



10 Steps to a Successful Fundraising Event

Step 1 – Determine the Type of Event

- You are only limited by your creativity! Almost everything can be turned into a fundraising event – bar night, silent auction, wine tasting, pet event, movie night, parents’ night out, dinner party – the options are endless!
- Choose something that you like/are interested in, but also consider your audience. Choose an event your contacts will want to attend!

Step 2 – Set a \$\$\$ Goal & Ticket Price

- Set a (realistic) goal amount.
 - How much do you plan to make from this event?
- Your goal amount will help you determine:
 - How many people do you need to attend to reach your goal? Ticket pricing, expected revenue from raffle sales, etc.
- How are you going to collect donations? Ticket sales, auction items, raffle items?

Step 3 – Location, Location, Location!

- Make a list of 2-3 locations you like that will fit your estimated amount of people & the type of event.
- Make sure the location is somewhere your expected attendees will want to come to!
- Things to consider when choosing a location:
 - Choose a venue that is usually busy and is willing to help promote your event. You want to try to bring additional people (outside of your connections) to your event.
 - Do research on your preferred venue to see if they have done fundraisers before (if you cannot find anything online, it doesn’t mean they will say no, but this is helpful to know).
 - Consider any event cost for your attendees (parking, cover charge, etc.).
 - Take into account the neighborhood & clientele of the venue.
 - Use your connections if possible – look through your contacts (and those of close friends/family).
 - Before you make “the ask” consider what the business will gain from the event (recognition for aligning with a great cause, added customers that you will bring in, possible tax deduction for donated goods or services, etc.). If you approach a venue with how a fundraiser can help them, you are more likely to get a yes!
 - Approach each location (your preferred location 1st) – it’s best to make this request in person. Come prepared with information on Comfort Zone Camp and a venue request letter.
 - Once you confirm your location, do a thorough walk-through of the venue to plan the layout of your event. TAKE PHOTOS if possible (this can be very helpful later in the planning). If you have something that needs to fit inside of the venue (band, tables, etc.) measure the space(s) needed to confirm that everything will fit.



Step 4 – Set a Date & Time

- Consider payroll dates – people are going to be more generous towards the beginning of the month & right after paydays (usually Fridays).
- Consider your audience, and pick a time that will work best for the majority (hold a kid friendly event earlier, hold a party themed event later, etc.).
- Keep in mind traffic as well as work & school schedules.

Step 5 – Promote, Promote, Promote!

- Make an event flyer.
- Print copies & post them around your neighborhood, work, the venue where the fundraiser is being held – everywhere you can!
- Email the flyer out to all of your contacts.
- Post the flyer on all social media outlets (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter). If it is open to the general public, there are a TON of free calendar listings online.
- Recruit family & friends to help you promote!

Step 6 – Additional Revenue

- Consider additional sources for donations:
 - Add a raffle or silent auction to your event.
 - Sell drink tickets for donated beer/liquor to boost donations.
 - Always put donations jars around your venue (on the bar, near the door, stage, etc.).

Step 7 – Confirm the Details

- Recruit helpers & assign roles – IN ADVANCE. You are going to want to be able to mingle with the crowd & host the event. If you can, have helpers on-site to make sure everything goes smoothly.
- You should be communicating with the main contact at your venue throughout the process, but make sure to confirm ALL of the final details at least one week before your event (& the day before if needed).
- Make yourself a checklist of everything that needs to be done. The more organized you are before the event, the easier the event day will be!



Step 8 – Make a Packing List

- Make yourself a packing list of everything you need/might need for the event!
 - Tape/Tacks (to hang signs)
 - Cash for change (if needed)
 - Cash box or money bag
 - Donation jars (starting out with a few bills in a donation jar often helps encourage others to donate)
 - Informational Signage (drink specials, details of the fundraiser/cause, directional signs, etc.)
 - Comfort Zone Camp signs & brochures
 - Raffle tickets (if needed)
 - Band equipment, audiovisual equipment, & microphone (if needed)
 - Tables & table covers
 - Silent auction forms
 - Credit card slips (and possible computer/tablet to take online donations)
 - Decorations – if you need balloons for your fundraiser, most Party City locations will donate up to two dozen the day before
 - Any other supplies specific to your fundraiser that you might need (when in doubt, pack it)

Step 9 – Day of the Event

- Get to your venue earlier than you think you need to...it is better to be ready early than to be rushing!
- Take photos (will help with Step 10).
- Recruit helpers, especially if there is a lot of set-up to be done (i.e. silent auction).
- If your event is in a public space, see if there is any way to make announcements (or have informational signage) about your fundraiser.
- Bring it back to the Comfort Zone Camp mission – let your attendees know why they are there! People are going to be more willing to give if they know their money is being spent well & going towards a great cause!
- Inform your helpers and staff at the venue that you can take cash, credit cards, & checks for donations.
- HAVE FUN! You have done the planning – now it's time to execute your plan, have fun, & raise money for a great cause!
- Be sure to clean up after your event, and double check that you have everything you came with.



Step 10 – Thank You & Follow-Up!

- Make sure to thank the venue, your donors (the ones you can), helpers, and any companies that donated items to your fundraiser.
- For in-kind donations (donated goods & services) turn in an 'in kind form' for each item to the National Program Manager (needed for tax purposes).
- Post to Facebook & other social media outlets – people who could not make it may still want to donate. Include photos if possible!
- Submit your donations, and log all offline donations to your fundraising website.