



Auctions

A fund-raising auction can be combined with any event or held on its own. Supporters donate their time, talent, or treasures to be auctioned off to the highest bidder.

The key to a successful live fund-raising auction is to have a good auctioneer, preferably one willing to donate their services. He/she does not need to be a professional or a fast talker, but someone who is friendly and has a good sense of fun and is knowledgeable of the expected audience. A good auctioneer can generate bids for even the most unlovable object and foster bidding wars for the popular items. It is important to let the auctioneer know the number and character of the items to be auctioned so ample time is allowed for the big ticket items, and everything is auctioned within the allotted time span. The auctioneer should be given a complete description of each item as it is presented for auction. (Small, typed index cards are suitable for this purpose. Be sure to include the item number for easy reference.) Several helpers are needed to move items to and from the “stage” or from wherever the items are auctioned.

For a silent fund-raising auction, each donation is displayed with a ruled sheet and pen/pencil. The bidder signs his/her name and telephone number and the amount of their bid. Other bidders sign below with a higher bid amount. (The minimum bid and raise amounts should be noted on the sheet.) Bids are closed at a set time for all, or can be closed by table in 15-minute increments. Announcements are made 5 minutes before closing to encourage “bidding up” of the most popular items. Once closed, the winning (last) bidder is notified and can collect his/her prize at a central collection table where payment is made. (Be sure to have plenty of help available to locate items and collect bids.)

Youth Auction

Auction off the youth to do jobs like 6 hours of babysitting, a day of house cleaning, a car wash, etc. Participants can wear costumes or carry props used for the specific job being offered for auction. Some jobs are good for pairs of youth (e.g., window washing, weeding gardens, cleaning or raking yards, painting, packing or moving, etc.).

Youth for Rent

This is a youth auction (as above) with a twist—bidders get to specify the service rendered. The congregation, or audience, bid on an hourly rate for 2 youths. Once the final rate is established (usually around \$20 for 2 youths for 1 hour), the people sign up for date, time(s), and job. The youth group then matches 2 youths per job, based on the skills needed to accomplish the job and the students' availability. Jobs range from house cleaning, babysitting, yard work, painting, packing, moving, etc.

Best Seat in the House Auction

Put a sofa in your youth group room. For \$1 each week, students can purchase a chance to win the best seat in the house for each night's service. The winner can choose two friends to join him or her.



Blind, White-Elephant Auction

Remember, a blind auction is mostly about fun but can also raise funds for your group. It works best as part of an ongoing event such as a luncheon or dinner meeting. Here's how it works. Get as many people as you can that will be attending the event to bring a wrapped package. The contents could be humorous or something of actual value. Think of the possibilities!

Donors can weight the boxes with a brick to disguise the contents, have an oversized box for a very small present, or wrap boxes within boxes to increase anticipation. You get the idea! Announce that at least one of the boxes contains a "\$x" bill or something of value that is small enough to fit in any of the boxes. The dollar value will depend on your group and the anticipated bidding amounts.

As guests arrive, they place their boxes on a display table so potential bidders can examine them and speculate on what they contain. Whether you use a live or silent auction fund-raising, make sure everyone has time to pick the boxes up and shake them before the bidding. Guessing the contents is half the fun.

At the specified time, the boxes will either be auctioned individually or the results of the silent auction announced. If you have a live auction, make sure you have a couple of "valuable" prizes auctioned first to stimulate the bidding. Above all, make sure you allow time to let everyone to open their box in front of the group. That's where the most fun is.

