

# Fundraising Fundamentals

(If You Don't Know This Stuff, You Should)

David Allen, Development for Conservation

October 2024

# Introduction - Who is This?

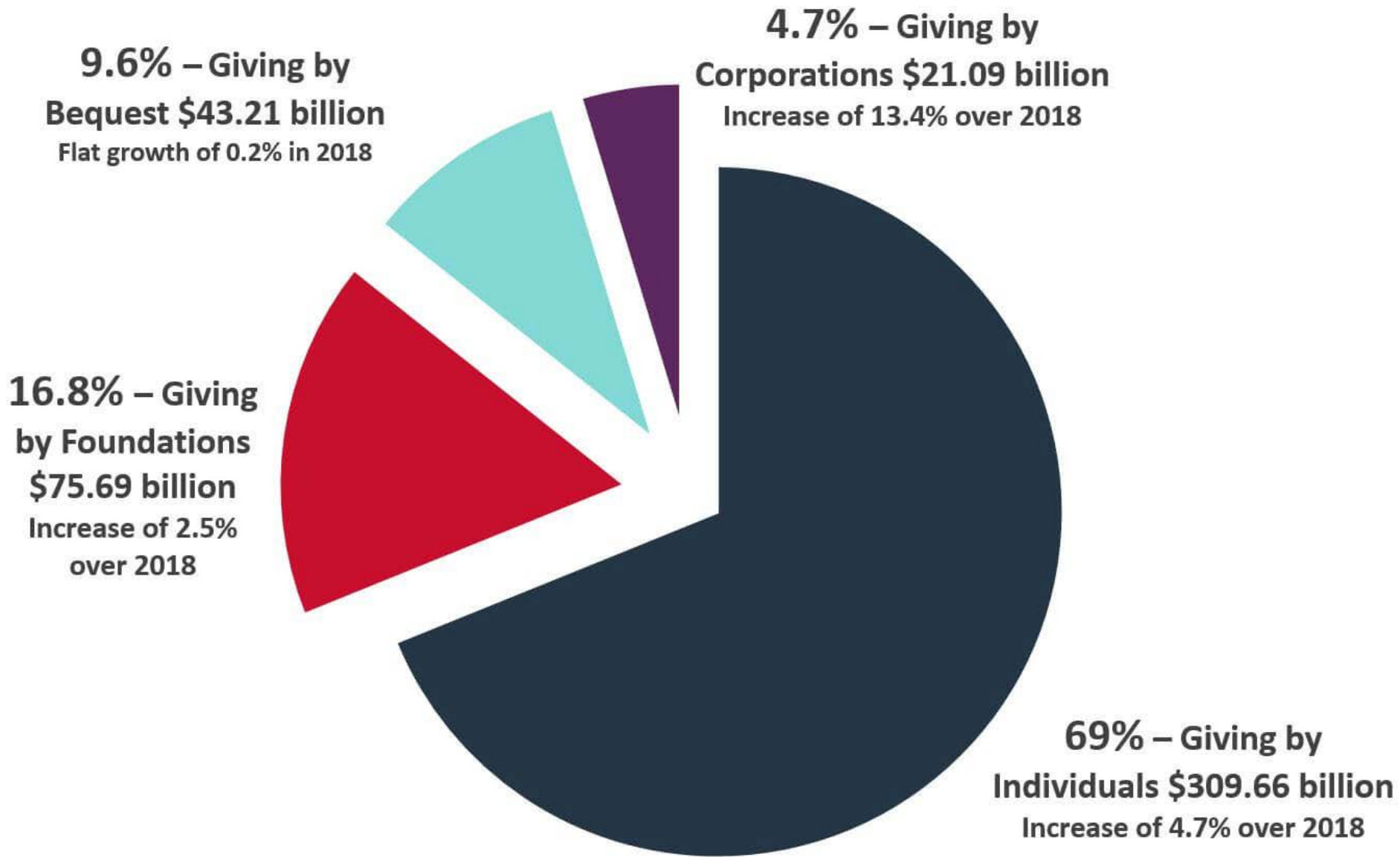


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[www.DevelopmentForConservation.com/  
about-us/resources](http://www.DevelopmentForConservation.com/about-us/resources)

- David Allen
- Development for Conservation
- More than 35 years in FR
  - 1/3 with TNC Chapters in OR, TX, and WI
  - 1/3 with Sand County Foundation
  - 1/3 FT Consulting since 2009



# FOUR PARADIGM SHIFTS

# 4 Paradigm Shifts

1. We are **helping donors do something important** just as much as they are helping us
2. Focus on the **NET**, not on the cost
3. Major describes the **decision**, not the person
4. **Practice** is important for Board Members

# Paradigm Shift #1

*We don't need donors to think like WE do.  
We need to learn to think like THEY do.*



# Paradigm Shift #1

We waste too much time imagining why donors will say NO.

