

# CAMPAIGN BELIEFS

Whether a \$100,000 annual campaign or a multi-million dollar capital campaign, we have learned twelve truths about campaigns.

- 1. Relationships are more important than money.**  
Always.
- 2. A case for support is never, ever about a need for money.**  
It's always about impact and how the organization is meeting deep community needs.
- 3. Data drives strategy, planning, and decision making.**  
Quantitative and qualitative data tells a story and organizations need to be intentional about data collection and analysis. The findings must be understood and shared widely.
- 4. Donors should never feel like an ATM.**  
Which is why donor acknowledgement (a meaningful, timely, and accurate thank you) and donor engagement (cultivation before an ask is made and stewardship after a check is written) is so critical.
- 5. Invest in human resources, not just bricks and mortar.**  
Campaigns are complicated and exhausting. Hiring the right team, and supporting them with the right resources, is an expense that should neither be delayed (let's wait until we open) nor minimized (they are used to wearing many hats). Support your volunteers, too.
- 6. When doing the math, show your work. No flub numbers allowed.**  
Crunching the numbers and documenting the assumptions embedded in the budget creates a road map that is easy to follow, readily adjustable, and fully transparent.
- 7. State the assumptions at the outset, then challenge them.**  
Beyond the budget, what other assumptions are being made that impact the campaign's success? How true do they remain today, and will they remain true tomorrow?
- 8. Contingencies get spent. Prices go up. Delays happen. Leaders leave. Donors say "no."**  
Don't dwell. Learn, acknowledge, and move on.
- 9. Courage and tolerance for risk are essential.**  
All campaigns are a leap of faith. How aligned are your board, campaign leadership, and CEO?
- 10. Build connections and allow for creativity.**  
At all times, hear what's being communicated — whether it's your largest donor or the youth being served — and create the space to process and think so that messages are compelling and planning is responsive.
- 11. Someone or something will delight you, and, someone or something will disappoint you.**  
It will happen. Celebrate the good and grow from the bad.
- 12. Abundance can only be created in community.**  
Isolation is often created by fear, and fear fuels the scarcity assumption that there is never enough. When we gather for the collective good, we open ourselves to possibilities not previously known and create the very thing we seek — abundance.