

Conducting A Successful Capital Campaign, Second Edition

The New, Revised and Expanded Edition of the Leading Guide to Planning and Implementing a Capital Campaign

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The Dove Preparedness Index from Chapter 2

Another tool that has been developed and introduced in the past decade is the Dove Preparedness Index (DPI). It is not essential that a DPI review be done, but institutions are now beginning to use this tool during campaign preparation as a way of evaluating the current state of preparedness.

The DPI can be used at a variety of strategic points leading up to the formal launch of a campaign. It can be administered internally or facilitated by an independent third party. Having a facilitator work with the organization is recommended if the institution's background in campaigns is weak or nonexistent, or if the institution lacks confidence that it has the knowledge, understanding, or ability to determine numerical values correctly and objectively.

The DPI individually considers the ten essential prerequisites discussed in Chapter One. Each is scored on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 representing the lowest score and 10 the highest score. Three of these ten prerequisites are considered to be key (the "key three," italicized in the example that concludes this chapter). If the overall score on all ten prerequisites is 75 or higher, and if the score on the "key three" is 25-30, then the institution is very well positioned to go forward with its campaign. If the overall score is 60-75, or if the "key three" score is 20-25, then the institution is in a gray area-close, but probably not quite ready. If the overall score is lower than 60, or if the "key three" score is below 20, then there is still work to do. Here is the DPI for a hypothetical organization:

- Commitments of time and support from all key participants (9)
- A clear organizational self-image and a strategic plan for organizational growth and improvement (8)
- Fundraising objectives based on important and legitimate institutional plans, goals, budgets, and needs (8)
- A written document that makes a compelling case for supporting the campaign (3)
- An assessment of the institutional development program and a market survey addressing internal and external preparedness (8)
- Enlistment and education of leaders (1)
- Ability and readiness of major donors to give substantial lead gifts (5)
- Competent staff and, perhaps, external professional counsel (5)
- Adequate, even liberal, funds for expenses (6)
- Consideration of other factors (age of the organization, caliber of the constituency, range of the institution's giving program, size and geographical distribution of the constituency, previous fundraising success, quality of the program and impact of its services, location of the organization, human factors,

state of the economy, competing and conflicting campaigns, trends in the nonprofit sector, unfavorable publicity, local issues) (5)

In this hypothetical case, the DPI was 58 and the "key three" score 9. This organization is not yet ready to proceed.

What needs attention? Certainly, the case needs development; the matter of leadership needs to be addressed, and the major donor pool has to be expanded. Raising these "key three" scores alone to the level of 8-9 each would position the institution to go forward. Moreover, the cultivation process must be expedited, and it appears that the proposed budget is inadequate. There are some issues around staffing, and "other factors" were noted that either are causing concern or require some attention.

Let it not be forgotten: today's preparation is tomorrow's performance. Use all these tools-strategic planning, a market survey, development program assessment, and the DPI-carefully, thoughtfully, and thoroughly, and use them all very well.