A better question is why they might say YES.



# Why Would They Say YES?

Because they had loved the park for years

Because they love areas LIKE the park

Because they live nearby and use the park frequently

Because they value access to nature nearby for health, wellness, and spiritual renewal

Because they like the idea of protecting access to Nature for others

Because stewardship of the earth is a religious value

Because they believe Nature needs to be protected for flora and fauna  
(Everything needs somewhere to live)

For future generations



# Implications

1. Stop waiting for business to “come around”
2. Talk more about values than deeds
3. Prioritize taking people to the land

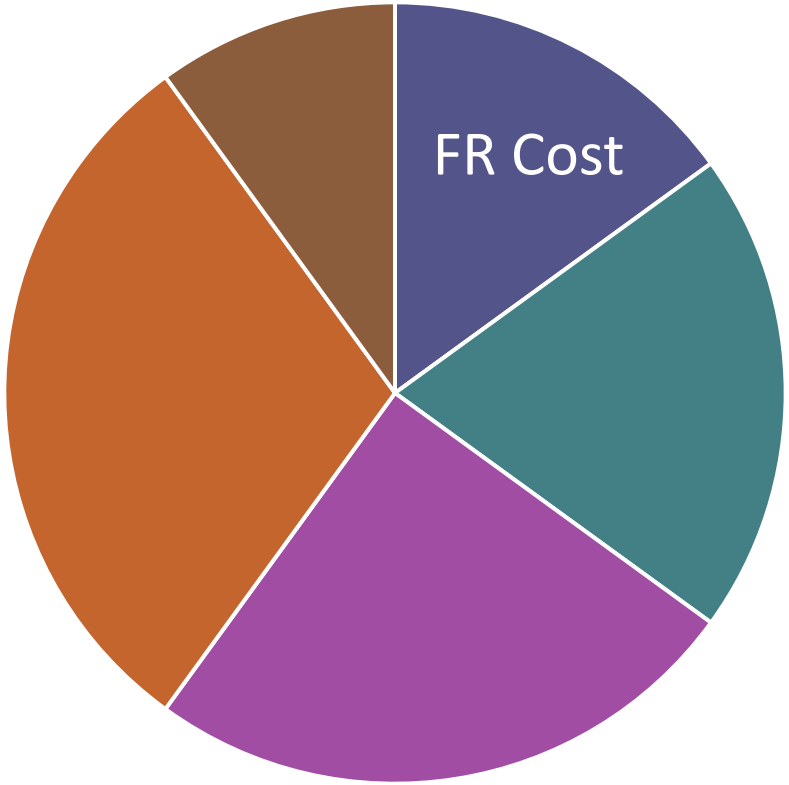
# Paradigm Shift #2

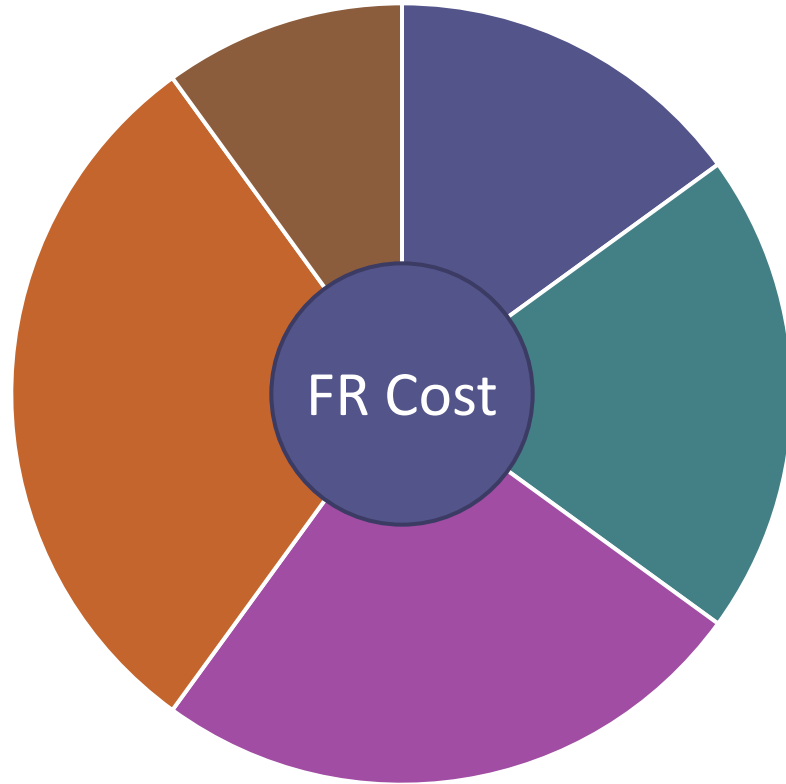
Focus on the NET. Not on the cost.

It's not about how much money is raised.

It's about how much money can be put to work.

If you could spend twice as much on fundraising and raise twice as much for the mission, wouldn't you do that?

