



# CAUSE SELLING

## THE SANFORD WAY

A Guide to Relationship-Driven Fundraising

**Second  
Edition**

DR. DAVID LILL & JENNIFER LILL-BROWN

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## EXCLUSIVE CHAPTER 1 PREVIEW

We're so excited to give you a sneak peek of  
*Cause Selling the Sanford Way: A Guide to Relationship-Driven Fundraising*  
Love Chapter 1? Order the entire book on Amazon.com today!

This book has been revised and re-designed to further T. Denny Sanford's mission of creating a better tomorrow through philanthropy, maximizing opportunities for nonprofits, and positively impacting the lives of individuals, families and communities.

Here's what you'll find inside this sample:

- 1. Cause Selling Introduction:** Discover more about the structure of the book and its two distinct parts that include: 1) Fundraising success fundamentals and the skill sets needed to impact change, and 2) The eight-step Cause Selling cycle and how it empowers both fundraisers and donors to get the most of out nonprofit giving.
- 2. Becoming a Cause Selling Professional:** The first chapter of the book introduces you to the concept of Cause Selling and how professional, future-focused nonprofits can experience the benefits of combining proven business principles with the heart of nonprofit fundraising.
- 3. About the Sanford Institute of Philanthropy:** Learn more about our courses and offerings, including our affiliate program and how you can learn more in order to do more!

**For more information about the book and to order copies, please visit:**  
[www.causeselling.org](http://www.causeselling.org)

**For more information about the exciting new roads  
we are paving for nonprofits, please visit:**  
[www.sanfordinstituteofphilanthropy.org](http://www.sanfordinstituteofphilanthropy.org)



## Introduction

# IT'S ALL ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS

Aristotle once said, “To give away money is an easy matter and in any man’s power. But to decide to whom to give it and how large and when, and for what purpose and how, is neither in every man’s power nor an easy matter.”

No matter how worthy, causes don’t sell themselves. That is why without the work of fundraisers, it would be impossible for organizations to continue their work. Fundraising is what keeps the nonprofit world thriving, and fundraisers are the conduits that enable donors to decide “to whom to give it and how large and when.” However, when it

comes to building a strong and consistent donor base, the focus should not be only on the cause. There must also be an intentional focus placed on donors and their needs.

**Successful fundraising is therefore centered on forming lasting, mutually beneficial relationships with like-minded donors who are willing and eager to provide financial support to your organization.**

John D. Rockefeller advised that we should “Think of giving not only as a duty but as a privilege.” As a fundraiser, what you do is *also* a privilege—you get to help donors feel empowered by enabling them to contribute to something greater than themselves.

The concepts in this book are based on the idea that we all sell every day—no matter whether it is a cause, product, service, or

**Life’s persistent and most urgent question is, “What are you doing for others?”**

*Martin Luther King, Jr.*

idea. That is why billionaire philanthropist and the founder of the Sanford Institute of Philanthropy, T. Denny Sanford, decided that the best way to shape the nonprofit landscape and help organizations across the globe to thrive is by teaching them how to “sell” their cause through techniques that work in the for-profit world.

Through his extensive experience in the world of philanthropy, Mr. Sanford noticed a lack of formally trained fundraisers who knew how to prioritize the needs of their donors. So, he partnered with the sales professionals and co-authors of a successful textbook on relationship selling to create this new, groundbreaking take on fundraising.

**Cause Selling has been designed to inspire you and give you confidence through providing the training you need to view your fundraising career with the passion and conviction it takes to succeed.**



The principles in this book are the result of years spent teaching professional selling, conducting seminars for sales professionals, and consulting with future-focused corporations, combined with 40 years of personal sales experience. We then combined that knowledge with the assistance of key subject matter experts in the philanthropic world to create this harmonious union of relationship selling and nonprofit fundraising.

As professionals who appreciate the sales environment and desire to see an improvement in the way that nonprofit fundraisers are trained, we wanted a book that would: 1) show that the most effective fundraising takes both passion *and* practice; 2) inspire motivated, creative fundraisers to view their jobs in Cause Selling as a career; and 3) demonstrate that a fundraising career can be a mutually beneficial experience—for you, your organization, and your loyal donors.

Cause Selling focuses on building relationships. It is this relationship-building style that spells success for fundraisers operating in a highly competitive nonprofit environment and dealing with donors who want to feel empowered by giving to powerfully impactful causes. The fundraising process is broken down into its most basic components, with the result being an eight-step Cause Selling Cycle that we explore throughout the second half of the book.

