

1-2-3 Go! (November 4, 2020)

Welcome to the Shelter Success Simplified e-newsletter of concise inspiration, actions, and ideas for animal welfare leaders and managers – and those who aspire to be!

FREE FUNDRAISING WEBINAR Thursday Nov. 12 – “It’s Not Too Late! End-of-Year Fundraising Ideas You Can Still Implement.” Space is limited so SIGNUP NOW.

1 – Quote to Inspire

- “We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.” ~ [Aristotle](#) (384-322 BC), Greek philosopher, scientist, tutor to Alexander the Great

2 – Actions to Try

- **Announce your goals:** One way to hold yourself and your organization accountable to reaching certain goals is to announce them. This keeps the vision top of mind and thus makes it easier to engage in regular, repeated actions toward fulfilling it. If few know you’re trying to reach a specific goal, it’s easy to let the daily fires occupy your time. Some goals can be announced to donors and the public, whereas others are best announced internally to staff and volunteers. With both kinds, you’ll be more focused knowing others are watching – and it creates opportunities for enlisting help and support.
- **Ask for input:** Many leaders and managers – and board members, too – often assume all innovations and new ideas for the organization must come from them. But great ideas can come from anywhere. Ask for team members’ input. They may be reluctant at first if they’ve never been asked before or they’ve been asked but nothing was ever followed up on. Ask them specifically what tools or process changes would make their jobs more efficient, and ask them generally what they think would improve the organization and why. Their perspectives may change yours.

3 – Ideas to Consider

- **Being relevant matters especially now:** One data point from the Great Recession a little over a decade ago is that people didn’t stop donating to nonprofits. Rather, they changed from giving to 12 or 13 organizations to instead giving to 3 or 4. The advice back then, which also applies now, is to stay relevant. Let the public know you’re still out there saving animals and what unique benefits you bring to the community – and remember that highlighting a specific animal who represents the best of what you do creates greater emotional resonance for most donors than stories about your overall impact.
- **Urgency vs. desperation:** Convey a sense of urgency in your appeals to donors, but avoid sounding desperate. Desperation puts the focus on the organization – “We need your help to survive” – rather than on your mission. Instead, employ a sense of urgency. An example: “Your support is needed now more than ever to help animals like Frosty (be sure to have a photo of Frosty) whose people lost their jobs due to the pandemic. Donate today to provide a strong safety net for our community’s pets.”

- **Moving past putting out fires:** One very understandable habit is to let your day be shaped by problems that come up and your efforts to fix them. This puts you in a state of reaction, where it becomes easy to lose track of the big picture. A more productive approach is to determine the positive place you want to be and what needs to be done to get there. For instance, let's say your volume of foster homes has outgrown your tracking system. Engage others (staff and volunteers) to help determine what system would meet your current and future needs, then work toward that goal of creating a better process for managing and tracking your foster care program. You'll still need to put out some fires – they just won't be your focus.

New episodes of the Shelter Success Simplified podcast:

- **Safe-handling tips for animals at shelters and clinics including parking-lot transfers:** Certified Animal Behavior Consultant Kelley Bollen on [Episode 23](#)
- **How to create a good nonprofit board of directors:** Jill Vacchina-Dobbs of SPCA of Northern Nevada on [Episode 22](#)
- **What funders look for in grant applications:** Chelsea Staley of Petco Foundation on [Episode 20](#)

Or find the podcast on [Apple](#), [Spotify](#), [Stitcher](#), and [iHeartRadio](#).

Struggling to manage your workload? Need to get a project or your team back on track? We help shelters and rescue groups with fundraising, action planning, operational improvements and more. [Request a free 30-minute consultation](#).

We love questions and feedback – just reply to this email.

~ Mark Robison, newsletter editor and Humane Network senior consultant

P.S. [Soccer rivalry](#).