

Throw A Fantastic FUNdraiser!

Fundraising is a great way for your group to raise awareness in your local schools and communities, as well as to support international causes or the operation costs of your club. Fundraising is also a fun way for your group to build friendships among classmates, teachers, and neighbors. There are many types of creative, zany, and unusual fundraisers – all involving difficult levels of effort and preparation. Only your club can decide which fundraiser will work best for you. However, all fundraisers require dedication, planning, and commitment.

Choosing a Fundraiser:

There are so many fundraisers... how to pick just *one*?! Before deciding on a fundraiser, you need to *brainstorm* with your group *how much work the club is expecting to do* and *what it wants to earn*. Think of different ideas and decide what works best. When choosing a fundraiser, **ask yourselves these questions:**

- Will it require money before-hand (example – purchasing goods to resell)? If so, where will we get it? How will we ensure that we will make the money back?
- Who is our *target audience*? What type of event would they like? What items would they buy?
- When is the event going to be held? A car wash is a great idea in June but a bad one in January. What day is best for our audience? If the event is long-term, when will it begin and end?
- How will we advertise it? Will the school/community allow us to distribute a flyer?
- Where will the event be? Can it be at school? If your group is not a school group, can it be at a member's home or church? If you are planning an outdoor event, where will you go if it rains?
- If you are having an event to raise awareness about an issue, how will you add education to your fundraiser?

Pre-Planning:

After you have chosen a fundraiser, the group needs to give its members responsibilities and plan the event. An important step is filling out a “**Five W's**” sheet:

Who: What club is running this? Do you have an over-all leader or different committees? What club members are doing what? Which teacher/adult is helping you? Who do you want to come to the event or to whom do you want to sell items?

What: What exactly is the fundraiser? How will you advertise it?

When: What day and time will the fundraiser be? If it is a long-term fundraiser (like a drive) when will it begin and end?

Where: Where will the fundraiser be? How will your club reserve that spot for the fundraiser? What if it rains/snows?

Why: What purpose does your fundraiser serve? Are you using the funds to support a specific cause? If so, how will you make that known? Are you going to have educational aspects in your fundraiser? If so, how will you

incorporate education into your fundraiser? How will this fundraiser help local/international communities?

Also during the pre-planning stages, you should **make a timeline** showing when specific planning events need to be completed. **Make a budget** with your group outlining how much money the fundraiser will cost to implement and how much you expect to earn. You should try to **get businesses to donate items** to your fundraiser. Many small businesses will be willing to give, if you ask nicely and *offer free advertising* at your event. When asking businesses for support, ask early and use a **donation letter**. For a sample donation letter, please see the *Dinner Auction Student Action Plan* in the Real-Life Collection. Companies can supply free printing, prizes, decorations, entertainment or food. Brainstorm which companies might give what donations. Make a list and decide which members will go to which companies.

Planning:

During the planning stages of the fundraiser, your group should be working together very closely to ensure that no detail slips through the cracks. Refer frequently to your “Five W’s” sheet, timeline, and budget. Get ideas and support from teachers and parents. Build interest for your fundraiser in your communities and schools. Word-of-mouth is great advertising for an event. During planning, your club should be making contact with the businesses you outlined in the pre-planning stage.

The Big Event:

On the day of the fundraiser (if your fundraiser involves an event), have club members **arrive early** to set-up and take care of last-minute emergencies. (**Law of fundraising: There is always at least one last-minute emergency.**) *Talk to people who come to participate.* Tell them about your club and its goals. *Thank them* for their interest and support. Assign members certain tasks before-hand so that everybody knows exactly what they should be doing. **Give a job to any member who wants one.** Responsibilities help members feel involved and empowered. Make sure that there are at least two mature and dependable people watching the money at all times. And remember to **have fun**. This is your club’s success story – Enjoy It!

Afterwards:

Make sure you clean everything up and thank your school/church for letting you use their space. Count the money you earn and have at least two people keep track of it until it is deposited. It is *very important* to deposit the money in a secure place (either a bank or a treasury at your school/church) until it is donated. You may want to write thank-you letters to people (parents, teachers, community leaders, businesses) who supported you. Also, if the event was a large and time-consuming one, your club might want to have a special “party” meeting a week or so after to thank its dedicated members. You should save the materials (budgets, “Five W’s” sheets, information from donors, flyers, etc.) in a folder for your next fundraiser.

The most important part of a fundraiser is having fun! Keep that in mind while planning and your fundraiser is sure to be a success.

GOOD LUCK!