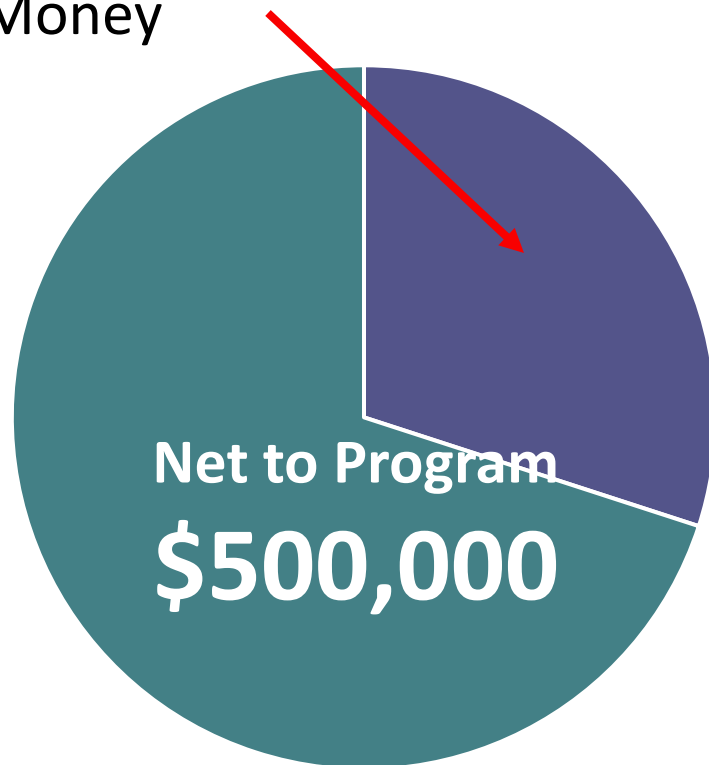




Cost of Raising Money



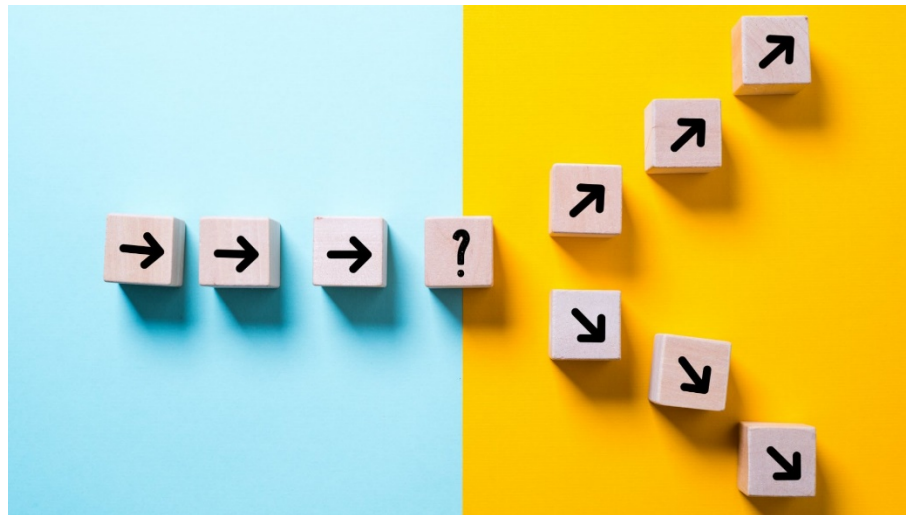
Total Raised = \$120,000

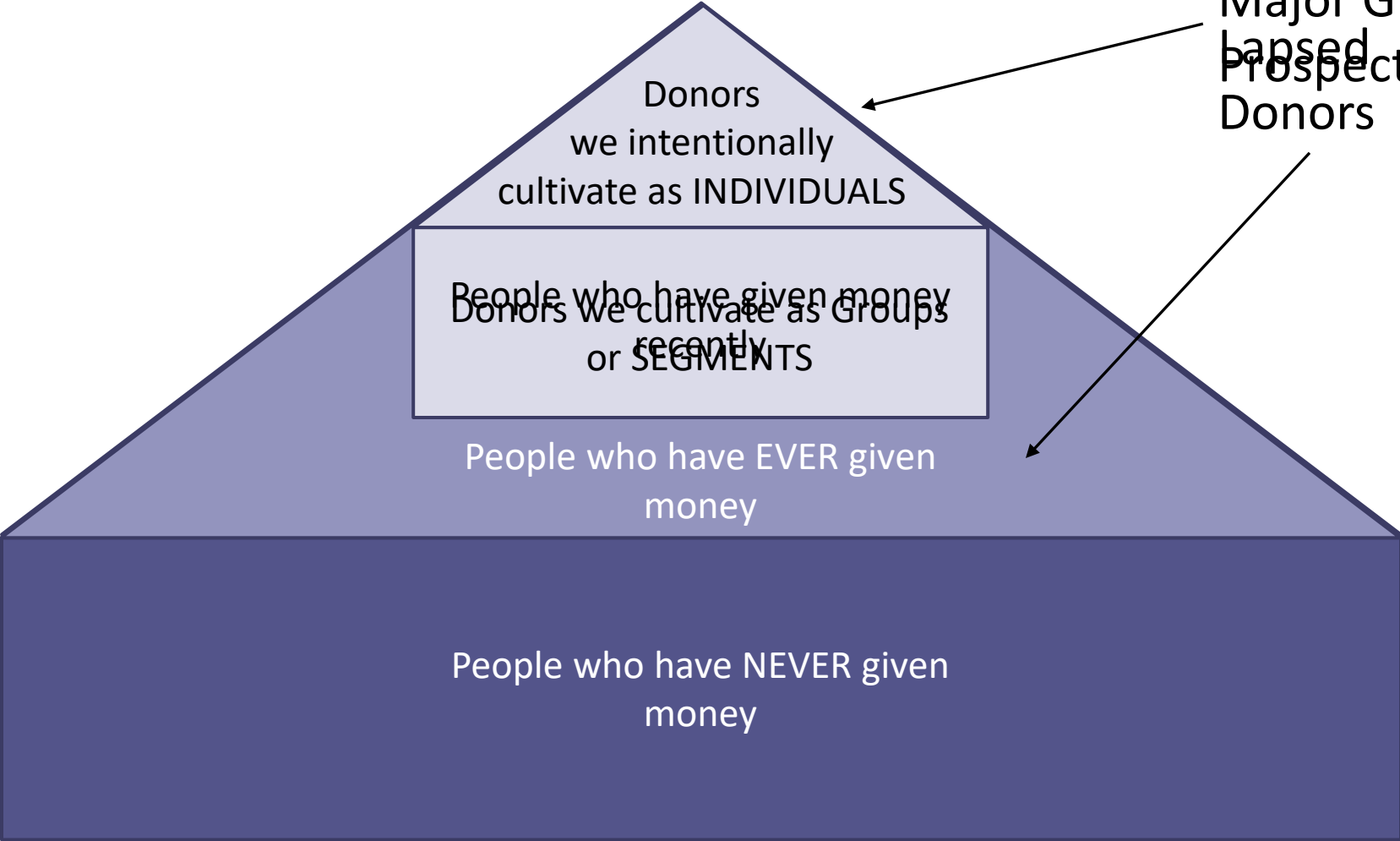


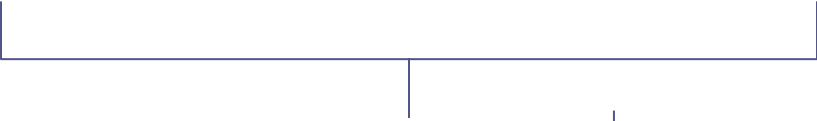
Total Raised = \$715,000

# Paradigm Shift #3

“Major” describes the decision,  
not the person making it.