For donors, a decision to give means a choice to enter into a relationship with you and your organization. It's up to you to foster and build that relationship so that one-time donors become lifelong donors. Donors rely on you to help them see how important their

gift is to the organization and to sense the good that they are helping accomplish.

**The quality of your relationship with each donor is the competitive advantage that enables you as a fundraiser to succeed in the competitive nonprofit sector.**

As Ralph Waldo Emerson so eloquently said, “It is one of the most beautiful compensations of this life that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself . . . Serve and thou shall be served.” It is our sincere hope that this book will give you the tools you need to serve more and more donors—and in turn, enable them to serve through making gifts.

The book is broken into two distinct parts. The descriptions below will help you see the logic of the chapter sequence so that you can get the most out of your experience:

## **Part I:** *Fundraising Fundamentals*

The chapters included in Part I are designed to provide you with the foundation for building a long-lasting career in fundraising. In order to do the most good, you need a thorough understanding of what a career in fundraising entails, how to manage your daily activities in the most efficient manner, the importance of good communication in every interaction within and outside your organization, and knowledge about what drives people to give.

**Chapter 1** discusses the relationship-centered nature of Cause Selling and intro-

duces the Cause Selling Cycle. Relationship-based fundraising is interactive; it involves two-way communication and encourages donor participation during each stage.

**Chapter 2** gives you a better understanding of how fundraising has changed in recent years and what you can do to connect to today’s donor. In an era of increased accountability and competition, the qualities of transparency, honesty, and sincerity are more important than ever before.

**Chapter 3** shows you how to gain control of your time and your activities, and it’s ultimately about personal organization and self-management. Many times, fundraisers have more responsibilities than one person can handle, so it’s up to you to make the most of the time you have to work on the highest priority items.

**Chapter 4** examines why donors give and how to communicate with them in a way that fosters meaningful, lasting relationships. The more you understand about donors and their decision-making process, the more readily you can discover what they need and want. Good communication is the cornerstone of a sound relationship.

**Chapter 5** examines six powerful tools that every fundraiser needs at their disposal. These tools include having the most relevant information about your nonprofit and its mission and positioning. It also includes a brief look at how generations give, the role

**The unselfish effort to bring cheer to others will be the beginning of a happier life for ourselves.**

*Helen Keller*

of online giving, and the use analytics in the nonprofit world.

**Chapter 6** introduces the four social styles, which are the ways a person sends and receives information. To be the most effective fundraiser you can be, you must learn more about what really drives the work of your nonprofit—your donors.

## **Part II:** *The Cause Selling Cycle*

Part II provides you with the heart of the book—which is the steps in the Cause Selling Cycle. These chapters walk you through every interaction with potential donors, from prospecting and pre-approach to the ask, and extend to the actions needed after a gift has been made.

**Chapter 7** discusses the critical topic of prospecting. Prospects are the lifeblood of nonprofit fundraising. Without a regular stream of new prospects, organizations can't cultivate, can't ask, and can't steward. This chapter discusses the procedures for locating and qualifying those prospects.

**Chapter 8** is designed to build on the previous chapter's prospecting techniques, and then take it a step further to help you get the most out of your prospecting efforts. We discuss the process of gathering pre-approach information and present techniques that will help you have more success in scheduling that critical first appointment with a prospect.

**Chapter 9** focuses on the most critical elements of your face-to-face time with donors—which are often the first few moments. You will learn how to present yourself in a way that builds trust and credibility as we continue to focus on building your cause's reputation as a place that promotes positive change and produces lasting, powerful results.

**Chapter 10** is devoted to the art of asking questions and listening effectively so that you can learn the needs of your donors. You will learn critical questioning and listening skills to help carry you through the fundraising process, from the pre-ask meeting to the ask and beyond. As they say in the nonprofit world, you don't really ask your way into a gift; you listen your way into a gift.





**Chapter 11** provides you with presentation techniques that are built upon the connection and rapport you established during need discovery. At this point in the Cause Selling Cycle, you have studied your prospective donors and discovered what motivates them, and now you are ready to make your presentation.

**Chapter 12** invites you to take a different approach to objections by welcoming resistance into the fundraising process. In this chapter, you will learn how donor objections are actually signs of interest. You will also discover the various types of objections you will encounter, as well as the best ways to overcome them.

**Chapter 13** discusses how to face the ask with confidence by adopting proper attitudes about closing, how to recognize signals that reveal a prospect's readiness to give, and finally, specific techniques to use

during the ask. After all, the only way to receive more gifts . . . is to ask for more gifts!

