



Are You Ready for a Capital Campaign?

There are ways to measure your organization's readiness for a capital campaign. Here are some characteristics of a nonprofit that is most likely to find success in a campaign:

1. Your nonprofit is needed.

- The organization is actively making a difference in the community and can make an even bigger impact in the future.

2. Your nonprofit is known and respected.

- The community knows about your organization.
- When you recruit board members, they consider it an honor to be asked.

3. Your nonprofit is focused and healthy.

- The organization has a practical strategic plan that fits with a capital campaign.
- The organization is financially healthy, meaning it has a balanced budget, access to credit, and financial and audit records that are in order.

4. Your organization has a base for fundraising.

- A strong corps of annual donors exists, and your organization has had success with increasing gifting levels by active stewardship.

5. Your board of directors is ready.

- Each member of the board makes an annual gift to the organization, and many have made additional special or extra gifts.
- Board members understand what a campaign would require in terms of their own individual and collective financial support and time.
- The board is willing to help cultivate and solicit gifts, and each member has helped identify one or two donors that can make a gift for the campaign.
- The board has put a development committee in place, and board champions are advocating for fundraising.

6. The staff leadership is ready.

- The CEO is respected by staff, board, donors, clients and the larger community, and willing to commit time to working on the campaign.
- The organization either has a full-time development director or has addressed which staff member will be responsible for the campaign.
- The CEO and board have secured campaign counsel or addressed why they are not hiring counsel.

7. You've done your homework.

- The organization knows what it needs to raise funds for, can articulate the outcomes and has a written and refined case for support.
- A feasibility study has been conducted to test the case before going forward with a campaign, and you've set a realistic campaign goal.

8. You can effectively tell your story.

- You have a written plan to communicate your campaign and its key messages.
- Staff and board members can tell the organization's story and communicate why a campaign is necessary.

9. You can spend money to raise money.

- The organization has identified a budget for a campaign and has allocated funding for it.
- The budget includes funds for donor recognition and communication, training and materials, counsel and equipment.

And, most importantly...

10. Your campaign is important, exciting and will make a difference!

- Your board and staff are excited about what this campaign can mean.
- You can create important changes in people's lives if you succeed in raising the funds.