**Annual Gifts**



**Major Gifts**



# Major Gift Fundraising

Cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding INDIVIDUAL donors - treating them as individuals - is the primary differentiation between major gift fundraising and all other fundraising.

# IMHO - Use of Time

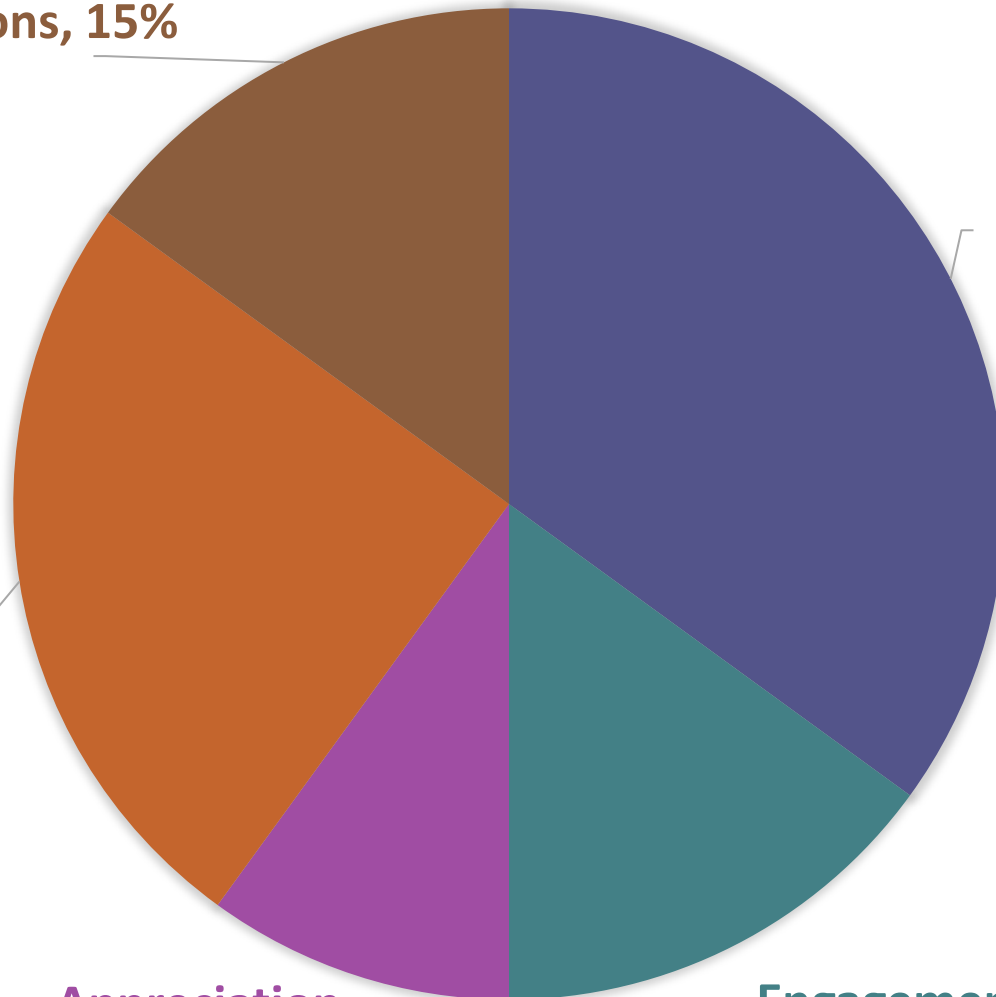
Renewal/Appeal  
Solicitations, 15%

Personal Contact,  
35%

Donor  
Communications,  
25%

Appreciation  
Events, 10%

Engagement  
Events, 15%



# Can't vs. Won't

- “I can't” means I don't have the resources.
- “I won't” means I choose to prioritize other things ahead of what you are asking.
- It is arrogant to decide that someone can't. It is self-defeating to decide they won't.