**Chapter 14** is all about building donor loyalty. The way you follow up with donors after they make a gift is as important as the gift itself. The donor absolutely defines the success of your organization, so you must learn how to make them feel every bit as important as they are.

Consider this book to be your guide for success in today's philanthropic environment. Becoming a great fundraiser involves no less a commitment to your profession than does becoming a great student, physician, lawyer, or teacher. Success begins by taking a single step. It begins by learning the correct principles and gaining the proper knowledge to lead you down the right path to success. Good luck!

**As the purse  
is emptied,  
the heart  
is filled.**

*Victor Hugo*





# BECOMING A CAUSE SELLING PROFESSIONAL



## OVERVIEW

Cause Selling is a relationship-centered, collaborative approach to professional fundraising. It is a model for fundraising that integrates valuable systems from the for-profit realm, with an intense focus on building long-term connections that benefit both the donor and the organization. In this chapter, we will introduce the concept of Cause Selling, as well as some basic concepts about a career in fundraising, as we endeavor to learn how to meaningfully connect with donors in order to support the mission we serve.



## OBJECTIVES

- Understand that the word *sell* is a part of everyone's life, regardless of profession.
- Study the definition of Cause Selling and what it means to you.
- Identify the eight steps of the Cause Selling Cycle and the purpose of each step.
- Discover what future-focused fundraisers do that sets them apart.
- Appreciate the benefits of a fundraising career.
- Realize the greatest fear holding you back from embracing Cause Selling and the mindset required to overcome it.

## Do Fundraisers Really Sell?

In a word? Yes.

Whether you realize it or not, you are *already* selling. You're selling your ideas, perspectives, and priorities to almost everyone you engage with on a daily basis. Waiters sell us on getting dessert. Parents rationalize to their

kids why it's important to eat their vegetables. Doctors convince us that a certain medication is the best option. In countless ways, we regularly ask those around us to alter a viewpoint or to take some sort of action because of a position, pathway, or product we endorse. This truth is woven into

the fabric of our daily lives.

Since asking is a fundamental part of our existence, the key is not *what* or even *if* you ask, but *how* you go about asking.

Why not just tell people about the mission and wait for the donations to come rolling in?

In a perfect world, that's all it would take. In reality, changing values, increasing options for giving, and a shifting donor demographic have made the job of fundraising more challenging. Fundraising professionals ready themselves for the challenge by taking advantage of the fluid nonprofit landscape to become better cause advocates.

The best fundraisers do not succeed on personality or passionate beliefs alone, nor on the principal message of their cause, but on their ability to handle change, harness technology, and respond to donors' evolving priorities. It can be challenging, but the payoff is worth the task. As a fundraiser, you'll experience what George Bernard Shaw called, "The joy of being used for a purpose recognized by all as a mighty one."

## Cause Selling vs. Fundraising

This book is centered on learning and developing the mindsets and activities behind Cause Selling. This may be a new phrase

To keep a lamp burning we have to keep putting oil in it.

*Mother Theresa*





to some, but it is not a new concept. It's an approach to fundraising based on the well-established "relationship model of selling" in the for-profit world.

The problem with this description is that when you champion a cause, it's all about heart and emotion—and frankly, none of that "bottom line" talk from corporations seems to align with a heart-led approach to running a nonprofit organization. As a result, the nonprofit world has endeavored to make sure the world understands how very different it is from the for-profit world.

But how different are the two sectors, really? Well, here's where we need to set the record straight: *"Nonprofit" is not a business model, it's a tax status.* Both nonprofit and for-profit organizations need the same thing to grow—a steady and predictable inflow of

revenue. By shunning this reality, the only thing nonprofit professionals achieve is to hurt their cause.

Is it possible, then, to combine a more business-aligned approach with the heart and soul of nonprofit fundraising? We believe it is! The words "business" and "profit" are not inherently evil. The individuals on your board of directors certainly don't think so. In fact, most of them are able to greatly impact change precisely *because* of their success in the for-profit sector.

Cause Selling professionals are not being disloyal to the mission of their nonprofit. It is quite the opposite. They are fully embracing proven business models so that the future of their mission will be realized. In other words:

### **Cause Selling Professionals = Future Focused Fundraisers**

Why not see your job as a business career? Why not view it as a professional vocation? You have an even more compelling reason to do so than your for-profit selling counterparts. You are concerned with the bottom line, not for the sake of the bottom line but because of what donations represent to the future of your cause!

Cause Selling professionals are a sophisticated, diverse group of entrepreneurs. They are fundraisers who see that the most effective and beneficial way to approach their job is by approaching it like a business.

