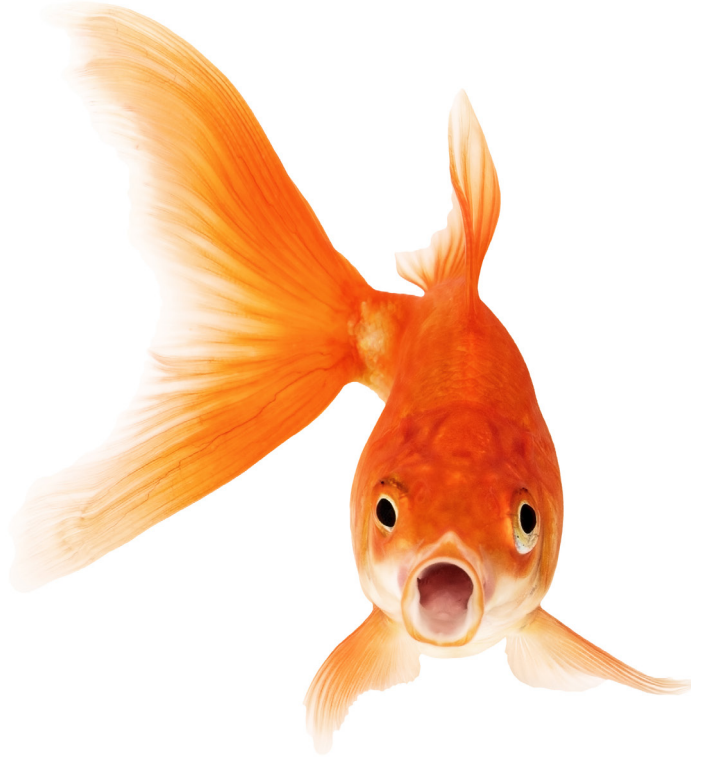




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Shifting the paradigm:

The case for a donor-centric case for support

With the human attention span barely exceeding that of a goldfish (yes, really), organizations must deliver their message clearly and concisely if they are to capture people's attention – and, most importantly, move them to action.

Your case for support is not actually about you. It's about what the donors need in order to understand the impact of their support. It's about building a meaningful relationship that results from sharing a vision. **Here are ten tips to get you started:**

Get to the point – and fast.

Brevity is king.

Find people who really listen to you. Listen to them.

Communications experts are accustomed to listening beyond the words. Keep an open mind and be open to a new approach.

Caffeinate your senior leadership.

A strong case for support demands deep exploration at the top levels. This can be time consuming but is well worth the time invested.

Writing by committee is inefficient. Groupthink is unproductive. Avoid both.

Invite feedback, but establish clear boundaries. Appoint a trusted internal representative who will consider all feedback and make the final call.

Lose the jargon. Find the beauty.

The case for support is not an academic dissertation. Stir the imagination through language and imagery.

Remember, patience is a virtue.

Rome wasn't built in a day, and neither is a strong case for support. Allow time for the process to unfold.

Prepare to watch sausage being made.

The process is iterative and can be messy.

Accept that no matter how perfect it is, it won't be perfect.

Be open to different points of view – they will undoubtedly serve to strengthen your case.

There's no time for high school English.

The old adage "tell them what you're going to tell them, tell them, then tell them what you told them" may be sage advice for a presentation or a book report, but doesn't apply to a donor-centric case for support.

Know when to hold 'em, know when to fold 'em.

Change can be uncomfortable, so know when to push people beyond their comfort zones – but don't push too far, too fast. Sometimes even small steps can cover big ground.



Graham-Pelton

1.800.608.7955

inside@grahampelton.com

www.grahampelton.com