

Fundraising Tips

The Alzheimer's Association, Massachusetts/New Hampshire Chapter's mission is to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research, to provide and enhance care for all affected, and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health. Through your efforts to raise money for the Alzheimer's Association, you are acting as a volunteer, an advocate, and a representative of the Alzheimer's Association – helping us to achieve our mission. You should feel good about your efforts.

Many people have found fundraising to be easier than they expected and very satisfying. Here's why:

- They felt good about being part of a team;
- They felt pride in doing a good deed;
- They have strong feelings about our program and research activities;
- They have a loved one or know someone with Alzheimer's disease;
- They enjoyed the opportunity to re-acquaint themselves with old friends and make new ones;
- They enjoyed reaching fundraising milestones they set for themselves;
- They enjoyed sharing ideas and accomplishments with others.



The following fundraising tips are available as a reference to help you get started with your fundraising plan.

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Develop your plan and reach your goal

First things first! Taking the time to organize your fundraising plan will help you succeed in the long-ride. The five things to contend with are:

- Setting your fundraising goal
- How to ask
- Who to ask
- When to ask
- How much to ask for

Set your fundraising goal. Set your goal before you start fundraising. Begin by raising the minimum pledge, and expanding beyond that. Think about the programs and services made possible by the money you raise.

Determine how to make your ask. This is where you can get creative. The most successful fundraisers use a combination of face-to-face conversations, emails, and letters to prospective donors. We highly recommend you setup your online fundraising webpage for easy “asks” to a broad, approachable audience.

Remember, gifts can come in a variety of ways. These include:

- Personal cash, checks, and online donations
- Employer contributions and employer matching gifts
- Special events fundraising

Your personal contact is what makes the difference. Talk about a friend or family member with Alzheimer's disease or other personal reasons you have for riding and raising money for Alzheimer's research. Tell supporters your fundraising goal while talking about the Ride you will be participating in. When asking for pledges, be relaxed, but show your enthusiasm. You'll do best with the style of solicitation that reflects you and your personality.

Determine who to ask: Ask everyone! Begin by drafting your target list of prospective donors, then implement. Your list may include:

- Family
- Friends
- Work colleagues
- Employer (also – employer matching gifts!)
- Nursing homes / Alzheimer's care facilities
- Church members
- Local businesses
- Clients vendors
- Community groups
- Physician / dentist
- Hair stylist
- Ministers/Rabbi/Pastor
- Riding club members

Remember to include any vendors, consultants and business with whom you may work.

They can choose to make a personal donation or a business contribution. The larger your contact list, the more money you will raise to support critical Alzheimer's disease education, care, and research.

Determine when to ask. Get started early! You will see that your energy and enthusiasm are contagious. Don't just pick a day in the future and pretend you'll start then – putting it off results in stress at the end of your training. Start today and you will be surprised at how quickly the results accumulate.

Determine how much to ask for. The amount you ask for from each sponsor varies. For example, you would probably feel more comfortable asking for \$100 from a close family member than from a neighbor. Be sure to have an idea of how much you want from each person before you make the inquiry, but don't be afraid to ask for more than you expect.

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Keys to Successful Fundraising

It's no surprise that most people are intimidated by the prospect of raising money. You're not alone. But with proper planning, reaching your fundraising (and riding) goals are no sweat! The staff at the Alzheimer's Association will work closely with you to help you achieve your goal, just as we've assisted hundreds and hundreds of others in the past.

Be the first to contribute. Once you are registered to ride, your easiest pledge will come from yourself. Remember, it is always easier to ask others if you have already sponsored yourself.

Fundraise in a variety of ways. The most successful fundraisers use a variety of methods, including: soliciting personal donations, asking for employer gifts and employer matching gifts, holding fundraising events, having “benefit” tag sales – you name it!

Share your commitment to the Alzheimer's Association & the RIDE. There is a guiding principle that will help you throughout your fundraising for the RIDE: your commitment to ride for the Alzheimer's Association is an impressive goal. It will touch and inspire people more than you will probably know. People admire and respect those who set a goal and go for it! They will want to invest in you, because it makes them a part of your incredible accomplishment.

Incorporate the cause in your message. Remember that you are not riding for vacation. You're riding for very personal reasons and to raise money for the Alzheimer's Association, Massachusetts/New Hampshire Chapter, to help people and their families who are living with Alzheimer's disease. You are making a huge contribution to the community and inspiring children, teenagers and adults to take action. Become knowledgeable about where your donations go, and you'll inspire donors to give more money.