It is the mission of this book to transform fundraising into a career based on business-proven principles that translate into more long-term partnerships with "customers" (i.e., donors) who believe in the cause, appreciate

your forward-thinking approach, and want to align themselves with an organization that will still be impacting change for years to come—because that means their gifts will be put to the best possible use!

One of the most extraordinary parts of being a fundraiser is that the nonprofit sector freely welcomes you regardless of your age, gender, background, or belief system. If you are bold and brave enough to be the unique person you are and champion a cause, then take the next step by not being afraid of the word *sell*.

If you raise funds for a nonprofit organization, you already have something that most for-profit salespeople can only dream of having. You are “selling” something that you believe in wholeheartedly. Harness that passion to become the best Cause Selling professional you can be.

## What Is Cause Selling?

Cause Selling is a fresh approach to fundraising that allows organizations to remain future-focused in today’s ever-changing business realm. Let’s define the term and break down the steps in the Cause Selling cycle:

**CAUSE SELLING** is the process of *seeking* out potential donors who have a need, interest, and passion for your cause, *assisting* them to recognize and define that need, *showing* or demonstrating to them how your cause fulfills that need, and *inspiring* them to donate to your cause.

## THE CAUSE SELLING PROCESS



Cause Selling is a relationship-driven process that transports you from *hoping* for more gifts into *taking action* through a tangible, results-driven method that will leave everyone feeling the warm glow of giving.

The question, then, is not *if* we sell (because we all do) but *how* do you sell your cause in a way that grows your nonprofit, your personal career satisfaction, and the satisfaction of your donors? That is the question this book will endeavor to answer.

You already have your *why* (i.e., the mission). This book will provide you with the *how* so that you can do your job with the greatest effectiveness by connecting with more like-minded supporters who want to further your organization’s cause.

Because isn’t that the whole point anyway?

## The Cause Selling Cycle

When you go into a doctor’s office, you know that certain steps will be followed every time. You’re going to wait in a big room. You’re

going to get your heartrate, weight, and blood pressure checked. Then you're going to wait more in a little room. Every job has predefined steps that enable the goal to be reached.

It shouldn't come as a surprise, then, that regardless of the size or type of gift you are seeking, certain tasks must be regularly performed as a part of your fundraising efforts. These tasks form the eight steps in the *Cause Selling Cycle*. The separate pieces are

presented in a logical sequence in this book. In practice, however, the order will vary because the ebbs and flows of human relationships resist any attempts to force the process into a straight, predictable line.

The eight steps to successful fundraising described in Exhibit 1.1 are the focus of Chapters 7 through 14, and they represent your guide to a successful career in fundraising.

There are also three distinct phases

## EXHIBIT 1.1

## The Cause Selling Cycle



within the Cause Selling cycle. Phase One is comprised of all the work necessary to identify qualified donors. Phase Two includes your face-to-face time with donors. Phase Three involves the ask and then everything that happens after a gift is given. Here is a brief summary of the steps within each phase:

## Phase One

### 1. Prospecting

Like salespeople, fundraising professionals must always be filling their pipeline with new *prospects*, or potential donors. Donor prospecting is the process of searching for and identifying someone with a passion or desire to give, the means to do so, and the authority to make the decision to give. Current donor lists are a great place to begin your prospecting efforts. At the same time, you can find new prospective donors through special events and referrals from other donors and influencers.

### 2. Pre-Approach

After you identify qualified prospects, the next step is to gather as much useful information as you can before you meet and during initial meetings. This part of the process can look vastly different depending on how well-known prospects are, how many mutual acquaintances you have, how active they are online, and how open they are to sharing information that helps you understand what motivates them to give.

## Phase Two

### 3. Approach

Your cause is special and unique, and so are your supporters. Prospects want to know

that you see them as individuals rather than carbon copies of every other donor. What happens during the opening minutes of your first face-to-face encounter sets the tone for the entire relationship. Unfortunately, first-time meetings between a fundraiser and a donor can often create *tension* rather than *cooperation*. Spend time finding the prospect's comfort level. By redesigning your approach, you can calm the prospect's apprehension and reduce your own "ask anxiety."

### 4. Need Discovery

During this step, you discover the needs and passions of the donor. Because the success of the entire process rests on this discovery, spend whatever time is necessary to ask questions and get to know prospects. One of your primary goals in every donor interaction should be to create an atmosphere within which an act of trust can occur. By forming relationships, you create donors who have confidence in the integrity and ability of the fundraiser and confidence in the organization.<sup>1</sup>



**You don't *talk* donors into giving gifts. You *listen* them into giving gifts.**

## 5. Presentation

Your rapport building, question asking, and enthusiasm should lead you naturally into the presentation. This is where you tell the story of your mission. No one likes to be sold or pressured. Instead, they like to see the value of what is being presented and make their decision based on their own assessment of your story. One of the most common questions fundraisers ask is, “How do I make the story appealing to each unique donor?” We will discuss donor giving styles in Chapter 5 and effective storytelling techniques in Chapter 10.

