# *Fundraising Guide for Chapters*

# Table of Contents

I. RESTAURANT PARTNERSHIPS

II. MIRACLE MINUTES

III. BOTTLE DRIVE

IV. SPONSORSHIPS
- A. School outreach
- B. Business outreach

V. GRANTS
- A. How to obtain
- B. How to maintain

VI. ONLINE FUNDRAISING

VII. CATALOG FUNDRAISING

VIII. RAFFLES

IX. 5K RUNS

X. CREATE YOUR OWN
- A. Creation of your idea
- B. Planning
- C. Executing

XI. Tips for Success

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# I. Restaurant Partnerships

Restaurant partnerships are a great way of fundraising for your chapter. Typically, a restaurant partnership is one night where the owner or manager agrees on a portion of the sales will benefit your chapter. It is an efficient way of raising funds, while having a good time.

## A. How to Reach Out

1. Arrange a Meeting
   If you are interested in partnering with a business, whether it is for an extended amount of time or a single event, reach out to the owner or manager and ask for a meeting.

2. Prepare for your Meeting
   To ensure that your meeting goes smoothly, you must prepare a thorough plan of what you are going to say. They will want to know about what and who you are, and why you need to raise funds for your chapter. Also, plan on discussing with them what DECA is and why it is beneficial to you, and how the partnership will be beneficial to them. When you have your thoughts organized make sure to practice, so that you are prepared.

3. Meet with them
   When meeting with the business owner, make sure that you are dressed to impress. Wear your DECA blazer and make sure you have all your materials that you need, whether that is a pen or even a small presentation you have made up to help convey your message.

## B. Restaurants that are known to Participate

1. Applebee's, Buffalo Wild Wings, Chipotle, Panera Bread, Cheesecake Factory, Subway, California Pizza Kitchen, and many local restaurants.

# II. Miracle Minutes

Miracle Minutes are a classic way of fundraising for DECA. They are typically held at school events, such as sporting events, or even during the school day, like during lunches. During the miracle minute a group of students will run around for 60 seconds trying to collect as much money as they can from those around the room. The money is counted, and the amount is announced to the entire group. This is an efficient fundraiser that gets people involved and excited.

# III. Bottle Drives

Bottle Drives are a great way of raising funds for MDA and your chapter. They can be used as a way of both informing your local community of DECA and raising funds.

**A. Make a Flyer**

Make a flyer to distribute around the area that you will be collecting bottles from. On this flyer include when you will be coming around to collect bottles, and what the money raised will be going towards.

**B. Collect Bottles**

Get together a group of friends or family to help you go around to the places you passed out the flyers and collect!

**C. Return Bottles**

Return the bottles to the store and give the cash to your chapter's treasurer.

# IV. Sponsorships

Whether you're looking for a way to fundraise individually or as a chapter, sponsorships are a great way to practice and showcase skills you've learned in DECA, promote the organization and reach out to the community. It's important with sponsorships to know your audience and have an appropriate goal for each interaction.

**A. School Outreach**

1. Set up a meeting

   If you're looking to raise money through your school or school district, talk to your advisor to assist you in setting a meeting. They typically have connections and know who to contact.

2. Prepare your presentation

   Begin by determining who will be in the meeting. This part is important when assessing the goals of this meeting. For example, if you are asking for a sponsorship to support International Conference qualifiers, it would make sense to have a repeat qualifier or someone who just recently qualified for the International Conference in attendance. Each person in the meeting should bring a new perspective and outlook as to why you are asking for the money.

Your presentation could begin with a brief explanation of DECA and then specify the achievements of your ICDC qualifiers. From there, you could have someone talk about their goals at ICDC and what knowledge they hope to gain there. It's also valuable to add why the business or school district should invest in your chapter. You could talk about growth within the chapter that year, or different activities your chapter has done throughout the year to make it successful. To wrap it up, you can summarize some of the costs you're hoping to get covered for the conference.

Practice makes perfect so be sure to practice a couple times prior to the meeting so that everyone is on the same page.

3. Present
   It's time to blazer up! Put on your DECA blazer to ensure you're professional and ready for the meeting ahead.

4. Follow Up
   Unless the person you were meeting with had an overwhelming "no", a follow up and/or thank you is always required. Sometimes they will ask you for a detailed budget or just ask for some time to think everything over. Remember, even you don't end up with a sponsor, you got an opportunity to practice your presentation skills.

**B. Business Outreach**

1. Prepare a handout
   For a casual meeting, it's nice to leave a sheet of paper with the person you end up speaking to that contains all the information they need to sponsor your chapter. If your chapter is looking for business sponsorships, you could make one sheet for the entire chapter to keep everything consistent.

