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March 8, 2010

TIME FOR A SMALLER ASK EVENT?

message from Terry Axelrod

Has your annual Ask Event™ become a burden? Does it seem like nearly as much work as putting on your former gala or auction? Here's a radical thought: maybe it's time to focus on quality, not quantity, and significantly reduce the size of your next Ask Event.



Consider the number one measure of a successful Benevon Free One-Hour Ask Event: At least 40% of the people in attendance must have attended a Point of Entry® in the prior year. When was the last time your group met that benchmark?

Next, consider this measure from our [Sustainable Funding Scorecard](#): 10% of Ask Event guests join your Multiple-Year Giving Society™ (pledging at least \$1,000 for five years) newly each year. When was the last time that ten out of every 100 guests at your Ask Event joined your Giving Society at one of these levels?

If you are not meeting either or both of these benchmarks, it's time to reduce the size of your Ask Event.

To read the rest of this article, please visit our [Current Feature Web page](#). This article is available until March 21, 2010.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

what's new

Conference Call: Can the Benevon Five-Year Program Work for Us?

Are you somewhat familiar with the Benevon Model yet uncertain how it would work for your organization? Do you feel that sustainable funding is elusive or unattainable? Please invite your board members, senior executives, and volunteers to this conference call to discover how the Benevon Five-Year Curriculum for Sustainable Funding® can work for every nonprofit.

On this introductory conference call designed for organizations that have not yet enrolled in our Five-Year Curriculum for Sustainable Funding, you and your board members will learn our tested and proven formula for building long-term sustainable funding from mission-focused individual donors. Benevon founder and CEO, Terry Axelrod, will moderate this call and describe the details of our five-year curriculum. Listen and ask questions as our special alumni guest speakers describe their challenges and successes in achieving their organizations' measurable definition of financial sustainability.

[Join us for this Conference Call: Can the Benevon Five-Year Program Work for Us? on March 16.](#)

Sustainable Funding Conference Call for the Association of Christian Schools International

Christian schools have unique challenges in conveying their financial needs to the community. Join us for a special conference call to learn about how to implement the Benevon Model to build sustainable funding for your Christian school during these challenging economic times. Learn how to engage your community in your organization's mission and to inspire giving, even in a lagging economy. Listen and ask questions about this personal, mission-based system for growing your base of passionate, long-term donors and moving your school toward sustainable funding.

[Join us for this Sustainable Funding Conference Call for the Association of Christian Schools International on March 18.](#)

Sustainable Funding Conference Call for Self-Implementers

Are you implementing the Benevon Model without attending one of our two-day workshops and receiving our coaching through the process? Are you wondering how your results measure up to those of our alumni organizations and what you should expect?

Join us for a special conference call to learn about the results of our alumni organizations and to hear from other self-implementers about their success with the model. These alumni will explain the difference it made to finally attend the two-day workshop with a full team from their organization and receive our coaching. Ask questions about the essential and often counterintuitive aspects of the model, and learn how this program has moved organizations towards sustainable funding.

[Join us for this Sustainable Funding Conference Call for Self-Implementers on April 16.](#)

Conference Call for Implementing the Benevon Model in These Challenging Economic Times

Join us for a special conference call to learn about how to implement the Benevon Model to build sustainable funding for your nonprofit during these challenging economic times. Learn how to engage your community in your organization's mission and to inspire giving, even in a lagging economy. Listen and ask questions as our alumni guest speakers from other nonprofit organizations discuss their success with this no-pressure, mission-centered approach.

[Join us for this Conference Call for Implementing the Benevon Model in These Challenging](#)

[Economic Times on April 19.](#)

PRIVACY AND THE ESSENTIAL STORY

ask Terry

Q: *We live in a small town, and we're concerned about privacy issues surrounding our Essential Stories—we feel that in some cases, these stories might reveal too much about the subject, and people will be able to tell who the story is about. How can we avoid this?*

Glen in Colorado

A: If the story is truly too revealing, you should consider using a different story. However, there are ways to preserve your clients' privacy while still telling a compelling Essential Story™. You can change names and distinguishing details, or make your Essential Story a composite of several stories. Your Essential Story doesn't have to be a literal retelling of one client's experiences, but rather should convey the work your organization provides in general to all clients, and the impact that work has on their lives. Finally, you should obtain permission from those people whose stories you use—if they themselves don't feel comfortable with their story being told, you should look elsewhere for your Essential Story.



Terry

For information about submitting Ask Terry questions, read our [guidelines for submission](#).

COACHING FOR SUSTAINABILITY—JULIE GOEBL

tips on implementing the model

Our fundraising coaches inspire and motivate nonprofit organizations of all sizes and types. This week, Benevon coach Julie Goebel discusses finding a Leadership or Challenge Gift.

We tell our groups that one requirement of implementing the Benevon Model is that they obtain a Leadership or Challenge Gift for their Ask Event each year. This gift, which can come from a single donor or a group of donors, and can be a one-time gift or a multiple-year pledge, helps to inspire giving from your other Ask Event guests. But how can you go about finding a Leadership or Challenge Gift? I recommend starting in the following places:



- Look at your Multiple-Year Giving Society Donors—either one donor or a group of them. And you don't have to wait for their fifth year to ask! You can ask for a one-time gift in addition to their five-year pledge, or you can ask them to extend their pledge for additional years or increase their annual pledge to a larger amount.
- Look at other campaigns: your past "Retire the Debt" campaign, a capital campaign, etc. Look at who gave to those campaigns, and consider asking those donors for an additional one-time gift.
- Former board members who still wish to be involved with your organization can be excellent sources of Leadership or Challenge gift funds. Again, you might find this gift from a single former board member, or you might create a larger gift from a pool of gifts from former board members.
- Consider asking your long-term Table Captains. If they have been involved with your organization, and the Ask Event, for a while, they might love the opportunity to inspire giving at your next Ask Event.
- Look at your one-time donors. Ask them to make another one-time gift, or a five-year pledge in the Multiple-Year Giving Society.

Learn more about Julie and our other coaches on our [Meet the Coaches page](#).

INTRODUCTORY SESSIONS

event calendar

We currently have live, in-person sessions and conference calls open for registration, including:

- [Boston, Massachusetts](#)
- [Springfield, Massachusetts](#)

For information about in-person sessions in your area, go to our [Introductory Session calendar](#).

For conference call listings in your area, go to our [Conference Call Calendar](#).

Watch our free online video, [Seventeen Minutes to Sustainable Funding](#).

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