## 6. Handling Objections

Prospects will have all sorts of reasons for why they can't give. Some are valid. Others signify you have not yet found the driving force that will inspire them to give. If you did a good job of qualifying the prospect, welcome these hesitations! They give you the opportunity to ask more questions and dig a little deeper.

## Phase Three

### 7. The Ask

Cause Selling is a matter of presenting compelling benefits that relate to both needs and emotions. And since the donor has been an active participant throughout, the ask should be the natural conclusion to a successful meeting. Fundraising in this manner reduces the amount of resistance you may encounter, including resistance to giving the full amount for which you are asking.

## 8. Stewardship

The final step in the Cause Selling cycle is fostering donor retention. Whether you call it nurturing, relationship management, or just staying in touch, developing a retention strategy is vital to the success of any nonprofit. Sadly, it's also a strategy that gets neglected in many organizations.

**Fundraising Begins  
with a *Great Mission*.  
It is Driven by a  
*Compelling Message*.  
It is Sustained through  
*Meaningful Relationships*.**

## We're All 'Works in Progress'

Let's be real for a minute. Many of you got into fundraising expecting to be surrounded by tireless enthusiasm and endless fulfillment. Soon after, the reality of fundraising set in, and you may have found yourself saying, “Wow, this is hard!” or maybe, “This is not what I signed up for.”

It's often a thankless job (you didn't see that one coming), not to mention that some of those around you aren't filled with the sunshine and optimism you were assuming you would see and feel.

Where's the warm glow?

Where's the fulfillment?

Making matters even more complicated is the fact that many of our colleagues have not learned the basic skills needed

for success. They are quick to throw in the towel, claiming they just weren't born to be fundraisers.

Becoming great at anything is not a matter of blind luck. In fact, great development professionals make a conscious choice to become the best. How? They read books, take courses, ask questions, study the techniques of successful fundraisers, work hard for their

cause and their donors, and continually strive to outperform themselves. That is how a successful fundraiser is made—and it's a process that can take many years to fully master.

It is not a natural process to ask for a gift! As the old saying goes, "You get out what you

put in." The same is true for honing your fundraising skills. Cause Selling is a constant learning process, and you must always be a student of your profession.<sup>2</sup>

Selling is an art for many successful fundraisers, but it is also a skill that must be practiced and polished. The question is if you are willing to put in the time and effort necessary to make Cause Selling a successful career—and only you can answer that.

## Training Is Not Optional

You may think your cause speaks for itself. And to you, it does. The problem is that many nonprofits are getting lost in the crowd. According to GuideStar, there are more than 1.8 million active nonprofit organizations in the U.S. alone.<sup>3</sup> How do donors find out about your organization and feel inspired enough to

provide the funds your organization needs to carry out its mission?

That's *your* job.

Fundraisers are facilitators of information and emotion who connect with donors and keep them engaged—and those connections resemble salesperson/client relationships. That is why fundraisers who use a relationship-selling approach are the ones who most successfully build enduring loyalty with donors.<sup>4</sup> In fact, if more fundraisers approached their jobs from the perspective that fundraising is "selling a cause," it would open up a new world of training available to do their jobs.

## Top Performers Are in Short Supply

Great causes need great fundraisers, and yet recruiting talented fundraisers can be a real challenge. T. Denny Sanford, who has donated hundreds of millions of dollars to science and medical research, says, "It's easier to recruit a world-class scientist than to hire a great fundraiser."

Exceptional fundraising requires a mix of skills that don't often come in the same package. You need to have *passion* and be *personable*, which are traits that come more naturally to outgoing people. Fundraising success also requires *listening* and *analytical skills* such as good organization and planning, which are often associated with introverted personalities.

This does not mean that extroverted people who are unorganized or analytical people who are shy can't be exceptional at their job—but it does help explain why great fundraisers

**Fundraising is  
the gentle art  
of teaching  
the joy  
of giving.**

*Henry Rosso*





are in short supply. The good news is we can overcome this through proper training that is rooted in Cause Selling principles.

