

RBSCo's Top Ten List for When the Economy is Going Through Contortions

10. Planned giving experts tout the tremendous opportunity provided by Charitable Lead Trusts during times of devalued equity markets and low interest rates. www.planningforgood.net/2008-articles
9. Anticipate a dramatic decline in corporate donations.
8. Donors will tend to be more cautious; greater fiscal and programmatic transparency in your nonprofit can convince them that their gifts will be used effectively.
7. During World War II, philanthropic giving actually *doubled*. Giving increased 4.9% during the 1974 recession, and 7.6% during the 1982 downturn. During the dot-com bust, Thomas J. Watson Jr., former CEO of IBM, gave \$25 million to Brown University; Walter H. Annenberg bequeathed his entire art collection (valued at approximately \$1 billion) to The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. During the same time, the Atlanta Historical Society *exceeded* its \$15 million capital campaign goal.
6. "Philanthropists in general value stability over the long term and therefore invest their money cautiously. Consequently, they are usually cash rich, not dangerously leveraged and highly speculative. With ready cash and marketable assets, these individuals may actually prosper during a recession. They can take advantage of bargain prices on real estate, stocks and other distressed properties. They also continue to support many charitable causes." – G. Douglass Alexander, author of *Essential Principles for Fundraising Success*, 1991.
5. Don't cut your fundraising budget – hone your tactics.
4. Even if you're not in campaign, continue to strengthen donor relationships – focus not only on major donors, but also on your base who consistently supports your annual fund.
3. If you're in campaign, ask: Can you put your needs on hold? If the answer is a resounding "no" then proceed, and do so knowing you may face less competition. Even more good news – the confidence you display by moving forward in an adverse economic environment will demonstrate the urgency of your cause.
2. Stay optimistic – successful fundraising is largely psychological. The best way to not get money is to stop asking. And when you ask, for heaven's sake, don't apologize!
1. Adhering to process is more critical than ever. Nothing will ever replace a systematic approach to raising money, including:
 - ❑ Clear, compelling articulation of mission/case for support.
 - ❑ Systematic identification of prospects.
 - ❑ Sincere engagement and cultivation
 - ❑ Direct, personal solicitation
 - ❑ Professional on-going stewardship



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