   The sheet should contain basic information such as your name and school. You can explain DECA in full here and provide a website for then to attain more information. From there, address why you are looking for a sponsor, and what they money will be used for. To wrap it up, give them an address to mail a check and who it should be made out to.

2. Prepare your talking points

3. Know where you're going
   If your entire chapter is going out to businesses, try to have everyone write down and share where they plan to go, so you don't have multiple people going to the same business. Typically, local small businesses are going to have more money available than a big franchise. Be sure to talk to car dealerships, law firms, credit unions, doctor's offices, and chiropractor's offices as well.

4. Look the part
   Again, this is a presentation and you're speaking as a part of a business organization, so you want to look the part. A good first impression is always helpful but, in this situation, it's crucial.

5. Ask to set up a meeting
   If you walk into a business, always ask the receptionist or an employee who you should be talking to. If they say that person is busy, it can't hurt to ask to set up a meeting in the future. You can always leave your phone number and one of your flyers. You never know what can happen!

# V. GRANTS

## A. How to obtain

There are many businesses both locally and nationally that offer grants to schools for programs such as DECA. Grants can be centered around many different things such as community service, career development and leadership. It is best to start your research early. Many businesses that offer grants have applications with specific deadlines such as Walmart and Starbucks. There are also many smaller, local businesses that often have an annual budget to donate to charities. You can get ahead of the curve by applying or inquiring early in the year. It is best to approach businesses in a professional and personable manner. Be sure to emphasize the importance of your cause by meeting in person and arriving prepared to show your appreciation of the business owner's time.

## B. How to maintain

Staying organized to make sure that your chapter is applying well before deadlines is crucial to increase your chances of maintaining grants. Continue to let the businesses see the students' passion and dedication to their chapter to stand

out. Maintaining a strong relationship with a supporting business is very important to continue the grant process. Be sure to thank the business for their help and generosity. It is also a good idea to show your chapter's appreciation by keeping the business "in the loop" and to update them on your chapter's success in DECA.

# VI. ONLINE FUNDRAISING

There are many online crowdfunding options available to raise money for your chapter. No matter which website you decide best fits your chapter's needs, an appealing title, photographs, and cause are crucial to creating a successful request. Include a personal touch such as photos of your chapter and a personal, compelling story to convey why someone should donate to your chapter.

Some good options to research for your chapter are gofundme.com, donorschoose.org, fundly.com, piggybackr.com, and fundrazr.com. Be sure to pay attention to website details such as platform fees.

Once you have picked a platform and finished setup, you can begin promoting your cause on avenues such as your chapter and school's social media accounts as well as chapter members' personal accounts. As always, networks can be extremely powerful in this situation and reaching out to as many people as possible is a great way to create awareness.

To continue your success in following weeks and months, keep people updated on the funds raised and be sure to always show your appreciation!

# VII. CATALOG FUNDRAISING

Catalog fundraising is going to most useful if you have a decent sized chapter where people are going to participate. They're also going to require a team to oversee organizing and planning the fundraiser as well as distributing the items once they arrive. Almost every big brand is going to do their version of a catalog fundraiser, but it is important to investigate their specific rules and how much you'll be making on each item. Most catalogs are also going to online ordering to avoid the hassle of paperwork and turning money in all at once.

A. Some catalog fundraising examples include:
    - Yankee Candle

- Otis Spunkmeyer
- Tervis Tumbler
- For more ideas, check out gafundraising.com.

# VIII. RAFFLES

The easiest type of raffle is going to be the basic 50/50 raffle where 50% of the money raised goes to support you and the other 50% is the prize. This raffle works especially well at an event. Talk to your principal to see where and when you might be able to do a raffle. Always be creative and figure out if this works well for your school. There are restrictions to when you can sell tickets and what you can raffle off. Some raffles also require a license. For more information, check out the State of Michigan website: https://www.michigan.gov/cg/0,4547,7-111-34702---,00.html.

# IX. 5K RUNS

5K runs are a great way to get people together for a cause, while having fun, keeping things lively, and staying active. While this is a great, low budget option to raise money for your chapter, the key to hosting a successful and fun running event is planning. Here are 10 steps to hosting an unforgettable 5K experience:

**A. Location & Course**

The first step is to pick a location to host your race. Some easy options are your school, a local park or your school cross country team's home course. It is important to keep parking areas, restroom access, proximity to your school and topography in mind when choosing the course. To draw in the most participants, try to avoid hills or any challenging terrain. A great tool to use to aid in your course design process is raceentry.com, where you can create free race maps. One popular course designing strategy is utilizing an out-and-back course, to limit possible confusion and support staff required such as hydration stations.

