Run Up](#). You can simply purchase places (you often get a discount for team entries) and either cover the cost or set a minimum amount each person in your team has to raise to make sure it's above the cost. This allows you to fundraise for any charity, even those who don't organise their own events (and so would probably be even more grateful!)

[City Giving Day](#) takes place every year in September and gives City companies the chance to join hundreds of other businesses to support a wide range of charities through events.

For the less active teams, [The Funding Network](#) runs fantastic crowdfunding events at great venues across London. Watch small charities pitch for funding and give whatever you want during their live crowdfunding session - it's a great night out with your team and has options for a range of budgets.

Some points to consider:

Inclusivity - can everyone who would want to join in, or are you excluding older/disabled/less fit team members? If so, can you include them in other ways?

Cost - start small and learn how much people feel comfortable raising, rather than starting with a huge amount that you need to raise to cover your costs

Timing - how does this work with your work agenda, are there preferable times of the year for fundraising and do you have enough lead time to get people involved?

3. HOW TO ENGAGE YOUR FUNDRAISING TEAM

The first step is to think about who you want to reach out to and involve. Do you want to focus on just your employees so they can bond, or do you want to include their friends and family to reach out and build some wider links? Or how about wider stakeholder groups such as suppliers, clients, alumni and people you're likely to work with in the future? The possibilities are wide, so referring back to your core aims for the exercise is crucial to check that you're focusing on the



impact you want to have.

Once you have a team of committed people, think about how you can maximise their potential. Do you want to do some team training? Would branded team outfits make people feel part of something bigger? What do you want the values of the team to be? Are you trying to encourage togetherness? (In which case why not pair weaker members of the team with stronger members to make sure nobody is left behind?) Do you want some internal competition? If so you could offer recognition for the person who raises the most by a certain date.

At the end of the day, keep your end goals in mind both for your business and the charity, and let your imagination run free!

4. ONLINE DONATIONS

You're probably familiar with online fundraising platforms such as [JustGiving](#) and [Virgin Money Giving](#). They're brilliant resources making it easy for people to donate to you and for you to track how much you're raising. They also make sure Gift Aid can be collected i.e. that UK tax-payers can have their donations boosted by 25% if they opt in.

What you might not know is that some charge significantly greater fees than the others, and others are much harder for charities to use. Ask your chosen charity which platform they'd prefer you to use and then create your fundraising page. Do you want to heighten the competition between team members and have individual pages or just one for the team?

It's vital to create and share your page as early and often as possible. Read the helpful hints and tips these sites offer about how to create your page. A personalised message explaining **who** is taking part, **what** you're doing and **why** it matters makes a tremendous difference, as does a photo. Don't forget your team will be sharing this page so make sure it's accurate, genuine and matches your organisational culture and tone (or moves towards what you want that to be!)

5. THE SECRET TO FUNDRAISING: ASK, ASK, ASK!

The key to fundraising through sponsored events is to remember to ask for donations: ask and ask some more! Businesses have huge networks so use this opportunity to connect as many parts as you can. This raises brand awareness both for your chosen charity and for your business.

Use tools such as eye-catching email signatures, social media, internal and external communication and marketing channels. Speak to your local or trade press, make a quick film on your phone and share it with people.

With so many options, remember to make sure everyone in your team is joining in, feeling included and that everyone knows that their contribution makes a difference. Your chosen charity may be able to help you bundle donation amounts into 'the difference £xx will make'



6. WHAT ABOUT SOME LITTLE EXTRAS?

If donations aren't pouring in at the speed you'd like, or you want to find ways to get more people involved, why not think about some light touch additions?

Raffles, dress-down days and cake sales are small but easy ways for more people to support the team and fundraising efforts without simply giving their own money.

So why not? Make event fundraising work for your business!

Organising a team for a fundraising event is fun, challenging and can be really rewarding. The principles are similar to most small project management timelines, but with added satisfaction for all involved.

The ideas above have hopefully inspired you to tackle your next fundraising team event with a renewed focus on your business-specific end goals, enthusiasm and emphasis on communication not only when building your team, but also raising funds, thanking donors, supporters and of course, your team.

All there's left to do then is to get the funds over to your chosen charity and revel in the achievements of your team. Oh, and then start thinking which event you want to join in with next...