# Paradigm Shift #4

- It's OK to practice
- Practice involves slowing down
- Practice involves repetition
  
- Organize opportunities for everyone in your organization to practice

\_\_\_\_\_ *feels like an  
important place for me to  
invest my time and money  
because I believe that ...*

# FUNDRAISING MYTHOLOGY

# Here's What We Hear

- Challenge grants really work – you need to find us a challenge grant
- WHAT works? 1:1, 1:2, 1:5, 2:1?
- Is there any risk of donors “shopping” for the best deals?
- Is there any downside to not making it?
- There are studies from public broadcasting that suggest that over time, donors begin to hold off their giving until there is a match.

# Here's What We Hear

- Newsletters are too expensive and they waste paper – ENews works just as well
- How do we know?
- How expensive is “too” expensive?
- ENews works just as well in what way? In fostering loyalty? Raising money?
- ENews may work for some people, but what about those for whom it doesn't?
- Several high profile all-electronic experiments were quickly abandoned because they didn't work “just as well.”



# Here's What We Hear

- I know a great graphic designer who will do our appeal pro bono - she will help us raise more money
- Does graphic design drive fundraising response?
- Maybe she will just help us spend less money!
- Given the choice between spending \$800 to raise \$6,000 and spending \$2,500 to raise \$10,000, which would we choose?

# Here's What We Hear

- Direct mail doesn't work anymore - you need a social media strategy
- Doesn't work anymore in what sense? For fundraising? For recruitment? For building awareness?
- Again, how do we know?
- Have we tried side-by-side testing?
- Are these two statements even related?
- Many Millennials report giving on-line – after receiving a request in the mail.

# Here's What We Hear

- Telephone calls just irritate people
- Irritating for the caller or the person called?
- Calls to say thank you? Invitations to special events? Updates on projects you know they are interested in? (Calls from your mother?) All irritating?
- Calls from Board members and senior staff convey a higher level of importance to the communication. It can certainly be abused, but it's neither automatically nor universally "irritating."

# Here's What We Hear

- I wouldn't read a 4-page letter, therefore no one will read a 4-page letter
- Does it matter whether the letter will get read?
- Are we writing letters that people will read or are we writing letters that raise money?
- This issue has perhaps been tested more consistently than any other. 4-pagers generate more responses and raise more money. (No one reads 1-page letters either.)

# Here's What We Hear

- People will give more money if we don't ask for a specific amount
- Based on what evidence?
- Another issue that has been thoroughly tested. The ask amount is called an "anchor." Appeal letters that include specific anchor requests ALWAYS raise more money. The most effective anchors are those related to what the donor gave last year.

# Here's What We Hear

- We should wait to ask - people are tired right now. Donor fatigue is a real thing.
- Again - Based on what evidence? There are two million nonprofits out there. Will anyone notice that we didn't ask? Will they appreciate us for waiting? Do we expect to raise more money by not asking?
- SOME donors are tired and won't be giving again soon. But we won't raise money by not asking.

# And Finally, Think About This

People who care about Nature  
and the natural environment  
have far more in common with  
each other than Millennials  
have with each other

# THE TRIPLE-A BOARD



# Exploring the AAA Structure

Board member involvement is critical in FR

- Connecting into the community
- Engaging others
- Extending the impact of the mission
- Multiplying staff efforts
- Strengthening their own commitment

Kay Sprinkel Grace

# The AAA Way to Fundraising Success:

2008-2009  
Fundraising  
Success

Maximum Involvement,  
Maximum Results



# What is a Triple AAA Board?

- Triple AAA is a construct – a management tool
- Every Board member is asked to play as role as an Ambassador, Advocate, and/or Asker
- Every Board member is offered an array of potential assignments from which to choose - drawn from the strategic development plan

