



# **BWF Client Partner Series**

*Josh Birkholz and Carole  
Arwidson*



- Welcome! We are glad you have joined us.
- Use the Q&A Feature to ask questions.
- Any unanswered questions will be addressed individually after the webinar.
- Share your thoughts with us by using **#bwfwebinar**.
- For technical challenges, support is available by emailing [bwf@bwf.com](mailto:bwf@bwf.com).

## Upcoming Webinars



All webinars are at 2pm EST/1pm CST.

- Tuesday, March 24-***Turn Your Team Into Digital, Remote Engagement Officers***, hosted by Justin Ware and Chris Clark
- Wednesday, March 25-***Positioning Information Strategy Teams During Mandatory Remote Work***, hosted by Jason Boley and Merrell Milano
- Thursday, March 26-***The Remote Development Office – Maintaining the Mission***, hosted by Jeff Hilperts and Katrina Klaproth
- Monday, March 30-***Sustaining Optimal Board Leadership in Times of Crisis***, hosted by Dennis Prescott and Jan Cady
- Wednesday, April 1-***Reviewing Philanthropic Priorities and Alignment with the Current Marketplace***, hosted by Mark Marshall and Josh Birkholz
- Thursday, April 2-***Understanding Your Engagement Index: Priming Your Organization for Current and Future State***, hosted by Alex Oftelie

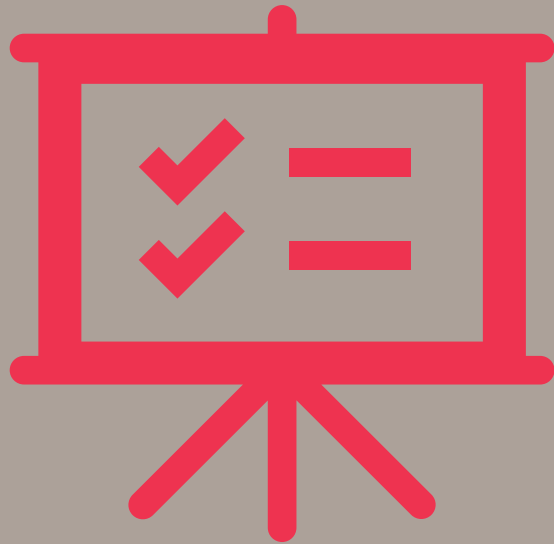


# Donor Messaging in Times of Uncertainty

*Josh Birkholz and Carole Arwidson*



## Agenda



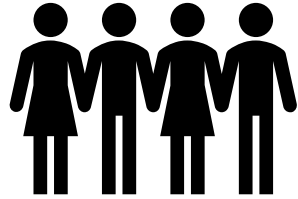
1. Navigating the Noise
2. Effective Messaging
3. Maintaining Momentum

# Navigating the Noise



# In Periods of Disruption

**Everybody reacts differently. Personalities exaggerate.**

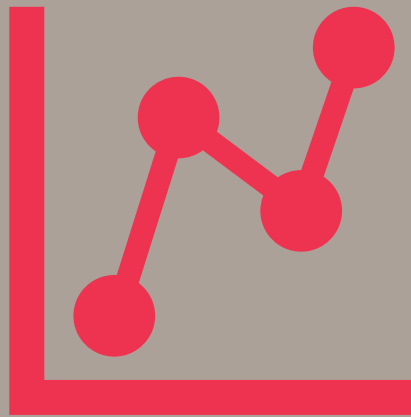


**Extroverts:** Want to share the anxiety



**Introverts:** Want space to process

2009



- Donors shifted to urgent, recipient-level needs.
- Some major donors felt embarrassed talking about their financial situations.
- Non-retired volunteers were pulled away from campaign activities to focus on their businesses.
- Long-term commitments stalled. Pledge volume recovered in 2010. Total dollars recovered by 2011.
- Many stories of donors citing nonprofit acceptance, patience, and confidence as reasons for returning.



# Looking for Normal

Most donors are at peak disruption or just starting to adjust.

We've been knocked down Maslow's hierarchy.

Personal priorities will need to climb back up.

Philanthropic priorities start at the bottom.

But they will climb as needs are met.

People will strive for normalcy.



## Empathy with Purpose



1. Put yourself in the donors' shoes.
2. But also believe in your mission.
3. If it was important before, it is still important.

# Effective Messaging



WORDS  
HAVE  
POWER

# We're in Uncharted Waters ... Sort Of

Some of us have been "here" before.

The rhythms and routines of our personal and professional lives have been upended.

More important than ever to stay focused on what is mission critical.

Disruption can lead to opportunity and creative thinking.

## The Days Ahead



- Breathe. (You're doing your best!)
- Communicate what's essential.
- Stay on brand.
- Choose your words and tone carefully.
- Be thoughtful and intentional.
- Keep it short.
- Command the narrative.



## Looking Ahead



- Describe next steps, maintain trust, and instill confidence.
- Continue to strengthen relationships (even kick stewardship up a notch).
- Articulate needs (possibly reprioritizing) and convey urgency.
- Be nimble and open; the disruption can create opportunities.

