Standing Up for Our Beneficiaries

Institute of Fundraising Scotland Conference 2016

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Vice President
WHAT I’M GOING TO COVER TODAY

- A Roman god and a very annoying Greek
- What you’ve all told me about your relationships with beneficiaries
- Fundraising ethics – where do beneficiaries fit in?
- A new look at relationship fundraising – is it all about the donor?
JANUS
SURVEY RESULTS
How important were beneficiaries in your job choice?

- Very important: 64%
- Quite important: 24%
- Not very important: 1%
- Neither important nor unimportant: 11%
Who is responsible for the way beneficiaries are represented?

- The CEO: 25%
- The head of communications: 10%
- The head of fundraising: 6%
- Other: 8%
- No-one: 1%
- Don't know: 1%
- A combination of the above: 49%
How comfortable do you feel about representation of beneficiaries?

- Quite comfortable: 41%
- Very comfortable: 42%
- Somewhat uncomfortable: 9%
- Neutral: 9%
- Extremely uncomfortable: 1%
- A little uncomfortable: 4%
How easy is it for you to have access/contact with beneficiaries?

- Very easy: 32%
- Quite easy: 23%
- Neither easy nor difficult: 10%
- Quite difficult: 22%
- Very difficult: 13%
Roughly how often do you have contact with beneficiaries?

- Daily 19%
- Weekly 19%
- Monthly 24%
- Quarterly 12%
- Twice a year 3%
- Once a year 10%
- Less frequently than once a year 13%
Reasons for difficulty in contacting beneficiaries

- Geographically remote: 41%
- Complex issues: 13%
- Controlled by other team: 19%
- Mistrust from comms/program team: 16%
- Unsure: 3%
- Beneficiaries not easy to define: 8%
Do you consult with beneficiaries on fundraising materials?

- Yes: 38%
- No: 62%
How do you organize this?

- Direct contact: 40%
- Forums/meetings: 23%
- Surveys: 17%
- Through other team: 11%
- Informal: 3%
- Not sure: 6%
If you do consult with beneficiaries, what opinions do they express?

- Generally positive: 68%
- Unknown: 25%
- Negative: 7%
WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

- Beneficiaries are really important to fundraisers.

- BUT we don’t get to have very much contact or access to them in our jobs...

- Partly because issues around them may be complex, but a lot of the time because other people in our organisation don’t trust our motives!

- It’s a distrust that doesn’t seem to be shared by the beneficiaries themselves.
HOW IT SHOULD WORK!

- Beneficiaries
- Donors
- Fundraisers
WHAT ARE THE BIG BLOCKS?

- Ethical uncertainties
- Power imbalance

LACK OF LEADERSHIP
FUNDRAISING ETHICS

The only mention of beneficiaries in our Code of Practice:

“Organisations **MUST NOT** exaggerate facts relating to the potential beneficiary.”
Our codes of practice are formulated from the assumption that our primary duties as fundraisers are to the donors and public we fundraise from.
WHO DO THE PUBLIC THINK CHARITIES SHOULD BE ACCOUNTABLE TO?

Q: Looking at this card, which two or three, if any, do you think charities should be accountable to (i.e., expected to justify their actions or decisions to)?

- A charity regulator: 48%
- The charity’s Trustees: 43%
- People who donate money to the charity: 35%
- The general public: 25%
- People who directly benefit from their goods/services/activities: 18%
- Central government: 15%
- Local government: 14%
- The police: 6%
- None of these/Don’t know: 6%

Base: All respondents (3,738)

Source: Ipsos MORI
“It’s important to recognise that donors are the most important people in the entire charity process and that what is right for them is ultimately best for your organisation and its beneficiaries.”

Direct Marketing Association, 2016
ARE they?

IS it?
NEW THINKING ON FUNDRAISING ETHICS

RIGHTS STUFF
FUNDRAISING'S ETHICS GAP
AND A NEW THEORY OF
FUNDRAISING ETHICS v1.1

Ian MacQuillan
September 2016

Ask

Ask

Don’t ask

SUSTAINABLE
PHILANTHROPY
WITH
PLYMOUTH
UNIVERSITY

Rogare is part of the University of Plymouth Hartsook Centre for Sustainable Philanthropy

Associate Members – helping Rogare to change the way we think about fundraising
“RIGHTS BALANCING” FUNDRAISING ETHICS

Under Rogare’s proposed Rights Balancing ethics framework:

“Fundraising is ethical when it balances the duty of fundraisers to solicit support on behalf of their beneficiaries, with the right of the donor not to be subjected to undue pressure to donate.”
“POVERTY PORN”

“...any type of media, be it written, photographed, or filmed, which exploits the poor’s condition in order to generate the necessary sympathy for selling newspapers or increasing charitable donations or support for a given cause.”

Matt Collin, 2009
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THE TRUTH IS NOT BLACK AND WHITE

INTERVIEW-South Sudanese stave off death with water lilies and goat bones

by Emma Bacha | Thomson Reuters Foundation
Tuesday, 13 September 2016 18:29 GMT

In Juba, vegetable traders are now cutting tomatoes in half to sell because some customers can no longer afford to buy a whole one

This is the truth.
THE TRUTH IS NOT BLACK AND WHITE

Rose and Kiilu's story

"When there is hunger I have to encourage the children to endure the situation and have hope, for we will be better tomorrow."
Rose, Kiilu's grandmother

"This is the reality of life for children like Kiilu who is 10 years old and live with his grandmother Rose, in Kilu."

About Kiilu

Favourite subject: Maths
Favourite sport: Football. "I like to play football with my friends and"

And so is this.
“Show donors that one day you can be sat in some nice gaff in Kensington, all the tea in China and something can happen. Maybe your loved ones die and you lose the plot and in a short space of time you can be homeless just like anybody else. And it’s right across the board no matter who you are or what you’re doing, anything can happen to you to change your life. [Clicks fingers] Like that.”

From Beth Breeze and John Dean, “User Views of Fundraising”
FAILURE OF LEADERSHIP

“Fundraisers are briefed from the top with a simple: ‘We need more money, go and get it.’ The only way to break through this is education in fundraising for trustees and executive teams, across all departments.”

Respondent to Rogare’s Relationship Fundraising Review
ASKING AWKWARD QUESTIONS

“Every fundraiser has a responsibility to the donors, to find out for certain that the organisation's programmes are sound and to report back to the donors that they are. This often means the fundraiser has to ask awkward questions of the programme managers and to insist on full answers. That's the fundraiser's job.”

Relationship Fundraising: A Donor-Based Approach to the Business of Raising Money (pp. 5-6). Ken Burnett.
CONTACT INFORMATION

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