

Middle Georgia State University Fundraising Tips for Student Clubs

Note: All student clubs must position their fundraising as by the “XYZ Club” at Middle Georgia State University. Students clubs may not position themselves as fundraising on behalf of MGA or Middle Georgia State University and need written permission to use the MGA logo.

A. The key to success is being prepared...

1. Prepare your “case for support”
 - a. What is it that your Club is trying to do?
....What are your goals for your club, event or activity?
 - b. Why is this important? How will it impact students? The community?
...emphasize how their gift helps students be safer...or builds leadership skills needed that they can carry forward throughout their lifetime...You can also remind them that saying YES to YOU improves your experience in the current leadership position that you have with your student organization or club.
 - c. How will involvement benefit the donor? (what's in it for me?)
...emphasize how their gift is a great way to highlight their company --- with more recognition to students. Their logo as a program sponsor has a positive impact on student perception of their company and makes students more aware of the company in general.
2. Who will you ask?
 - a. Family, friends, alumni, businesses (large or small), community organizations or service clubs?
Develop your list.
3. How will you approach them?
 - a. By mail, phone, or in person?

B. Making the Ask

1. Speak with passion.
 - a. Let the donor know why this is important to you and to the general student body.
2. Make good use of their time.
 - a. If you have 30 minutes with someone, spend 15-20 minutes making your case, then ask for their support. This allows time for questions or negotiations.
3. Remember to ask!
 - a. Dress for success! If you are visiting a company, a tie (or business attire) can go a long way in making a good first impression. For others, nice pants and a MGA or Knights polo would work well.
 - b. Bring notes if you need them to remember data points from your case. You want to be able to answer as many of their questions as possible.
 - c. Decide before you go into the meeting how much you will ask for and then do it. You can sell them on your program and leave without a gift if you do not say the words.
 - d. Make the “ask” clear and specific. “Would you be able to partner with us on our Veterans Day with a gift of \$____?”
 - e. Once you ask...BE QUIET! You have put the ball in their court – let them speak first.
4. Do not be discouraged if you hear “no”.

- a. Fundraising is a numbers game. (1 “yes” out of every 3 “asks”.) Every “no” gets you one-step closer to a “yes”.
- b. Don’t take it personally. People say no (and yes) for all kinds of reasons.
- c. There are only three reasons for a “no”...
 - The amount*? If so, ask what contribution can they make. All gifts, regardless of size, helps you achieve your goal.
 - The timing*? If so, ask if you can come back with a request that fits in with their charitable budgeting process.
 - The Project*? Maybe you asked for the wrong thing. What were they passionate about? Ask them if they would be interested in another Club activity.

5. Last...

- a. Bring a “leave behind” – something that reiterates your case and what you are asking them to do. You can create a standard one sheet to use in all your presentations – or make one that you can customize for each donor.
- b. Set up the next step. If they want to think about it or check with their manager, ask when you should get back to them. If they have agreed to be a sponsor, set up getting their logo art, etc.
- c. Ask the Advancement Office for help. MGA’s Advancement staff are happy to give you some suggestions – in developing a strong case, determining your best fundraising strategy, and even “role playing” an ask with you. We can also alert you of past/giving of some of the people you identify so that you can acknowledge their support when you meet with them.
- d. HAVE FUN! You are doing good and important work!

For more help: MGA’s Advancement Office Team