

RPAC DO's and DON'Ts

Do educate your membership so they know what RPAC is and what it does for them.

Don't assume your members have an interest in politics. The majority of people do not. They need to be educated as to why they need to be politically active and how politics can affect their profession. "If your profession is real estate, politics is your business."

Do develop a Fundraising Plan with your fundraising committee. If you design a plan without any input it will always be your plan. The committee needs to be vested in the plan. The plan does not have to be huge but it does need to be written down and your members need to know what they need to raise and how they are going to accomplish the goals.

Don't try to raise the money by yourself. There is a great deal of talent in your board, tap into it.

Do put your money where your mouth is. If you haven't invested in RPAC you have not credibility when you ask members to invest..

Don't act like RPAC and how it works is a secret. You want to develop a culture of investing in RPAC at your association, not a cult. The more information you can give your members about RPAC, the more they will see the need for a strong PAC.

Do recognize the members who contribute to RPAC. Give them first class treatment. They will get noticed and others will want to invest and receive first class treatment.

Don't assume that all fundraising methods and special events are legal in your state. Check with your Government Affairs staff first. Just because the America Heart Association had a special event at their fundraiser does not mean that you can do the same event to raise political funds. We don't like to reinvent the wheel, but we do need to make sure the funds that we raise are legal.

Do tier your events. Have something at every price range. Someone new to the industry may want to participate but you don't want them to feel intimidated by having only high priced items or events.

Don't hold onto the money after the fundraiser. There are time limits on how the money is processed and it is governed by federal law. Make sure you turn any RPAC investment into your association office as quickly as possible.

Do ask for a voluntary RPAC investment on your dues billing statement (if allowed by state law). It is the cheapest, easiest way to make sure that everyone in your association is asked to make an investment to RPAC.

Do know how to handle objections to RPAC. You will get them. The more information you can give your members the better.

Don't ask member to invest less than they did the previous year. You do not want to ask someone who has been investing \$500 for the past few years for less. You want to ask them to invest more. Do your homework.

Do have RPAC marketing material for your members. Not everyone will see the benefit of investing, leave them a handout.

Don't use your association funds to produce marketing material (brochures) for your members. Check out the RPAC Fundraising Partnership Fund for state and local association. You can get RPAC brochures free. Contact Shannon Burke at 202-383-1009.

Do have an understanding of the basic fundraising laws at the federal and state level.

Don't assume that the Federal Election Commission or your state Board of Elections will never find out you are not following the letter of the law.

Do make sure that the disclaimer notice is included on all forms of solicitation notices. Even e-mail notices. Check with your Government Affairs staff to determine if your state requires additional language to the notice.

Don't even think you can throw together a special fundraising event and break even. Any fundraising event requires weeks of planning, promotion, and more manpower than you originally thought. They can be a great deal of fun and very profitable, but they take time. Check out NAR's twelve steps for a successful event. We have worked out the timetable for you.

Do have fun when fundraising. Remember, the first three letters in fundraising spell fun. If you can get your members to invest in RPAC while having fun. It will make it easier the next time you ask.