



Frequently Asked Questions

1. What vote should be taken to approve a campaign?

It is vital that the congregation feels ownership of the plans. Normally, a congregational meeting is held for discussion of proposed plans before campaign planning begins.

2. How much money can a congregation typically raise over the three-year commitment period of a capital campaign?

A church's results depend upon the present level of giving, the type of project proposed and the degree of congregational ownership and enthusiasm for the project.

3. How long does a campaign last?

Generally, a three to six-month campaign period is required from the point at which the campaign begins the active campaign process to the campaign conclusion.

Each constituent is asked to make a three-year pledge to the special campaign over and above their giving to the annual operating budget.

A pre-campaign readiness period often takes an additional three to six months. It is during this time that an outside consultant should be contacted in order to build a solid foundation for a successful campaign.

4. How many people should be on the campaign committee?

The campaign committee generally consists of a chairperson and seven or eight chairs of campaign sub-committees. Each of these sub-chairs, in turn, recruits as many people as necessary to complete the appropriate tasks.

5. Will having a capital campaign affect pledges to the operating budget?

In every instance member's first priority is giving to the operating budget. Capital pledges must be over and above such regular giving. In the first year of a capital campaign, operating budget is relatively static, though increases are often possible in later years.

6. Who can help us with our loan application?

Contact your presbytery to start the application process for church and/or commercial loans.

7. Should we include a mission cause in our campaign?

It is strongly recommended that churches consider a mission component. Not only does it model good stewardship – concern for others as well as ourselves – but experience shows that congregations respond very positively to including such a cause. Churches often choose to tithe – giving 10 percent of the funds generated by the campaign to mission.

8. How long in advance of the campaign do we need to talk with outside counsel?

Early discussion – even a year in advance of your proposed program – will facilitate planning. If such advanced planning is not possible a consultant can discuss your particular circumstances and help develop a campaign timetable.

9. What time of year is the best for a capital campaign?

Successful campaigns are conducted in every season of the year. The best time to begin a campaign is when all the essential preliminary work has been accomplished. Church committees can only control internal factors for campaign readiness. When the church is ready, it should proceed.

10. Can a capital campaign be conducted at the same time of year as an operating budget campaign?

Yes. Such coordinated campaigns can effectively challenge members to support the congregation's ongoing ministry and mission, as well as the special capital objectives.

11. Is visiting every member the only way to secure members' pledges?

No. While an "every household visitation" is the most effective and productive process, it is not the only way. There are a number of different techniques and many campaigns are a hybrid of two or more methods.

12. We think there will be a lot of resistance to hiring a professional fund raiser. Why should we use "outsiders" to help us?

Outside counsel brings experience and expertise to the campaign process that is essential if the full dollar potential of the campaign is to be achieved.