### ***The Answer Is the Right Training***

Nonprofits fail for the one, two, or all three of the same reasons for-profit businesses fail:<sup>5</sup>

1. A lack of capital (donations)
2. A product (cause) that does not compel enough people to action
3. A faulty model for customer (donor) attraction and retention

That means if you have a mission that is compelling, there is really only one thing keeping your cause from expanding its reach—and that is a flawed model for donor attraction. Translation: Your nonprofit's fundraising practices need some work!

Preparing for the future in nonprofit giving trends through training isn't an option anymore. It's a requirement. Proper training is what ensures everyone in the organization is operating according to the same standards and methods. A well-organized and well-executed message delivery across all platforms—including through the individual efforts of those on the development team—is what ensures the future of your organization.

Nonprofit development programs are usually multi-faceted and require many different abilities depending on the position. For example, development careers can require skills such as grant-writing, composing annual appeals, and organizing events and strategic campaigns. Some positions are more research-based, some require strong interpersonal skills, and others involve a broad mix of abilities.<sup>6</sup>

The bottom line is this: nonprofits cannot bypass proper training and expect to have the same results as organizations that have introduced proper education into their culture. Skills training is not an insult to your abilities, nor does it undermine your passion for what you do. People are simply most comfortable asking for something when they understand how and why to ask.<sup>7</sup>

## Benefits of a Nonprofit Career

No one enters the world of nonprofit fundraising because of a burning desire to ask other people for money all day. In fact, your job is not even about collecting gifts; it's about inspiring passion. In many ways, the mission *is* the bottom line. We also know that what brought you here may look a little different from what brought the next fundraiser to the nonprofit world. However, we're all driven to become better cause advocates because of a few common motives:

**Ability to Make a Difference.** First and foremost, the reward for a fundraising job well done is priceless. Many fundraisers feel honored to be able to work for a nonprofit that is close to their heart for personal reasons, and others are just happy they can earn a living by doing something that adds value. How many careers are built on passion, integrity, and relationships and also give you the ability to make a real difference on this planet? It is truly a one-of-a-kind opportunity.

**Transferable Skills.** Working at a nonprofit can help you develop transferable soft skills



that include leadership abilities, multitasking capabilities, and strong interpersonal skills. You can also gain exposure to things that you might not have access to in larger, private sector organizations. Cassie Scarano, CEO and co-founder of *CommonGood Careers*, states, “Generally in nonprofits, especially smaller organizations, you get a broader view of how an organization runs, have more access to strategic decision making, and are challenged to take initiative.”

Recent trends show that the private and social sectors are converging, so that those who want both private sector benefits and social sector values have more options. “It’s no longer about deciding if you are either mission-driven or profit-driven,” Scarano said. “Instead, people need to consider where on the continuum they fall and what factors as a whole are most motivating to them.”<sup>8</sup>

**When you become a fundraiser, you don't work in the "nonprofit" sector. You work in the "for-change" sector.**

**Opportunities for Advancement.** The nonprofit sector is experiencing explosive growth. With this growth comes a demand for strong nonprofit talent, as well as the opportunity to build a long-term career. Independent Sector, a leadership network for nonprofits, foundations, and corporations, reports that nonprofit employment has doubled to around 10 percent of total U.S. employment over the past 25 years. Additionally, according to the most recent Nonprofit Employment Practices Survey released by GuideStar and Nonprofit HR, the sector contributes 5.4 percent of the country's total gross domestic product.<sup>9</sup>

**The nonprofit workforce is the third largest of all U.S. industries, just behind retail trade and manufacturing.**

One of the perceived challenges to nonprofit career advancement is that there are many positions on the ground level, but only a limited number of senior management positions. That is why bringing other valuable skills into an organization—such as your ability to effectively fundraise—is a great way to create career opportunities. In fact, successful fundraisers are often sought after in the search for nonprofit top executives.

**Competitive Salaries.** A common myth about nonprofit organizations is that salaries are not competitive with those in the corporate world. *Fundraisers are the catalysts of their nonprofit.* They are responsible for keeping the work, ideas, and progress flowing, and because of their vital role, development positions are among the most highly compensated roles in nonprofit organizations.<sup>10</sup> The chart on the next page shows the average annual salaries for some common fundraising positions:



Job Title	Avg. Salary
Development Director	\$85,270
Development Manager	\$73,626
Major Gifts Officer	\$69,916
Fundraising Director	\$64,177
Grants Officer	\$55,275
Fundraiser	\$49,955

*Provided by GlassDoor.com  
(based on 2018 reported national averages)*

When deciding which nonprofit to align with, factors such as organizational budget and location will play a critical role in deciding how you are compensated. As you might imagine, organizations with larger budgets (\$10 million and higher) pay more than organizations with budgets under \$10 million.<sup>11</sup>

Like all other sectors, the nonprofit world is becoming increasingly social. Throughout the book, you will find boxes like the one below called “The Social Media Connection.” In these sections, we will highlight ways you can utilize social media and other online

resources to maximize your position’s potential. In this chapter, we discuss how development professionals are using social media to find career opportunities.