**B. Dream Date**

Secondly, pick a "dream date" that works for your chapter. Be careful to plan around important school events that may coincide with your fundraiser. Weekend mornings work perfectly because the most people will be available, and it will be a fun and active way to start the day. It is important to schedule your event with ample time to organize volunteers and help from local businesses. You can create a quick and easy registration form using raceentry.com.

C. **Volunteers & Sponsorships**

Volunteers and local businesses will play a key role in your event. First Aid and hydration stations, as well as timing are very important to hosting a successful 5K. Contact people who support your cause such as chapter members and families for volunteers in staffing your race. It is also helpful to reach out to students involved in community service centered programs such as National Honors Society, who are looking for volunteer opportunities. Raceentry.com also has a tool to help you create a free volunteer registration form. It is recommended to have at least one aid/hydration station along the course of a 5K run. These stations are generally a table set up on the course and should be equipped with disposable cups, water, Gatorade, volunteers and basic emergency supplies.

Reaching out to local businesses can be very beneficial to your event as they are usually happy to contribute to a good cause with monetary donations or other helpful products, or services such as food for runners at the finish line. When contacting a possible sponsor, it is essential to be professional, personable and to emphasize the importance of your cause. Try to meet in person and dress professionally to show the business owner that you value their time and appreciate their help. You can prepare by creating a flyer with event information and possible donation options.

D. **Race Timing**

Again, try to stay local when looking for someone to time the event. Contacting your school cross-country team's coach would be a good start to finding an inexpensive way to time your race. Many teams have simple systems to time a race that require very little equipment. Also, a quick internet search will help you find professional timers in your area.

E. **Race Shirts & Awards**

To keep costs down and fundraise as much as possible, creativity is the best option. Try to shop local for shirts or awards by contacting businesses in your area and asking for donations or deals. These items do not have to be fancy, so materials like cotton are perfect for race shirts. Shirts can be a great way to get the word out and advertise the run, turning the event into an annual tradition and building support for your chapter.

It can be challenging to figure out the right number of shirts or awards to purchase the first time hosting a new race. To reduce costs, awards can be as creative and simple as socks, hats, food or mugs. Accompanying an award with a certificate is a cost-efficient option to recognize winners. Medals and trophies can be fun, but

keep in mind that although awards improve the quality and image of your race, they are not necessary to host a great event.

# X. CREATE YOUR OWN FUNDRAISER

If you have a little more time and want to put your marketing and business knowledge to the test, creating your own fundraiser is a great choice. Not only do you have control over what you do and what you sell, you can also incorporate the previous ideas into the fundraiser.

## A. Creation of Your Idea

*For this guide, the example being used will be a simple Valentine's Day fundraiser (see Figure 1).* The five considerations that one should consider when creating a fundraiser are: *Wants, Trends, Cost, Resources, and Time*. In terms of **wants and trends**, the only way a fundraiser could be successful is if the product being sold is wanted by consumers. *For the Valentine's Day fundraiser, the want to feel special on the year's most romantic day is a high priority for many teenagers.* When talking about **costs,** the necessity of success is to plan to make sure the costs of the fundraiser is feasible. Though a full-fledged carnival may sound fun and exciting, if you don't consider the monetary value, and end up over budget, you raise $0 for the fundraiser. **Resources** are essential to any successful project. Without sufficient resources, a fundraiser is bound for failure, whether it be a mentor, the item being sold, or even money. *Referencing our example, the whole project would fail if there had been a decline of roses in the stores.* Lastly, **time;** time is easily the most overlooked aspect of any fundraiser. You can have a lot money and the best product, but if your idea doesn't factor the amount of time needed, nothing will get done in the proper style you envisioned. When you consider all 5 of these factors, then you can successfully come up with a feasible and money generating idea.

*Figure 1*

Parameters of the Valentine's Day Fundraiser for reference

- Selling roses pre-sale for three days before a set date and delivering the roses to student's classrooms.
- Selling current and trendy side products including chocolates, cards.
- Raffling off a giant 53" teddy bear.

## B. Planning

After you have an idea and it is set in stone, the real difficulties set in with planning. First and foremost, **setting dates** for meetings, marketing, and the actual event. When you have set the deadline, there is less room for slacking and time management errors. *When looking at our Valentine's example, you could set*

*dates for 2 planning meetings, one week of marketing, 3 days of selling, and one day of delivery.* Having everything ready for a specific day means less confusion and a smaller margin of error. After setting dates, the next step would be to **evaluate risks** and **make a backup plan of action.** Because of the large possibility of risk, make sure to run through many scenarios and put up safety nets. *In the Valentine's Day fundraiser, the risk would be that if you were to sell roses day of, you would possibly buy too much or not enough. To prevent this risk, you could choose to pre-sell and then only buy as much as you sold.* Lastly, **assigning tasks.** One person should not and cannot do everything. Having a group of people split the tasks not only makes it more efficient, but also allows for specialization. Having one person know a part of the fundraiser inside and out creates less confusion and ensures tasks get done. *Relating it back to the example fundraiser, one person can take care of taking the pre-sale orders, one person can oversee organizing the spreadsheet, one person can plan delivery, etc.*

