

TOWARD STRONGER FEDERATION CAMPAIGNS: THE EVOLUTION OF PLANNING FOR THE CAMPAIGN

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... changing circumstances and changing characteristics of the Jewish Community will force change in the way resources must be developed in support of Jewish communal programs and services. When the Jewish communal system has attained levels of spending that, for operational purposes alone, amount to billions of dollars each year, the effort to generate resources cannot be approached casually or improvisationally. Careful analysis and planning are required. . .

While the annual campaign, and the organization that conducts it, can stand on their own as a separate entity, the Federation campaign is very much a part of the community dynamic. In the authors' judgment, the strength of the Jewish communal campaign is in the fact that it is rooted in the Jewish tradition of community and Jewish communal responsibility. Those of us who engage in fundraising for the Jewish community are not simply engaged in a mechanical set of activities, but in a cause whose roots were developed over the centuries. The forms of our communal organization are very clearly recognizable, at least for the period since the destruction of the Temple nearly 2,000 years ago.

This Jewish tradition informs our fundraising and our community organization. It helps shape the organization for the delivery of services, which our communities organize and sponsor, and it

helps shape the very nature of these services. When we approach a contributor in the Jewish community, whether a large or a small contributor, that individual is conscious of many things. Very prominent among them is the fact that this request for a commitment fits into a long tradition of community and community responsibility.

This is an aspect of our planning outlook that must be taken into account. When we plan the campaign, we operate on the basis of certain assumptions. One of these is that we have a deep, strong and continuing loyalty on the part of a fairly well-established constituency. Not everybody, not every contributor, necessarily will be conscious of this commitment. But there are enough who are so that there is a critical mass with which to maintain a campaign at a level of quality that goes far beyond what most fundraising enterprises are able to generate.

The campaign is more than a device for resource development. The campaign gives credibility to the whole Jewish communal enterprise. The fact that, year in and year out, the Jewish community can raise a predictable amount of money and provide services at a predictable level of quality gives credibility to the approach to

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funding sources, whether they be donors to endowments, foundations, government authorities, or third-party payers. So, while we recognize that the campaign is only one aspect of resource development, it also must be acknowledged that the campaign is a critical element of resource development; beyond that, it is a very significant factor in establishing the credibility of the entire community endeavor.

THE EVOLUTION OF PLANNING IN FEDERATIONS

Whether one functions in a planning capacity or has responsibility for fund-raising tasks, the common bond between the two is community organization. To put the current thinking about planning in a historical context, planning in Jewish Federations has been going on for more than forty years. In the earliest years, it tended to be episodic rather than continuing; it dealt with specific problems rather than a full range of activities and systems. In that period, planning and budgeting were closely linked, reflecting donor demands or agency requests which needed consideration and decision. This was the early rationale for planning, and in the sense that the rationale has not changed very much in the intervening years, it might be suggested that we have not matured much as a field. For many agencies, this remains the primary rationale for planning: they respond to annualized demands or requests from donors or beneficiaries to address very limited sets of issues. During the last decade or two, there have been some very stimulating articles on planning and planning opportunities in Jewish communal service. However, we have the impression that relatively few communities have undertaken to put these new methods into practice.

In the earliest years, relatively few communities undertook any kind of systematic

planning or budgeting. Baltimore, Boston, Cleveland, and Detroit were among the earliest federated communities to undertake putting their planning and budgeting on a systematic basis. Other major communities were beginning to move into this kind of activity in the post-World War II years. However, it should be recalled that Jewish communal campaigns during the period of the 50's and 60's were relatively flat, and resources for effecting change were relatively scarce. As a result, except for purposes of preserving resources or finding better ways to use limited resources, there was not a great deal of impetus to planning, given that the projection of future resources is a very useful component in the planning process.

During the late 60's and 70's, more resources were available and the demand for additional services became stronger. This led more communities into planning activities. They soon found that they did not have sufficient resources to meet all the demand confronting them. At that point, a number of communities sought governmental funds and foundation support to augment what they could raise in the annual campaign and from United Way allocations. It was in that era that governmental support and third-party payments became significant sources of support for hospitals and institutional services for the aged; that a Washington presence was established by the Council of Jewish Federations; and that state lobbying associations or liaison groups began to develop. That trend continues still.