## The One Thing Holding You Back

Like any other profession, professional fundraising has some downsides. Economic conditions and the changing priorities of the new generations of donors can certainly complicate the issue, but in general, there is really just one drawback that is universal:

### **No one likes to be rejected.**

The possibility of facing rejection is one reason some fundraisers are hesitant to view themselves as “selling” anything. If you aren’t selling, people can’t tell you no, right?

That’s not really how it works.

In fact, this thinking is holding plenty of *good* fundraisers back from being *great* fundraisers. You’re selling a cause, and because of that, statistics, logic, and reason tell us that some people will refuse to engage—for many reasons. The key is that in almost all cases,



### The Social Media Connection

## NONPROFIT CAREERS AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

For those seeking to find the right career in the nonprofit sector, social media platforms present a unique opportunity to market yourself to organizations. While you may not be able to tweet your way to a new career, career and online experts recommend leveraging social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and especially LinkedIn in your nonprofit job search.

Social media gives you the opportunity to showcase your personality and unique talents, and it humanizes you in a way that no résumé ever could. It also allows you to gain a more solid understanding of the organizations that interest you. While a website can provide extensive information about an organization, its social media presence can often offer more insight into their culture and the way they interact with employees and donors.

As you decide which organization is most suited for you, you can use social media every step of the way:

### **BEFORE YOUR SEARCH:**

Make sure your LinkedIn profile is up to date and compelling. Don't view it as an online résumé. It is meant to be so much more. Think of it as your own personal marketing piece. Stay active within the LinkedIn network, liking and commenting on the things that matter most to you.

Ensure that all of your online profiles reflect your level of professionalism and commitment to representing yourself in a positive way. As a fundraiser, you will be representing the cause! So, your profiles and videos should be free from indecent images, foul language, and any derogatory comments about other people or organizations.

### **PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW:**

Once you get an interview, use social media to learn about the decision makers you'll be meeting. You may be able to uncover mutual interests and connections that will influence your chances of being selected. You can also prepare your answers based on what you've learned about the interviewer, and of course, about the organization itself. Come prepared with thoughtful insights and legitimate praise for the work they are doing.

### **AT THE OFFER STAGE:**

As you are considering an offer, use social media to reach out to current or past employees. You may be able to get a clearer picture of the responsibilities of the position as well as the expectations that your new team will have of you.



**AFTER YOU LAND THE JOB:**

If you are fortunate enough to earn that dream position, always remember that with social media, everything *you* do directly reflects onto your organization. So, represent them well and with dignity.

Social media can be an invaluable research tool for new career seekers. Start following and interacting with the organizations that most inspire you, and you may find yourself working for them one day.

**Do not waste  
yourself in  
rejection;  
do not bark  
against the  
bad but  
chant the  
beauty of the  
good.**

*Ralph Waldo  
Emerson*

those reasons have *nothing* to do with you.

Closed doors do not define you. You are defined by the ones you open! Future-focused fundraisers learn quickly that rejection is not directed toward them personally or their nonprofit. They have the ability to separate their own worth from their work, so they will never become paralyzed by

the fear of rejection. Instead, they push on until they find the next prospective donor who

is ready (and excited) to say yes.

You will be discouraged by potential supporters, and sometimes by other fundraisers or your leaders. We're all human—but that's also exactly what makes this job worth doing. We have the rare opportunity to witness the best that human nature has to offer: all of the generosity, the love, the kindness, and the passion. A few closed doors will never stop the professional who seeks to help uncover these in others.

Get excited that you get to wake up every day and sell something that fulfills you and benefits others! It is a rare honor and a precious gift.



## SUMMARY



We all sell every day! This fact helps you see your job in a new light and opens up the doors of opportunity.



Cause Selling is not new. It is based on established theories from the for-profit world.



Future-focused fundraisers are successful because they work and train to become so.



With proper training, all personality types can be effective fundraisers.



Fundraising provides you with the unique ability to impact lasting change in the world.



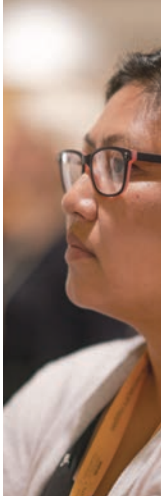
Increased competition and changing economic factors have made Cause Selling skills training an imperative.