### C. Execution

Lastly, executing the fundraiser. One can have the best plan, but with poor execution, the fundraiser is bound for failure. First things first, always **double check** your work. Money should be counted and recorded at the end of the night, records of sales should be double checked for mistakes. If you double check, the result should be free from mistakes. Next, **correct mistakes right away, and report this to everyone else so they do not make the same mistake.** This ties into good communication - making a mistake is good, and something to learn from in the following years. However, having everyone make the same mistake could jeopardize the success of the fundraiser. Letting everyone know what went wrong and how to fix it is essential in execution because otherwise, the result of the fundraiser would be a mess. **The Customer comes first** is a very common business term, but for fundraisers, it is also extremely important, especially if you want your organization to look good. Not only that, but if this would be an ongoing fundraiser, you would want customers to come back and purchase again next year. If a customer is unhappy with their order, make sure you ask them if they'd like a refund, or another product. *For example, in the Valentine's Day fundraiser, if someone's rose wasn't delivered to their receiver and they complained, you would have two options. One: deliver the rose to that person in one of their next classes and apologize. Two: refund the person and apologize.*

# XI. GENERAL TIPS AND TRICKS FOR SUCCESS

Following these tips and tricks can help you avoid any unwanted rookie mistakes. Though it cannot completely make a fundraiser risk free, it can help to bring any planned event to success.

A. **Communication** is often the most overlooked of the tips because human tendency is to believe that everyone sees it exactly like they do. Which is false, as everyone has a different perception to an idea or an order. Clarifying and ensuring that your directions are clear and concise is the hardest part of communication. However, there are simple ways to make sure your idea is understood by your chapter members. First, make sure to provide extensive details about every part of the fundraiser. Many assume that some parts are obvious and gloss over that portion, but to some, a specific area of the fundraiser may have been confusing. That lack of communication could cause some serious errors. The second way would be keeping an open line of communication with your fellow fundraiser workers. Allowing people to know they can ask any questions about anything helps to answer all questions and cement understanding of the task/tasks. Lastly, communicate mistakes and how to fix them. Errors are bound to occur with any large planned event that is frankly unavoidable. However, once the mistake is made, it should be reported to the head of the fundraiser, and then also reported to all members of the crew. That way, the mistake can be avoided in the future. Communication is extremely important in any situation, as it is a vehicle to minimizing mistakes. The better the communication, the better the result.

B. **Setting realistic goals** is always an important tip for any planned activity. Without a goal, there is nothing concrete to work toward, so there would be less motivation. However, with a goal such as “raising $500” there is a definitive result that you would want to achieve. This encourages members of the team to work hard to reach said goal. However, setting just any goal isn’t always beneficial. If you set an ambitious goal and you do not reach it, it creates a sense of disappointment and overall unhappiness in the team. That’s why setting *realistic* and *achievable* goals is the aim. A way to make sure your goal setting will be helpful is to look back at previous trends. If your school did a fundraiser like this previously, how much money did they make? How much more could you earn with a few changes? With proper realistic goals in place, a fundraiser would have a higher chance for success as there is a result in sight.

C. **Time management** is an extremely good quality to have no matter what the situation. However, it is crucial in maximizing the success and profit of a fundraiser. Often, people get ahead of themselves and don’t schedule enough time

for an activity. This would be detrimental as the profit levels would be negatively affected. Something to do to ensure time is not squandered away is to set a time table. Many people overlook this step due to the belief that they can handle it, and they have a timetable in their head. Having the actual printed/written copy makes it so people are held accountable for the tasks they should have done. The popular phrase "time is money" is the truth in any fundraiser situation because wasting time wastes money.

D. **Looking at the big picture** is a skill difficult for most people. Though the concept sounds relatively easy, it's often difficult to remember the entire project as you work through a problem. When only focusing on that problem, you may fix the task at hand, but cause twenty more problems, because your thinking was too narrow. A good way to always have the big picture in the back of your mind is to have a concept map of the fundraiser itself. Having listed every aspect and every workable idea, you can always check back on the map whenever needed.

E. Lastly, and arguably most important is to **organize effectively**. Everyone knows that one person that believes their horribly messy room is the only way they can live. Often their argument is "if the room gets cleaned, I can never find anything", which surprisingly is a good argument. The thing about organizing is that everyone does it differently. The only way to truly effectively organize is to do it in a way that you *and* your teammates can decipher and figure out. That could mean compromising on ways to do things, but if everyone can understand the organization, less mistakes will occur.