The introduction of this kind of activity emphasized the necessity for systematic needs assessment and program development. To demonstrate to funding sources that an evaluative capacity existed, it was useful to have an ongoing planning structure. The notion of planning as a year-round endeavor, accountable at the top level of the organization, was then pretty well established.

In the late 1970's, the concepts of

management by objectives and zero-based budgeting began to take hold. With these developments, the applicability to campaign management emerged more clearly. In the period between 1978 and 1980, the Council of Jewish Federations and the United Jewish Appeal moved actively to encourage campaign planning. By now, a good many communities, but still a minority of the national Jewish community, have entered into the campaign planning process.

It is worth noting that the campaign planning approach is rooted in the community organization. It is based on the assumption that the annual campaign is an integral part of the community process and should not be regarded simply as a one-year activity. What is needed is to think beyond the year-to-year approach, to take account of what must be done in order to raise the monies that the community requires.

This thinking led to introduction of the methodology referred to as the capacity planning process, in which there is evaluation of what a community might really be able to achieve if it were structured to conduct its campaign in the most effective way. With such an orientation, the community could rationally approach donors, and the community as a whole, not only with an urgent presentation of need, but with an indication of the direction of growth which makes sense for that community. With such thinking, it should be possible to work toward increasing the number of donors, the quality of giving, and the numbers of donors in the larger categories of giving.

The latest refinement in campaign planning in Federations has been the introduction of what is now called strategic long-range planning, which Federations began using in the early 1980's. The Council of Jewish Federations created a department to deal with strategic long-range planning in 1982. Today, a number of pilot communities are examining the

process. The United Way of America has given leadership in the development of this method, and the experience of a number of local United Ways has revealed some very innovative applications which are of interest to us.

What the authors have tried to indicate in this very cursory review is that planning has emerged from a sense on the part of various elements of our communal systems, that things can be done better than they have been. We have found that a systematic approach to our community process could help us address developments and issues which will affect our ability to accomplish what is needed. Presumably, if we do a better job of planning, we should be able to conduct better campaigns. That planning and campaigning are related, and that together they form a conceptual framework for our own activity, is the next point which this article addresses.

PLANNING DEFINED

Planning offers the opportunity and the means to relate systematically the various components of the communal enterprise; to understand the developments that affect them; to think through the problems and issues that confront them; and to develop the strategies for keeping the system alive and dynamic. Planning is a systematic process which offers a means for understanding the changes that are occurring and for thinking through the problems and the opportunities that these changes present. It sets goals and objectives which establish the direction and pace for communal activity, or, in the case of campaign, for fundraising efforts. It provides a vehicle for formulating and implementing a well-conceived program for systematic growth and development. It enables the monitoring and the evaluation of the program in light of changing conditions and circumstances, and it permits adjustments and modifications to facilitate

progress toward the goals and objectives which have been agreed upon.

There are many types of planning. Long-range planning attempts to assess the total universe in which the communal system functions. Likely, it would relate to campaign as one aspect of resource development, and it would look at the campaign in global terms. Long-range planning would consider large-scale elements that bear upon the campaign.

Short-range planning is operational in scope. Generally, it is a management tool, to ensure orderly performance of the functions that comprise the campaign.

Planning in Jewish communal service has primarily been referred to as a generic activity. However, it has in practice pertained essentially to the programs and activities conducted by the Jewish community agencies. The planners in our system have been referred to as social planners, and their focus has been on such activities as Jewish education, group services, or health and rehabilitation. Increasingly, in Jewish communal service, there is an inclination to think of planning as incorporating the total enterprise. There will be sub-units to deal with services and service delivery. Other sub-units will deal with resource development, and there will be sub-sub-units within that. This likely will be the vernacular that we shall use in the future.

