

AFP Central PA Chapter

Sustainable Fundraising

*By Ellen H. Arnold, CFRE, Principal, The Franklin Consulting Group*

[Arnold@franklingroup.com](mailto:Arnold@franklingroup.com)

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**Principle:** As fundraising professionals we have the responsibility to focus on sustainable fundraising efforts which involve the best use of the precious dollars we have in our operating budgets and to conduct a cost/benefit analysis regularly to keep us on track.

**Vignette:** For several years The Good Samaritan golf tournament was a good friend raising and fundraising event for The Brethren Home Foundation. As costs to run the event escalated and the number of participants dwindled, it was apparent a hard decision needed to be made. A 5-year analysis of the financials quickly told us the real picture: The Good Samaritan Fund was receiving less and less money for charity care and, when staff time was considered, this was actually a money losing venture. I shared the grim statistics with the volunteer golf committee and was quickly advised that I needed to convince the Founding Tournament Chair as well as the current chair, a local banker. Both of these individuals were savvy business folks and one look at the project analysis showed them that change was needed. The banker, in fact, was delighted that we dared to think change and willingly committed the bank's sponsorship funds directly to the Good Samaritan Fund: no games—no gimmicks, just pure philanthropy!

**Postscript:** An annual exercise for fundraising managers must be to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of each fundraising project and appeal and to know how these measures are trending. Such measures should include, in addition to number of donors and dollars raised, the cost to raise a dollar, the return on investment for the project; special event net results and others specific to your organization.