



Hiring a Fundraising Professional Is No Laughing Matter

Carefully selecting a fundraising company to work with is an essential step in fundraising success.

By Vickie Mabry

It's that time of year when many student activity groups evaluate their fundraising goals for the coming year and make decisions about how best to meet those goals. Often the process involves selecting a professional fundraising company, a decision that many compare to choosing a business partner or hiring a new employee. "You want to make sure you find someone you can trust—someone you believe will deliver," according to one school principal.

Where to Begin

Fundraising companies come in all shapes and sizes. Some are large, national organizations. Others are mid-sized companies operating in a specific state or region. And then there are smaller one- and two-person businesses working in a limited geographic area. Some sell using a direct sales force. Others sell through mail order. The size of the company and the mechanics of their program are less important than the company's solvency, experience, and reputation.

PTO fundraising chair Sharon Rivard first turned to the yel-