Within our professional lifetime, we have seen the term planning evolve from one which describes the coordination of community services to periodic studies defining fields of service, to continuing attention to resources and needs as they are applied to the operation of services, to the systematic assessment of the relationships of resources, needs, and services, to efforts to predict trends and developments affecting the availability of resources, the nature of needs to be served and the capacity and capability of serving them.

It is only recently that reference to planning in the campaign has been used to characterize it as a management device and as an instrumentality for adapting to change. In a handbook published in 1958, by the Council of Jewish Federations, Henry L. Zucker described the annual campaign as "at once a social service and a sales campaign. It is the biggest, the most spectacular, and one of the most important events in the Jewish community's calendar." At the same time, he regarded it as a great unifying force in organizing the community, with tremendous value in bringing about an understanding of Jewish life and Jewish human values and problems.¹

The annual campaign today serves these functions, but in current usage it may be likened to the sales campaign of a business or an industry. Sales once were conducted on the basis of a "seat-of-the-pants" approach to the customer. They now involve much more systematic attention. The salesman must examine and anticipate the developments which will affect the sales effort. That moves toward the function that is now called marketing. We may regard planning as a marketing activity and the annual campaign as sales activity. The marketing provides an overview and backdrop which sets the stage for the sales campaign. It offers perspective and balance to counteract the impulses of the moment to which a dynamic enterprise must respond. Our job here is to link together the sales campaign and the marketing effort, the conduct of the annual fundraising effort and its planning and management, to ensure the most effective performance and the most satisfactory end results.

1. Henry L. Zucker, "Organizing and Planning the Campaign," Louis Stein, ed., *Building Stronger Federation Campaigns*. New York: Council of Jewish Federations, 1958, p. 12.

MANAGING THE CAMPAIGN

Our task is to develop ever-increasing vitality and vibrancy in our annual campaign efforts. We need to maintain the centrality of the Federation campaign and create that link that is often subliminal, but which makes the annual collection effort so effective. The way to do this is through the orderly process of examining change so as to understand its nature and then developing appropriate responses. Following are six key elements of planning for campaigns:

1. Needs Assessment

It is essential to do a needs assessment for annual campaign planning. Though beneficiary agencies remain fairly constant on a year-to-year basis, there are changes that require substantial increases in funds. The needs assessment helps to establish and strengthen the credibility of the campaign.

What are the elements of needs assessment? It is important to understand what changes are having an impact on our Jewish community—overseas and in Israel, nationally and locally.

The changes confronting us can have two responses: work harder to unearth those special sources of support which can be tapped to help fund programs and services (governmental grants, foundations, etc.) and sharpen the persuasive reasoning why members of the Jewish community should contribute more money in this campaign.

A review of our internal capabilities is a crucial element of any needs assessment process. What can be accomplished in the annual campaign cycle must be determined. We must deal with what is achievable and engage our leadership in thinking through what we can indeed accomplish. When one dreams about what the annual campaign could do, it is im-

portant to recognize that, in order to achieve some lofty goal, it will be necessary either to find more people who will contribute or to persuade those who currently give to increase their level of giving.

The needs assessment will focus on those issues which are most germane to our fundraising effort and build a persuasive case. This will have to be done differently in the years ahead, and certainly more effectively, because the conditioning of Jews toward giving is changing as generational cohorts move further away from tradition. We must capture the issues in such a way that they are presentable, understandable, and persuasive. While we can assume that Jews will respond to Jews in need, this desire to be of assistance must be connected to the community and what it is doing so that both the individual and the community will benefit.

The campaign case that is built on assessment of needs will be the most persuasive, and the most persuasive case will obtain the greatest involvement. The greater the involvement, the higher will be the yield of the annual campaign.

2. Priorities

Having determined the needs, it is necessary to order the priorities in which they will be placed. In moving from a global view to a strategy that is doable, we must make selections and judgments about targeting our efforts to achieve the greatest return. That becomes an absolutely essential component of the campaign. Some of the issues that we were not capable of treating in the previous campaign may lend themselves to successful treatment in the forthcoming campaign.