Because asking is a part of your career, so is rejection. Let it serve as motivation to find the next donor!



What you do every day is an honor. That's why a few closed doors should never stop you from continuing to seek to help others.



**Grow  
Philanthropy.**

**Change Your Community ...  
and the World!**



# ABOUT THE SANFORD INSTITUTE OF PHILANTHROPY

make #Philanthropy happen

The Sanford Institute of Philanthropy (SIP) prepares future-focused nonprofits and their fundraisers for greater impact by providing learning opportunities specifically designed to enhance their nonprofits' cause, their communities, and the world.

The Institute is committed to delivering measurable results through a proven, contemporary curriculum presented by world-class nonprofit leaders, best-in-class faculty, and renowned philanthropists. Through comprehensive, peer-to-peer instruction, our participants develop and strengthen applicable and time-tested skills they can apply to their development operations now and in the future.

With a concentrated focus on building deep, lasting relationships, the curricula in-

cluded in our programs and courses encourage guided practice and collaboration, allowing participants to deepen their skill sets and increase their confidence. Participants complete their education feeling empowered and equipped to cultivate and retain loyal donors, conduct successful campaigns, and be more effective and intentional in their roles.

## *Our History*

T. Denny Sanford has always believed in sharing his success with others. Inspired by big-picture movements like the Giving Pledge, founded by fellow businessmen and philanthropists Bill Gates and Warren Buffet, Sanford has pledged to give the majority of his fortune away to charity and to work tirelessly to make the world a better place, especially in the avenues of philanthropy, fundraising and education.

Sanford is the founder of Sanford Programs at National University, a private nonprofit institution, which includes Sanford Harmony and Sanford Inspire, as well as the Sanford Institute of Philanthropy. Formally launched in September 2014, Sanford Programs are designed to create positive societal change through the development of nonprofit leaders and the creation of educators who





teach inspirational programs serving world-wide needs.

To date, Sanford has given more than a billion dollars to various causes, demonstrating his commitment to his personal motto:

**Aspire to inspire before you expire.**

### **Learn More, Do More**

Go to our website to learn about SIP offerings online and in your community, including our free monthly webinars, as well as the Fundraising Academy that is designed to

take your fundraising efforts to the next level and beyond.

We have big plans for the future, and we want you to be a part of it! In order to turn our goals into reality, here is our key strategy: To plant hundreds of programs at nonprofits and universities across the country—a family of Sanford Institute of Philanthropy Affiliates—that embrace our philosophy and join us in supporting and promoting the contemporary fundraising educational model, one that is focused on putting the donors' needs first.

**“As a SIP Affiliate Director with extensive background in nonprofit leadership, the value of SIP and *Cause Selling* is phenomenal. The textbook and curriculum are truly an antidote to the noise and confusion we find in the fundraising space. *Cause Selling* provides a crystal-clear framework and methodology for anyone who is serious about building and deepening relationships with donors. The book is a one-stop reference tool for nonprofit fundraisers who want to excel and have the competence and confidence necessary in the 21st century.”**

*Solomon Belette, Director, Sanford Institute of Philanthropy, John F. Kennedy University*



Together, the consortium of partners will accomplish our unified mission by partnering with regional associations, foundations, and businesses to inspire leaders to fundraise for

their causes, improve their ability to secure more gifts, and become better stewards of their donor relationships.

**“The Cause Selling cycle completely transformed my perspective and gave me the confidence to develop and sustain lasting relationships with our donors. The Cause Selling cycle allowed me to better understand my donors’ passion and effectively deepen their connection with my organization’s cause, which became a shared cause. Relationship-driven fundraising allowed me to build trust and credibility with our stakeholders. I was given the tools to steward my donors so they became long-lasting supporters. The Ask, which was initially the most intimidating activity for me, became a natural next step in the evolution of my donor relationships. It became second nature.”**

*Pearl Hoeglund, SIP at National University Fundraising Academy graduate 2016, Program Manager, Sanford Institute of Philanthropy*

**Visit our website to learn more about our programs, to become an affiliate, or apply to become an instructor:**

**[www.sanfordinstituteofphilanthropy.org](http://www.sanfordinstituteofphilanthropy.org)**

**For more information on Cause Selling  
and how to order the book, please visit:**

**[www.CauseSelling.org](http://www.CauseSelling.org)**

This book may be purchased for educational, business, or sales promotional use.

For information or to order, please contact:

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