## Practice What You've Always Done



- Determine which donors need to hear from you and what they need to know.
- Identify the optimal communication channel(s) and timing to reach them.
- Who, What, When, Where

## Some Key Messages

- Immediate changes and actions being taken (All)
- Budget and ongoing fundraising implications (Board)
- Ways to be helpful at this time (Volunteers, Staff)
- Ways to financially support the organization now (Alumni/ae, Patients, Patrons, Subscribers, Volunteers)
- Impact on campaign planning or implementation (Board, Alumni/ae, Volunteers, Staff)
- Vision forward (All)

Help provide emergency Coronavirus supplies

DONATE NOW

## World Vision responds to COVID-19

20,000 masks, 15,200 pairs of gloves, 16,200 gowns, and 3,000 coveralls have been shipped to healthcare workers.

AT&T 10:55 AM 94%

Done worldvisionphilanthrop AA

### VISIONARIES

Philanthropists in support of World Vision

#### WHO WE ARE

#### WHAT WE DO

#### HOW TO HELP

The devastating outbreak of coronavirus is beginning to spread throughout the United States. You can be the hands and feet of Christ to help protect children, their parents and school staff here in the U.S. Please give now to help save lives.

Donate Now

## World Water Day

March 22, 2020



POWERED BY GIVING



## COVID-19 RESPONSE FUND

Please consider supporting NorthShore University HealthSystem's (NorthShore) front-line work battling the rapidly evolving COVID-19 pandemic. NorthShore, a nonprofit community health system, understands the importance of leading boldly at this time. In fact, we were the first hospital in the state to develop and deploy an in-house test, working in conjunction with the Illinois Department of Public Health.

NorthShore has assembled a group of clinical, operational and administrative experts to specifically focus on our response efforts. By combining the best collaborative thinking of our experts with our advanced technological capabilities we're providing our patients, our employees and our communities with the most comprehensive guidance and care available.

*"The importance of in-house testing in the diagnosis of our patients and management of our patients cannot be overstated. We simply cannot wait three to five days for results to return from outside labs. We urgently need resources. This is about people, equipment, supplies, and our patients."*

Karen Kaul MD, PhD  
Duckworth Family Chair, Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine  
NorthShore University HealthSystem

The COVID-19 Response Fund provides vital support to our operations, with NorthShore anticipating that significant costs will be incurred as we continue to respond to the evolving and dangerous pandemic. Philanthropy will add to NorthShore's own ongoing investment in this effort.

Working together, with crucial real-time input from front-line care providers and operational personnel, NorthShore is already allocating vital resources quickly and effectively to ensure we are best prepared to meet the needs of our patients and communities. Private donations will increase and accelerate our ability to take necessary action.

Thank you for considering being a philanthropic partner to NorthShore in the fight against COVID-19. As was the case in 1891 when we were established in response to a typhoid fever outbreak, NorthShore is determined to provide safe and effective care for the patients and communities we are privileged to serve.

supporting Open Arms of Minnesota.

Many of you know that last year I joined the Board of Directors of Open Arms of Minnesota because I believe that food is medicine. Their mission is to nourish mind, body, and soul, and they are working tirelessly around the clock to maintain delivery of nutritionally-tailored meals to patients and their families with HIV, MS, cancer, ALS, heart failure, and other life threatening illnesses through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nourishing our neighbors has never been more important than during this COVID19 public health crisis, and the need is higher than ever now.

Please join me in supporting Open Arms through their website:

<https://www.openarmsmn.org/donate/> or through Venmo at OpenArmsMN.



## Support Open Arms of Minnesota During COVID-19

Fundraiser for Open Arms of Minnesota by







## A Few Tactical Ideas



1. Enlist champions to fundraise on your behalf.
2. Create a virtual donor town hall.
3. Focus on monthly giving subscriptions to grow the recurring revenue stream.
4. Create video thank-yous.
5. Send out videos of featured event speakers.

# Remember ...

Your mission matters.

Your donors care.

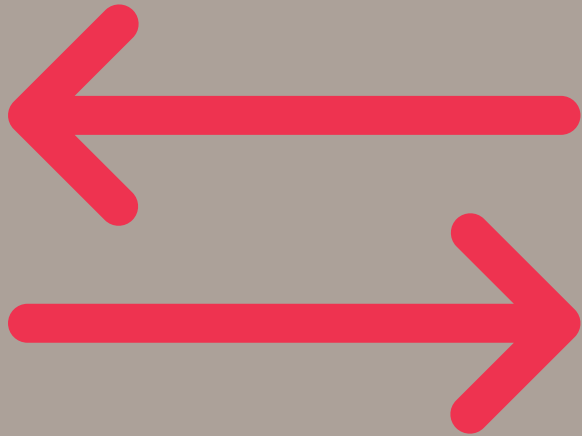
Your needs remain—and may even have altered.

Like vigilant handwashing and social distancing,  
**effective and ongoing communication must be a priority.**



# Maintaining Momentum

## Ask For Help



- Ask your donors for advice.
- Ask your staff what they would do in your shoes.
- Be ready to be smaller for the benefit of your program.

# You can do this!

There is power in **putting others first**. Show you care by asking how they are. Really listen.

We are not all in the same boat. We are all in our own boats on the same tumultuous sea. But **we have Zoom**.

**Be proactive**. But also **be patient**. The human spirit has blown way past adversity throughout history.





# Discussion



# Thank you!

*Josh Birkholz and Carole Arwidson*

*Additional Resources Found At:*

[Bwf.com/CurrentResources](https://bwf.com/CurrentResources)

