



Change-Makers Nonprofit Book Club Meeting - Compelling Conversations for Fundraisers - February 2024
Thu. Feb 29, 2024

Summary:

The meeting was a book club discussion led by Melanie Lambert on the February book club selection. Lambert provided a detailed review of the book, highlighting its practical structure, readability, and valuable resources. She also pointed out some repetitive content and the manual-like style, suggesting that while it may not be as engaging for experienced fundraisers, it could be highly beneficial for newcomers to the field.

Lambert provided a comprehensive overview of the Values and Case Statement chapter, emphasizing the shift from traditional fundraising approaches to a more personal and values-driven connection with donors. She highlighted the significance of conveying organizational values, authentic listening, and pivoting conversations towards fundraising. Additionally, she shared insights on the effectiveness of a positive approach in engaging donors and discussed the relevance of the chapter's content to grant application drafting.

The meeting also included a discussion on fundraising principles and donor engagement, highlighting the significance of incorporating a call to action in conversations with donors. Lambert emphasized the need to understand donors' interests and values, stressing the drawbacks of relying solely on wealth screenings to identify potential donors. Additionally, she underscored the critical role of speaking with donors about the impact they have made to maintain their support, drawing from her personal experiences as a donor.



The meeting concluded with a discussion on the transformative approach to fundraising, advocating for a shift from a hierarchical structure to a collaborative problem-solving dynamic. Lambert and Alan Mackern emphasized the role of passion, donor knowledge, and relationship-building in fostering a culture where donors are inspired to contribute without being directly asked. The conversation also touched on personal introductions, highlighting the diverse backgrounds and experiences of the participants. The meeting ended with plans for the next book club meeting and warm farewells exchanged between the participants.

Chapters & Topics:

Compelling Conversations for Fundraisers

Melanie Lambert shared her thoughts on the February book club selection, emphasizing its practical structure, ease of reading, and valuable resources. She also noted some repetitive content and the manual-like style, suggesting that it may be particularly beneficial for those new to fundraising.

Values and Case Statement

Melanie Lambert delves into the chapter on Values and Case Statement, stressing the need for fundraisers to go beyond memorizing elevator pitches and instead focus on communicating organizational values. She underscores the importance of using values to differentiate nonprofits, authentically listening to donors, and pivoting conversations towards fundraising. Lambert also connects the discussion to grant writing and the positive impact of presenting a compelling narrative.

Fundraising Principles and Donor Engagement

Melanie Lambert shares insights on fundraising principles and donor engagement, emphasizing the need for a call to action in conversations with donors. She discusses the limitations of wealth screenings and the importance of having quality conversations with potential donors, particularly existing and recurring donors. Lambert also emphasizes the critical role of speaking with donors about the impact they have made to maintain their support.



Importance of Stewardship and Gratitude in Fundraising

Melanie Lambert discusses the significance of stewardship and gratitude in fundraising, citing a past experience of hosting a thank-a-thon that yielded donations without making direct solicitations. She emphasizes the value of adding real meaning to donors' lives and how it can compel them to support an organization. Lambert also notes the effectiveness of using "you language" in communication with donors to foster a sense of personal connection.

Transforming Fundraising Mindset

Melanie Lambert advocates for a transformational shift in the fundraising mindset, emphasizing the importance of donor-centric approaches and mutual problem-solving. She highlights the significance of re-engaging donors, discussing the concepts of LYBUNTS and SYBUNTS, and the challenges of retaining new donors. Lambert also emphasizes the value of authentic listening and the need to approach uncomfortable conversations with donors in a constructive manner.

Key Takeaways from Fundraising Chapters 4-6

Melanie Lambert shares her insights on donor attrition, emphasizing the significance of engaging donors and understanding their motivations to prevent attrition. She also highlights the importance of moving donors through the donor pyramid and the value of planned gifts as a reflection of donors' values, drawing from her own experience with a legacy gift from a recurring donor.

Discussion on Fundraising Strategies and Relationship Building with Donors and Foundations

Melanie Lambert shares insights from the book on fundraising strategies, emphasizing the significance of the integrated ask and the challenges of donor conversations. She also stresses the importance of building relationships with program officers and grant administrators, highlighting the mutual benefit of addressing each other's needs.

Discussion on Book Content and Key Points



Melanie Lambert leads a discussion on the book's emphasis on establishing relationships and compelling conversations. Alan Mackern shares his thoughts on the importance of connecting and making a pivot in conversations to address crucial points, particularly fundraising needs and serving the mission.

Navigating Fundraising Meetings

Melanie Lambert shares her experience with the difficulty of transitioning from casual conversation to fundraising discussions during face-to-face meetings. She highlights the need to be upfront about the meeting's purpose to avoid discomfort and wasted time, emphasizing the importance of setting clear expectations from the beginning.

Perspectives on Fundraising and Philanthropy

Melanie Lambert and Alan Mackern share insights on fundraising, highlighting the shift from a hierarchical approach to a mutual problem-solving perspective. They stress the significance of passion, donor knowledge, and relationship-building, aiming to reach a stage where donors are inspired to get involved without being asked for donations.

Discussion on Book Content and Application

Teresa and Melanie reflect on the book's unexpected content and discuss the practical value of the resources in the back section. They draw connections between the book's teachings and their professional and personal lives, expressing enthusiasm for its applicability. Alan also shares his positive impression of the book so far.

Key Questions:

- * How can we utilize the book's breakdown by donor type as a guide for fundraising?
- * What strategies can be used to connect with donors on a personal level through values and case statements?
- * How can we effectively acquire new donors by understanding their why?



* How can we approach foundations and grant administrators to build relationships and secure funding?

Next Steps

[Join Change-Makers Nonprofit Book Club on Amazon](#) to see a full list of upcoming books and how to purchase them. [Click here to get your copy of “Compelling Conversations for Fundraisers: Talk Your Way to Success with Donors and Funders”*](#)

**As an Amazon Affiliate, Melanie Lambert receives a small commission for each applicable sale.*