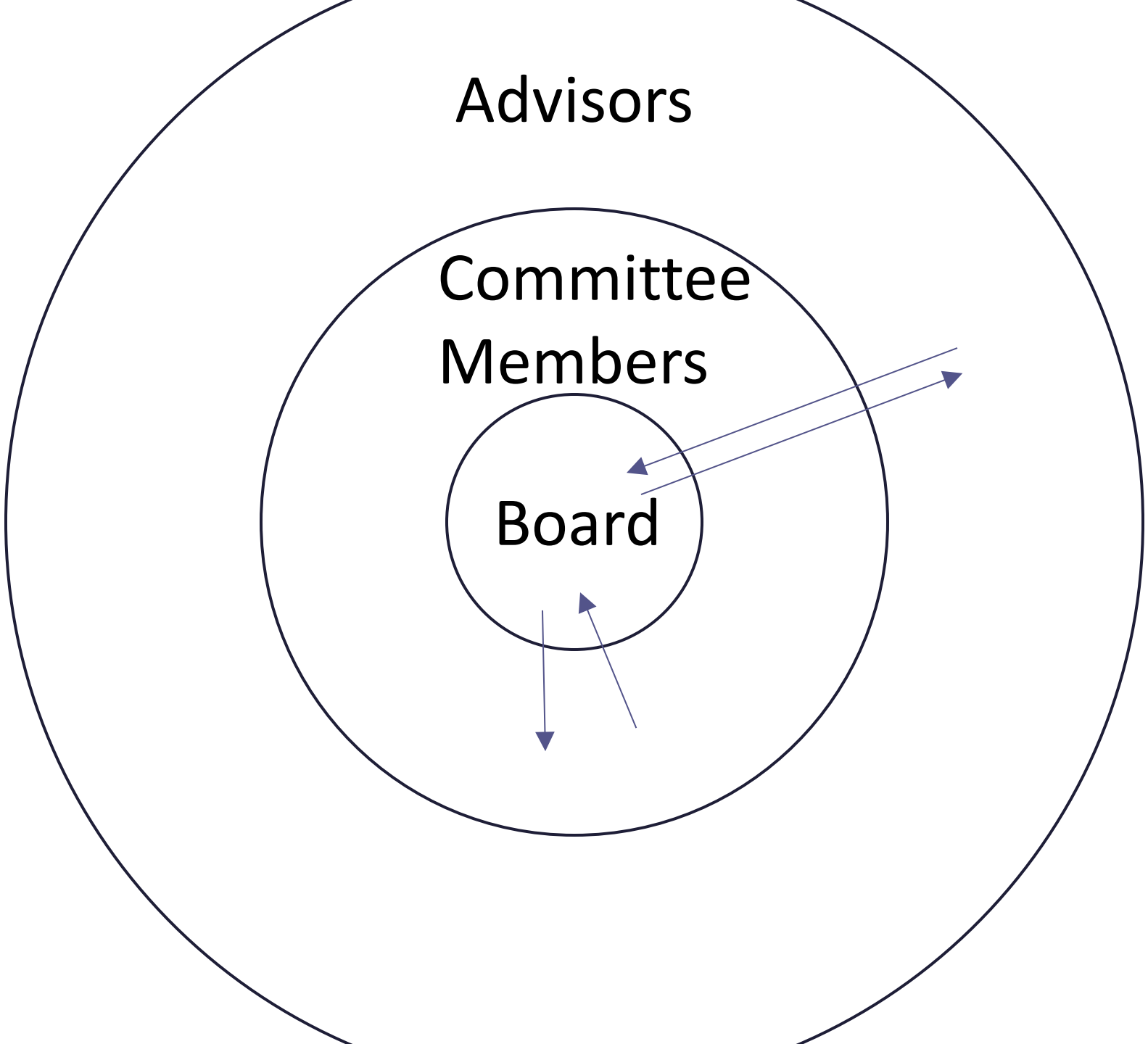
# Roles Board Members Play

- Ambassadors
  - Hosts, Door openers
  - Build relationships
- Advocates
  - Topical Experts
  - Make the case (formal and informal)
  - Recruit other volunteers
- Askers
  - Closers, call the question, make the ask

Advisors

Committee  
Members

Board



# Roles Org Leaders Play

- Ambassadors
  - Hosts, Door openers
  - Build relationships
- Advocates
  - Topical Experts
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# They All Need

- Training
- Role Clarity
- Feeling Included
- Regular Communication
- Practice
- Recognition

Questions??





**Thank You**