

## What is a Feasibility Study?

The primary purpose of a planning study is to determine whether the organization has the five critical elements of success in place to conduct a capital/endowment campaign. These include:

- A positive and credible reputation in the community;
- A compelling case for support for the anticipated capital/endowment project;
- Enough donor prospects willing to give at sufficient levels to ensure campaign success, including leadership donors who can give between 25-50% of the campaign goal;
- Volunteers willing and able to provide leadership on the Capital/endowment Campaign Committee and to help identify, cultivate, solicit and acknowledge donors;
- Organizational readiness and infrastructure to conduct the campaign (sufficient staffing and resources, as well as ability to provide sufficient focus on the campaign). The planning study has secondary advantages as well. It creates excitement and momentum, essentially “pre- selling” the case to your donors and prepares them for upcoming solicitation.

Steps in the Planning Study Process	Responsibility and Description
1. Identify group to work with consultants, providing data, information, idea generation, and feedback	The internal Campaign Steering Committee including key staff members.
2. Literature gathering and data review (collateral material, fund development metrics and reports, donor lists, capital/endowment project overview, etc.)	Consultants will provide list of materials for staff to collect.
3. Develop and write the case for support to be tested	Consultants will meet with Campaign Steering Committee to generate basic ideas and thrust of the case. Consultants will write case and garner feedback from Campaign Steering Committee.
4. Identify internal and external constituents to be interviewed and/or included in focus groups	Campaign Steering Committee with direction and assistant from Consultants.
5. Develop interview, focus group and survey questions.	Consultants with review by Campaign Steering Committee.
6. Conduct confidential constituent interviews, focus groups and online survey.	Staff provides all constituent contact information. Consultants schedule and conduct all interviews. Staff helps schedule and promote focus groups. Consultants prepare, distribute and collate all online survey data.
7. Scan the environment for external factors that may affect the campaign: the economy, competitive campaigns and fundraising environment, shifting attitudes and priorities in the community.	Consultants with input from staff.
8. Collate and process all research data, prepare report and recommendations.	Consultants
9. Present final report and recommendations to the Fund Development Committee and/or Board of Directors.	Consultants

## Methodology

1. **Lead Counsel:** One of Alexander | Carrillo Consulting's partners will be designated as "lead counsel" for this project and be your primary point of contact. You will have the convenience one contact but the benefit of two consultants working on your project.
2. **Literature and organizational review:** Consultants will collect and review budgets, development reports, brochures, grants, strategic plan, Board/volunteer management materials and systems.
3. **Interviews:** Consultants will conduct both internal and external constituent interviews. Interviewees will include: executive director/development director, key development staff, board chair, campaign chair, development chair, donors and funders. Interview content will include perceptions of the organization overall and the current project case for support, ability and interest in giving to the campaign (including actual gift amount), ability and interest in volunteering and giving at the leadership level, perceptions of organizational strengths and weaknesses, and understanding of environmental factors that may affect the success of the campaign.
4. **Focus Groups:** Consultants will facilitate 2-3 focus groups with board members and donors to present the case for support and gather feedback and ideas regarding the campaign's relevance and likelihood of success.
5. **Online Survey:** The online survey will gather confidential feedback on the above issues from a larger group of constituents who may not otherwise participate in the feasibility study. The survey will be short and easy to fill out.
6. **Environmental Scan:** Consultants will talk to other nonprofits, development professionals, funders and consultants to determine other campaigns that may be conducted during the time of the campaign, factors that are affecting recent campaigns in our area, and other external factors that may contribute to the success or failure of the campaign.

The entire process of the Planning Study, from contract initiation to report, takes approximately 90 days.

## The Planning Study Report

Upon completion of the study, Alexander | Carrillo Consulting will provide a detailed, written report that integrates all findings into a candid, honest and confidential assessment of strengths and weaknesses, and a prognosis for success to successfully reach the campaign goal.

The report will include:

1. A proposed goal and timeline for the most successful campaign possible;
2. Perceptions expressed by your constituents regarding the organization, leadership and the case for support;
3. Areas of strength and weakness, and recommendations to reduce risk and increase the likelihood of success;
4. A customized Chart of Gifts for your campaign including the number of prospects who have the capacity and interest in making the quantity and size of gifts needed to reach the goal. This includes a dollar amount or range we believe you can raise for this campaign and our recommendation as to if and when the organization should move forward;
5. Donor Cultivation and Solicitation Plans for every prospect interviewed, including recommendations for who should be on the solicitation team and the timing, proposed amount and purpose of the request for each prospect;
6. Identification of potential of influential and committed campaign volunteer leaders;
7. Proposed campaign staffing structure including recommended roles and responsibilities for staff, board, other volunteers and consultants;
8. Proposed budget and timeline of campaign phases with financial goals by phase;
9. The readiness of your organization to support a major campaign (staffing, programs, technology, and systems);
10. An overview of the environment in which the campaign will be conducted, such as the economy and potential competition;

*The planning study is not a guarantee of what will be raised, but rather a highly educated assessment of the organization's potential for success*