Ask directly. You raise money when you ask for it, and you don't raise money when you don't. The more people you approach, the more money you will raise. Ask a lot, raise a lot. Ask a little, raise a little. Don't assume people will donate without being approached directly!

Ask for a donation that matches your commitment. What you are doing is a big deal! Don't assume others can't make a donation that matches the size of your commitment. Let the person decide what s/he wants to donate. (Oftentimes, people are flattered by being asked to contribute at high levels because they think you perceive them as being very involved and successful in the community.)

Always keep your donation form handy. You may be at the market, or at your dentist's office, or at your children's school, or at the gym; wherever you are, you are in a perfect place to ask for a donation. Keep the donation forms with you at all times, and be prepared to present one at a moment's notice.

Follow-up. Never hesitate to follow-up with potential donors – many people simply forget to send in their check and a reminder is all they need.

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Letter and email writing tips

When soliciting prospective donors by letter or email, remember these key tips:

- State exactly what you are doing and why. Sharing your personal story is often a key motivator for donors to support you - and the Alzheimer's Association.
- Include your personal fundraising goal in the letter. If you wish, share how much you are personally supporting the cause as well.
- Highlight the important work being done by the Alzheimer's Association.
- Be sure to say that the donation is tax-deductible and that checks should be made payable to the Alzheimer's Association, Massachusetts/New Hampshire Chapter.
- Enclose a copy of a donation form so that your donors can easily send in donations, and a link to your personal fundraising webpage.
- Be sure to thank all your donors.
- Mail/email contacts as early as possible. Don't assume that someone won't want to support your efforts. Ask everyone you can think of.

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Fundraising Online

Setting up your own fundraising webpage will enable donors to easily make a contribution toward your efforts, as well as view your fundraising progress over the next few months. It's easier to reach more people and it's easier for people to donate.

Getting Started

To ensure a successful online fundraising campaign:

1. Build your personal webpage

- The Alzheimer's Association uses Kintera software for online fundraising.
- When building your webpage, highlight why you're riding for the Alzheimer's Association, and clearly state how their donation will further the mission of the Association.
- Use pictures to add a visual component to your fundraising page. A picture could be the person you're riding on behalf of, yourself, or Alzheimer's disease related.
- Include your fundraising goal.

2. Email everyone you know with a link to your personal webpage

Use similar language as you would in a letter.

- Include a link to your personal webpage.
- You might also want to include catchy language for an email campaign, to grab your potential donor's attention. Below is an example of a Top 10 List used with an online campaign, in addition to your personal story:

Top 10 Reasons to Help [NAME] Fundraise for the Alzheimer's Association

- *It's easier than riding the RIDE yourself.*
- *Anyone who makes a donation is guaranteed admission to the event.*
- *You are helping families struggling with Alzheimer's disease.*
- *I'll be your best friend*
- *Avoid the hassle of holiday shopping – a donation makes a great gift*
- *It's cheaper than buying Red Sox tickets!*
- *Your donation will bring us one step closer to finding a cure.*
- *The warm, fuzzy feeling you get from doing something nice.*
- *If I win the RIDE to End Alzheimer's, I'll pay you back 2x your donation!*
- *Help fund an organization that does great work.*

3. Build momentum with your online fundraising campaign

Keep donors updated on your training and fundraising progress. It's amazing to see how many people will donate twice or even three times to your effort once they get an update on the success of your fundraising effort.

4. Thank your donors

Remember to thank every donor with a personal card or call. Donors will also receive a tax-deductible receipt from the Alzheimer's Association.

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More fundraising ideas

EVENTS

- Throw a themed party: wine tasting, country line dancing, costume, gourmet, etc.
- Hold a sale: garage, bake, etc.
- Sell a service: washing cars, cleaning apartments or handyman services.
- Hold a contest: chili cook-off, dessert, etc.
- Organize a “thon”: swim, bowl, karate, dance, etc.
- Host a party at a local restaurant or bar.

WORK

- Collection jar: at work, place a collection jar (near a vending machine) for people to place their change.
- Dress down day: for a specific donation, an individual has the company “ok” to dress down for a specified day.
- Send an office-wide alert: ask your manager if you can alert employees by sending a company-wide email or distributing a letter in everyone's mailbox.
- Guess the number of beads in the jar: for a minimal donation, people can submit a count for the number of beads in a jar. Half of the money raised goes to the winner who's the closest and the other half goes to the participant.

OTHER

- Restaurants/local merchants: ask local business owners to donate a certain % of their profits for during one business day.

Be proud of your achievements. The dollars you raise will make a significant impact to end Alzheimer's disease!

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