If we think of campaign planning in a multi-year context, we are able to work toward the achievement of something in a

future year that we may not be able to accomplish at the time the need is first recognized. The judgment process takes into account what is most needed and matches it with what we are capable of doing. Those are the things that find their way into the operational plan developed as a result of the campaign planning process.

3. Goals and Objectives

Goals also represent a multi-year framework. If, by 1990, we want to be raising \$30 million as against \$22 million in 1985, what do we need to do over the next five campaigns to achieve that? It will not be accomplished simply by upgrading the giving of those who currently contribute. We must add 5,000 new donors, a number of whom will come from new industries, and we must persuade people at all levels of the campaign to give more.

We must find opportunity and mine it aggressively. A whole variety of new industries, with Jewish entrepreneur owners and managers, has been developing. Our challenge is to identify those people, reach out, and bring them effectively into our system.

In this particular context, after surveying what our community holds and what trends exist, we have decided that it is possible to achieve much greater campaign growth, and we have now focused on the very narrow set of objectives that will help us build year to year. Step one is to identify people in the new industries. Step two is to persuade them to give. Step three is to bring some of them into the campaign as active workers. Step four is to develop leadership from among this group.

4. Program Design

We have progressed from a wide range of ideas very slowly through a narrowing process, but we have tried to keep our thinking in a multi-year context. Many great

ideas will emerge at the beginning of the planning cycle, and these ideas should be examined from time to time to determine whether there are any which will best enable us to meet this year's campaign objective in the context of a multi-year goal.

In designing a campaign program, we also want to identify evaluative criteria. When we evaluate what we do, we are able to consider those limitations or strengths that may not have been fully understood before entering into the program. Opportunities that have not been sufficiently utilized can be established, and new strategies developed as needed.

Moving onto the nuts and bolts of campaigning, to make a campaign successful, there have to be targets and dates and events and the assignment of financial resources to utilize the opportunities that present themselves.

If, in the evaluation of new ideas, one, two, or three of them—new program options—are selected, then a modest objective can be set in the context of the multi-year goal. Then proper staff and adequate financial resources can be applied. The organization can deal not only with the new options, but also maintain its continuing functions. With evaluative criteria in place, a judgment can be made as to the effectiveness of the new approaches, in comparison with the efficacy of continuing functions.

5. Program Implementation

At this point, staff are assigned; methods of going about the implementation of the new options are thought through; policy options are prepared for presentation to lay leadership, managing and responsible for the campaign; and the objectives reduced to practical terms and achievable levels. At the end of the campaign, an evaluation can be made as to whether what was projected was in fact achieved. If it was not, then the reason for the failure can be examined.

The operation of the campaign is the implementation of program. A number of key elements need to be addressed: Growth in major gifts, leadership identification, setting target dates and dollar goals for the campaign as a whole and for units of the campaign, and programming of the campaign. These elements of program implementation all have a logical order and progression which should enable us to achieve our objectives and reach our goals.

6. Program Evaluation

Reference has been made to evaluation throughout these comments. It is essential for the reasons already suggested. If the planning job is done properly, criteria are established against which to evaluate the degree of success of elements of the campaign and the campaign as a whole.

It should be emphasized that planning represents essentially an orderly way of conducting our business. Applied to the campaign or fundraising, it should help us clearly define our goals and objectives and develop the programming required to carry us to their accomplishment.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATION

It is clear to those engaged in the management of Federation campaigns that changing circumstances and changing characteristics of the Jewish community will force change in the way resources must be developed in support of Jewish communal programs and services. When the Jewish communal system has attained levels of spending that, for operational purposes alone, amount to billions of dollars each year, the effort to generate resources cannot be approached casually or improvisationally. Careful analysis and planning are required so that the best use be made of available resources and maximum resources are obtained.

The increased use of planning is a favorable development. It not only indicates what we would regard as an appropriate response to changing conditions, it represents a thoughtful application of knowledge and experience in response to the needs of the community. The Jewish community has a long history of continuity and adaptation to change. This article has been addressing one important component of that history.