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Young Readiness Index

Before undertaking a significant campaign, an assessment of an organization's readiness should be undertaken. Usually, this assessment includes a financial development study, often done with the help of outside counsel. Another tool for assessing readiness is the "Young Readiness Index."

To use this tool, rate (or have key volunteers and other staff rate) your organization in the following areas. Scores in each area should range from the lowest at "1" to the highest level of "10."

<i>Key Indicators</i>	<i>Rate 1-10</i>
❖ A written document that makes a compelling case for supporting the campaign, including reasonable projections of the project's total cost has been prepared and adopted.	_____
❖ Ability and readiness of major donors to give substantial lead gifts before a public announcement of the campaign.	_____
❖ Enlistment and education of volunteer leaders.	_____

Subtotal of Key Indicators: _____

<i>Additional Indicators</i>	<i>Rate 1-10</i>
❖ Commitments of time and support from all key participants (the governing board, the chief staff officer, prospective major donors, key volunteer leaders, the professional fundraising staff and the institutional "family.")	_____
❖ A clear record of achievement and a strategic plan for organizational growth and improvement.	_____
❖ A pool of cultivated potential donors with the capacity to make gifts, paid over three to five years, in the ranges described in the project's chart of gifts.	_____

Additional Indicators

Rate 1-10

- ❖ An assessment of the institutional development program and a market survey addressing internal and external preparedness. _____
- ❖ Competent staff and, perhaps, external professional counsel. _____
- ❖ Internal systems capable of preparing prospect lists, supporting volunteer activities, recording and acknowledging gifts. _____
- ❖ Adequate, even liberal, funds for expenses. _____
- ❖ Adequate working capital to conduct capital planning and development activities before the first gift is made to the campaign. _____

Total Score: _____

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Subtotal of Key Indicators	Total Score	What does this mean for our project?
25-30	80 and Above	<i>Very well positioned and ready to proceed.</i>
20-35	65 through 79	<i>Close, but not quite ready.</i>
Less than 20	Less than 65	<i>Clearly, some work must be done to improve relations with potential donors and leaders and to strengthen support for the project!</i>

Other factors that affect an organization’s readiness to conduct a major campaign include the strength of the national and local economy, competing or conflicting campaigns and a history of positive public perceptions.

Use the Young Readiness Index along with other market research, personal interviews, focus groups and a capital development study to make a frank and honest assessment of the organization’s development strengths and weaknesses so that any shortcomings may be “shored up” before a campaign is announced.