

LEADERSHIP ISN'T THE MOST IMPORTANT THING. IT IS EVERYTHING

Campaigns continue to be won in spite of these challenging economic times. Success is realized when organizations determine to forge ahead, but proceed with powerful and influential leadership. Success awaits those organizations unwilling to compromise with anything less than the best.

Even in a more robust economic time, many organizations find great difficulty in recruiting *the right* leadership. If they settle for less than the best, their campaigns are flawed from the beginning.

Some decide that instead of securing the very best person, it is more expedient to settle for those “willing to serve”. This usually means an individual who doesn’t bring everything you hoped for— but is available. You must not allow yourself to fall into this tempting snare.

Your campaign will only be as successful as the leadership you enlist. Selecting and recruiting precisely the right person to head your campaign program is the most important decision you can make. Never settle for second best.

Once you have identified a perfect candidate, a careful and thoughtful approach must be orchestrated that ensures their acceptance. It requires as much care, as you would give in soliciting a lead gift.

Determine the most formidable team to call on the person. Keep in mind, recruiting the right person is truly the most important gift of the campaign.

Prepare a job description that describes what the person needs to bring to the position. What are the duties? How much time is required? What support will be given by your staff and organization? But of greater importance, how will this campaign impact those you serve?

I think back to the most successful campaigns I’ve been associated with and the most effective campaign chairpersons engaged in those programs. I’ve learned a lot. Over the years, I find these are the messages you want to convey to your potential chairperson in securing their appointment:

1. No other organization is better positioned to provide its service and touch lives in the way yours does.
2. This campaign will significantly impact those we serve and the institution’s greater community.

3. We are convinced the campaign is winnable. Our study shows that.
4. We will never reach our *greatest level of success* without this person's personal involvement. Our study shows that.
5. Because of this person's status and the regard he or she enjoys, the chair will be able to recruit volunteers and key leadership. Our study shows that.

You will certainly need to add other insights as appropriate for your situation. However, by adhering to this outline you are providing what leaders are looking for today to determine their willingness to chair a campaign.

Be certain to remind them of the significant impact your campaign will have in saving and changing lives. Additionally, you give confidence that the goal is achievable (who wants to be associated with anything but success!).

I got to thinking of a campaign where I was providing counsel. The Board of the Children's Health Foundation poured over the list of candidates being considered to lead the campaign. After careful deliberation, it was obvious that Bill Comrie met all the criteria. He would be a perfect fit.

We worked behind the scenes to make certain the right team was in place to secure his appointment. The approach was made. It was a perfect presentation.

Guess what Bill said? It was *no*.

Everyone involved was devastated to say the least. After the meeting, one board member suggested: "We all heard Bill say *no*. But I think I heard *maybe!*"

We all huddled to make another attempt. Additional strategy was implemented. A phone call was placed for one more visit.

Here is what they said to Bill on the next visit. "Bill, you know how important this is that a new dedicated Children's Hospital is completed. We know that success will be realized, but it will not reach its greatest level of success without your personal involvement."

Guess what Bill said this time? It was confirmed he would lead the campaign. This is why the campaign ultimately raised twice the original goal. Leadership determined to settle for nothing in selecting their chairman than the very best choice.

We think this is why Bill finally accepted. The project was going to save and change lives. Success was assured. And the realization that his personal involvement would ultimately bring the greatest possible level of success.



When we call on a possible chair, I like telling them we are not just looking for just anyone. You have taken great care and deliberation in the selection. It is not merely filling a position, but their personal involvement will significantly enhance the final outcome of the campaign.

Let me suggest something else that's important. I find today you will find it easier to recruit leadership if you have co-chairs. Often we have three. In one campaign recently, I wanted to be certain we include at least one woman. And I wanted someone (man or woman) who represented the more established (well...older) community. Finally we were seeking a young emerging leader.

We find that recruiting leadership is more challenging than ever. But we find key men and women are willing to step forward for causes that are of consequence, organizations that change lives and save lives.

Nothing will do more to ensure the success of your campaign than recruiting the right chair.



Go to our website: www.panaslinzy.com to review a fail-proof checklist—
“Choosing the Right Person to Chair Your Campaign.” There are twenty-one criteria you must consider.

