



How to Prepare and Innovate in This New Funding Climate
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How to Prepare and Innovate in This New Funding Climate



- My name is Lydia Sierra, Principal of Lydia Sierra Consulting, LLC
- 25+ years in Human and Social Services and hold a Master's degree in the Administration of Nonprofit Organizations
- 8 years experience as the Founder and Executive Director of a Nonprofit Organization
- Specialize in Fund Development Services, including proposal writing, grants management, and individual donor campaigns

I am passionate about developing a fundraising culture within nonprofit organizations.

Today we'll focus on...

- The Problem
- The Plan
 - Four Steps to Prepare & Innovate in This New Funding Climate



How to Prepare and Innovate in This New Funding Climate



The Problem... COVID-19 has forced CBOs to respond by...

Shifting from in-person to remote services

Meeting new and increased needs i.e. housing and homelessness, health, employment, and food distribution

Supporting vulnerable individuals and families through outreach and communication

The Problem...

Funding and Contracting

- Many philanthropic funders are being flexible with their grants in light of the COVID crisis.
- However, CBOs are concerned about the loss of other revenue sources, as well as future budget cuts.

*COVID-19 Has Plunged
CBOs into Survival Mode*



4 Steps to Prepare & Innovate

1. Develop a new business plan
2. Demonstrate leadership
3. Send out fast, urgent appeals
4. Plan for your future



The Survival Plan...1. Develop a new business plan

Ask the question, “What best advances the long-term mission of our organization?”

PRIORITIZE YOUR LONG-TERM MISSION



There is no long-term mission unless the organization survives in a minimally viable state or is able to transfer some (or all) of its program(s) to organization(s) able to continue them.

The Survival Plan – 1. Develop a new business plan...



Not a full business plan but an overview of steps that you need to take

Include basic scenarios around funding (use FMA tool)

Fight for your fundraising budget:

FUNDRAISING IS AN ESSENTIAL EXPENSE

INVEST MORE, NOT LESS

The Survival Plan

2. Demonstrate Leadership

- Many CBOs have posted a continuity statement on their websites and have shared their commitment to their mission, clients, volunteers, staff, partners, and communities
- Demonstrate confidence
- Acknowledge all supporters
- Communicate new emergency services and needs



The Survival Plan

3. Send out fast urgent appeals

YOU NEED TO LAUNCH
EMERGENCY/CRISIS CAMPAIGNS
NOW...

If you work with vulnerable people including homeless, refugees, disabled, elderly, etc. or you are an arts organization...If your mission's income is under threat because of COVID-19...

THIS IS YOUR TIME!



The Survival Plan – 3. Send out fast urgent appeals...

- Focus on crisis communications at this time
- Keep your donors up to date with what you are doing
- Email 2-4 times a week – mix of asks, updates, and simple, helpful, useful things
- Update social media accounts at least daily



Example of crisis template...



URGENT CRISIS APPEAL

The impact of COVID-19 is threatening the very existence of <CHARITY> services. **Only with your help have I any chance of avoiding cuts in the next couple of weeks.**

Please rush <ASK1> to me by <DEADLINE1>

Dear <Alex>

This is the most important letter I have ever written.

<CHARITY> is facing an **unprecedented financial crisis** which is forcing me and my team to make decisions I never imagined we would ever face.

Decisions that <SHORT CONSEQUENCES OF THOSE SERVICES BEING CUT>.

The COVID-19 pandemic is having an **unimaginable impact on our services** and our ability to raise funds.

The Survival Plan 3. Send out fast urgent appeals

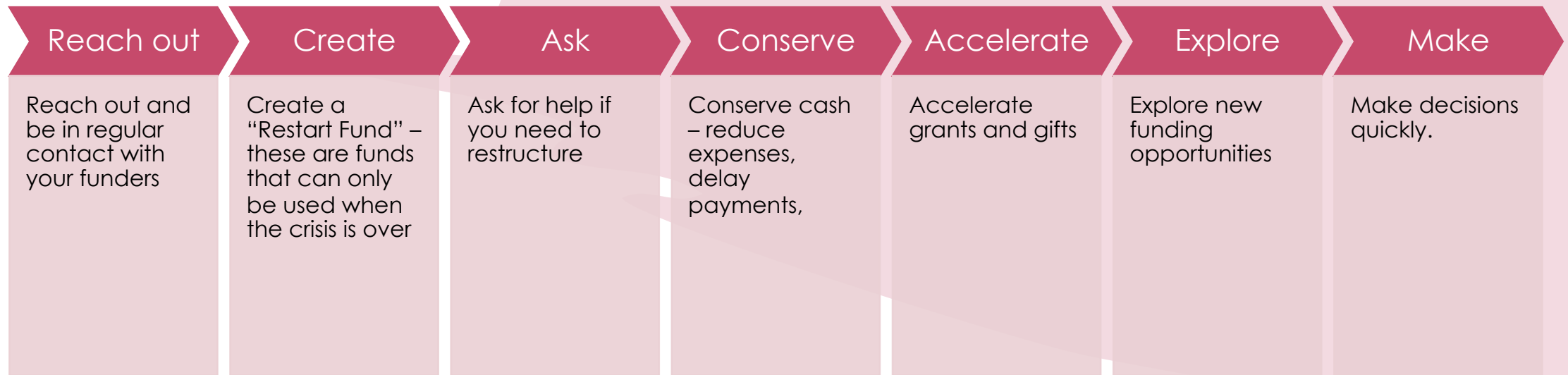


In addition, to the ask...

- Show your donors you care about them
- Provide them with a list of resources in their area
- Call them just to check on them and engage in conversation, they may be lonely
- Offer support on how to pay bills, order groceries, donate online, online church services, weekly webinar updates, reading material...show them love!

The Survival Plan

4. Plan For The Future



Conclusion

- Keep the COVID-19 emergency activity going while it is relevant
- Begin to bring in normal activities, before life begins to get to a new normal
- Revisit the postponed business plan
- Continue forth with a stronger nonprofit organization!



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Resources and References

- Moceanic Fundraising - <https://www.moceanic.com/>
- FMA – Fiscal Strength for Nonprofits - <https://fmaonline.net/nonprofit-financial-management/how-we-help/covid-19-response-resources/>
- LISC – Local Initiatives Support Corporation - <https://www.lisc.org/covid-19/small-business-assistance/small-business-relief-grants/sams-club-grant/>
- Sea Change March 31, 2020 – Tough Times Call for Tough Action, A Decision Framework for Nonprofit Leaders & Boards
- And, all my wonderful clients!

*Nonprofit Founders, Executive
Directors, & Board Members...*

Thank you for all you do!



FOR A COPY OF THIS
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