



2008 WINTER GALA RAISES RECORD AMOUNT

In this economy, when many nonprofits are cancelling events, would you....

Increase the price of a gala table from \$3,000 to \$5,000?

Spend fewer months fundraising? Decide to double your goal?

That's exactly what Manny Loya, President and CEO of the Southern California Chapter of the Arthritis Foundation did at his November 2008 Gala.

"After reading Marshall's book and attending his workshop," Manny said, "I decided to put his principles into practice. I don't have a background as a fundraiser and I'm open to trying anything that is a best practice. From Marshall, I learned that the most important strategy, especially in tough times, is to stay connected. You have to keep your relationships fresh, stay in touch and be there for your stakeholders. Marshall showed me, step-by-step how to do this."

"Our first Gala strategy was to re-engage our Board. The second was to honor people in three different industries and to leverage their relationships," he said.

"In the last ten years, relationship building with our Board members was virtually nonexistent. They had not been engaged as a resource to make 'asks' of their contacts," Manny said.

Using Marshall's techniques, Manny spent months re-connecting with his Board; **"I started chasing the people and a relationship with them, instead of their money.** Because of these new, deeper connections, we have completely re-engaged our Board. They were a great resource sitting right under our nose!"

Now when Manny discussed the Gala goals, **"I really didn't have to ask for help; they wanted to help me.** It was like a warm ask instead of a cold plea! I had never really asked the Board members for anything specific. I assumed they knew what I wanted – after all, we're a nonprofit!"

"Now, they actually took charge and went out to make the 'asks'. **It was so easy - all I had to do was go with them for some presentations and follow-up,"** he said. "My Board really began to feel part of our organization. Their attitude was – we'll go with you on this project and we won't let you down."

At the board retreat, one of the staff noticed a big difference. **"Board members brought Gala checks that had been written earlier.** Instead of mailing them, they wanted to personally give Manny the checks. They wanted to see the expression on his face!" she said.

The second strategy was to engage the Gala honorees including Joe Torre, Manager, Los Angeles Dodgers, Morgan Rector, President, Comerica Entertainment Group, and Michael H. Weisman, MD, Director, Division of Rheumatology, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center.

Manny and his staff spent a few months building relationships with these prominent honorees', their staff members along with their wide circle of referrals.

At Comerica, Manny met with all of the Entertainment Group executives. This motivated them to set a high fundraising goal for the event.

"Comerica built a great fundraising team. One of the bank's consultants solicited entertainment attorneys and production companies on our behalf and Comerica made its goal."

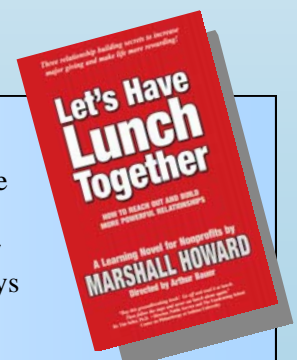
As the Gala approached, Manny thought about other relationships he had. When he contacted a pharmacy rep he knew well, they devised a guerilla relationship plan to meet some of the Cedars' doctors. **"We actually stood in the hallway of the patient intake area and, as the doctors came out, we would spend a few minutes with them. We then followed up with formal appointments in their offices!"**

To further build relationships, at the Gala Manny strategically broke up his staff. **Instead sitting together, they were placed at different tables to meet prominent prospects.** Now, they have lunch dates with many new prospective "partners!"

What was the result?

Instead of raising the budgeted \$250,000, the Gala raised a record \$550,000. Some of the outstanding results included the sale of a \$50,000 sponsor; several \$25,000 sponsors and lots of VIP \$10,000 sponsors.

"Here's the important lesson I learned from Marshall - if you have a relationship and times are tough, **your connections mean that your donors will give to you first.** His process showed me how to build deeper connections and that absolutely pays off," concluded Manny.



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