

# Selecting Campaign Counsel

Successful fundraising at any organization is based on strong relationships between staff, volunteers, and donors, so that individuals develop a connection with the organization that transforms into a desire to make significant investments in its future. Counsel's role is to guide and advise the organization to successful fundraising through increasing the capacity of the organization.

## Before Selecting Counsel

- **Establish your expectations.** You should expect counsel to understand the history, mission, and operating culture of your organization from the start. Counsel should seek opportunities to approach new funders and new ways of engaging current volunteers. Finally, counsel should always be authentic and objective in its analysis and advice for the future.
- **Understand counsel's expectations.** Have a clear understanding of why you are raising money, including a mission-based purpose, clearly definable components, and cost estimates. You should also understand the time commitment of your staff and campaign volunteers, as well as the financial investment required to run a campaign. Also, make clear the decision-making structure of your organization so counsel understands the leadership hierarchy.

## The Selection Process

- **Identify key players.** When choosing counsel, identify potential firms through organizations such as the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP), Giving Institute, or referrals.
- **Seek the right answers.** Next, prepare a Request for Proposal (RFP) that clearly outlines what you are asking of counsel. Avoid RFPs that prohibit advance conversation and interaction; that approach will prevent you from getting a sense of how counsel will really work with you.
- **Narrow the playing field.** Ask questions to see which firms are suited for your needs and would optimize a campaign's outcome:
  - Does the firm have experience with organizations like yours?
  - What record does the firm have in running campaigns with a similar scope and goal?
  - Who from the firm will work on your campaign? Assess your confidence in that individual. Does he or she appropriately represent your organization's constituents?
  - Does it "fit" right? Analyze the effectiveness of communication between you and the firm, gauge how your personalities mesh and the level of mutual respect.

# Why Partner with JGA

- **Engage a team of experts.** When you align with JGA, you engage a team. Our consultants work with clients in pairs on each study, audit, or campaign. And, those consultants draw from the expertise of JGA's 13-person staff to ensure their client's return on investment. When you choose JGA, you choose consultants, writers, and project managers with more than 150 years of combined experience who continually work to provide you with the expert counsel you need. *Our team becomes your team, and we place a high value on responsiveness.*
- **Add value to your organization.** JGA is committed to providing service based on extensive experience as practicing development professionals, as well as broad consulting experience. We contribute to the field of philanthropy by conducting original proprietary research that expands our understanding of new and emerging trends in the industry. We are successful only when you reach and exceed your development goals.
- **Don't hire counsel—Partner with counsel.** At JGA, we are a student of your organization and its needs. We are flexible and attentive, always willing to go the extra mile to guarantee your organization's success. We will be at your side each step of the way, offering encouragement and objective criticism. A strong consulting engagement will allow your organization to calibrate its expectations correctly from the start and then help the organization execute your campaign plan at the highest levels.
- **Gain the objective viewpoint.** JGA provides an invaluable outside look at the functionality of your organization, while remaining highly involved at all levels. We hear your concerns and issues without bias.



For more than 20 years, **Johnson Grossnickle and Associates** has celebrated successes with educational institutions, arts & culture organizations, social services, foundations, faith-based organizations, and health care and research institutions.

With more than 150 years of combined expertise, our 13-person team has partnered with more than 250 clients, helping nonprofits to touch millions of lives.

**We look forward to partnering with you on your philanthropic journey.**