

## FUNDRAISING STRATEGIES

The MS Climb to the Top is about thinking big—bigger and better than anything you have ever done before. You may be a little intimidated by the thought of raising \$250, but it's much easier than it sounds. Thousands of climbers have succeeded in raising much more than their pledge goal. You can too. When you focus on a mission, people want to help you. We are here to help you as well.

### 5 STEPS FOR SUCCESSFUL FUNDRAISING:

- Do not procrastinate. Start your fundraising now! Successful fundraising is intentional and planned, and intelligently executed.
- Determine your goal. The MS Climb to the Top is about thinking big! The higher the goal you set, the more money you will raise. Set a date to achieve your goal.
- Develop a plan. Start a calendar. Take your pledge goal and break it down into smaller goals. Then schedule due dates on your calendar. Remember, each climber commits to raise at least \$250, and it must be paid by the first day of Climb.
- Follow through. This is a critical step in fulfilling your goal. Following through is the KEY! After you send out a letter, call the recipients to make sure they received your letter and to see if you can count on their support. After someone makes a pledge, send a thank you note. Give your donors updates on your fundraising and training progress. In addition, invite them to celebrate with you at the finish line on Sunday.
- Inspire others to share in your commitment. You're accepting the challenge on behalf of the 400,000 people with MS in the United States. You are not asking for the contribution for yourself, you are asking on behalf of the National MS Society and all people with MS.

#### LETTER WRITING

Open your address book today. To whom do you send holiday cards? Who is in your contact list? Make a list of every person you know, the obvious (friends and family) and the not-so-obvious

(neighbors, former acquaintances, business associates, club members, team members, alumni associates, etc.). You have just created your donor list. (It's amazing how many connections to MS you uncover when you reach out to people.) Now select a fundraising campaign that will work best for you.

#### TRADITIONAL LETTER CAMPAIGN

We've made it easy for you! Check out the Online Fundraising Tools section of the MS Climb to the Top website for two sample fundraising letters. [www.climbmsgne.org](http://www.climbmsgne.org)

#### ON-LINE LETTER CAMPAIGN

Email is a great way to send out fundraising letters, and we make it easy for you. Here are some of the on-line features:

- Personalize and send the pre-written Fundraising Email
- Send the email to everyone in your address book
- Create a quick and easy personal web page using the "Participant Center."

Please Note: If you register on-line, make sure to create a user name and password, otherwise you will not be able to use the fundraising tools available on-line. If you do not have a user name and password, please contact the Greater New England Chapter.

#### BOUNDLESS FUNDRAISING™

boundless Fundraising™ is a Facebook application that enables participants to extend their fundraising efforts beyond their Participant Center and Personal Page. To use boundless Fundraising, you must be a Facebook user (visit [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) to create a free account). After registering for an MS event, you'll receive an email that includes a blue "Fundraise with Facebook" button. The button is also available in your Participant Center. Click on the blue button to give the boundless Fundraising application access to your Facebook account. Boundless Fundraising provides an easy way to donate through your Facebook profile and post news about your fundraising so that it appears in the Newsfeed where friends will see it.

## **GO CORPORATE**

Ask your company to sponsor you. Some companies offer matching gift programs for contributions made by employees. If they do, contact your human resource director for more details and bring it to the attention of the employees. Put up posters and signs promoting the MS Climb to the Top. Display a chart showing your training and fundraising progress. Hold a contest to see which department can raise the most pledges.

## **ASK BIG**

Put together a list of potential donors who can donate \$50 or more. These may be business associates, your employer, or acquaintances in lofty positions. You may want to meet one-on-one, perhaps over lunch or dinner.

Call each potential major donor to schedule a meeting or lunch/dinner

Be bold. Contact people you don't know but who are able to make donations.

Write a script of the things you want to cover during your meeting. Be enthusiastic and passionate.

Meet your prospects and ask for a donation face to face.

Regardless of the outcome, send a thank you note after the meeting.

Stay in touch! Send progress letters to all donors and non-donors.

to join you.