

“CAPITAL CAMPAIGNS: HOW MUCH CAN WE RAISE?”

A church, school, or organization that is captivated by a vision and decides on a capital campaign always asks, “How much can we raise?” The following guides will be helpful in answering that question.

1. A church can raise 2 – 6 times their annual income. Some churches have raised up to 18 times their annual incomes with especially mission-driven, inspiring visions! But the financial result is dependent on many things, such as vision, spirit, leadership, strong major gifts effort, plenty of focus and attention, consistent messaging, plenty of pledging opportunities, etc.
2. What is the nature of a project? There is a hierarchy when it comes to enthusiasm for different projects. The hierarchy of support is:
 - New church, school, parish hall (2 – 6 times annual income)
 - Land purchases (2 – 4 times annual income)
 - Significant new addition, major renovations (2 – 6 times annual income)
 - Scholarships, tuition assistance, new programs (2 – 3 times annual income)
 - Endowments (1 – 2 times annual income)
 - Debt reduction (1.5 – 2 times annual income)
 - A formal or informal feasibility study must be done to determine the financial goal
3. Demographics – The demographics of a community are important.
 - How many households are in the church? School?
 - What percentage of households supports the church or school over the course of a year?
 - Is the community younger, middle-aged, or older?
 - Is the church or school in a lower, middle income, upper class, or mixed neighborhood?
4. Financial Potential
 - What was the total Sunday giving last year? The last three years?
 - Has a capital campaign been run before? When?
 - What is the potential for \$50,000, \$100,000, \$500,000, \$1,000,000 gifts, and larger?
 - What kinds of high-income earners do you have in the community?
5. Giving History
 - What is the average gift per household?
 - Who has given? What was given to previous campaigns?
 - Is stewardship an emphasis?
 - Higher per capita records of giving will often raise more than organizations with lower per capita giving.
6. Clerical, Lay, and Staff Leadership
 - Do the pastor, lay leaders, and staff support the vision? The capital campaign?
 - Who in the congregation supports the project? Who is against it? How influential are supporters and non-supporters?
 - Can the pastor, lay leaders, and staff give full-throated support to the vision and campaign?
7. The Spirit Within
 - Is the community united and one?
 - Is the community positive about and excited by the vision, the goals, and the project?
 - As Winston Churchill once said, “Bold visions stir the blood!” Is the vision big, bold, live-saving, life-changing, worthwhile, and compelling?

As you’ve read, a successful capital campaign’s financial goal is dependent upon many factors. A church or school can raise 2 to 6 times its annual income and up to 18 times its annual budget – depending on the above factors. For most projects and definitely for larger projects, a separate feasibility or planning study is necessary.

If you have found “Capital Campaigns: How Much Can We Raise?” helpful or if you are interested in a feasibility study or capital campaign of your own, then contact us today at VisionWorks – 402.999.2970 or markf@VisionWorksCo.com.