



2016 Fundraising Guide

Steps to Get You Started Towards Crushing Your Fundraising Goal!

Thank you for joining Team Imerman Angels. Your efforts are making it possible for cancer fighters, survivors, and caregivers to receive one-on-one support from a Mentor Angel – so that no faces cancer alone. 2016 is the 10th anniversary of Imerman Angels and this team will make it possible for over 1000 people impacted by cancer get the help they need at the time they need it most. We appreciate your being a part of this historic team.

Getting Started to Reach Your Fundraising Minimum. As a member of Team Imerman Angels, you agreed to a *fundraising minimum*. You will be surprised how many people will want to support you and here's why:

- Your fundraising supports those who have had cancer impact the lives of family and friends
- It will also help those who have had cancer impact them directly

It may seem like it will be challenging to reach your minimum. It is not that different from the feeling that many have when they think of the marathon itself. Each mile is a step towards the finish while each dollar is a step closer to funding a match with an Imerman Angels Mentor Angel. Just like training for the marathon, fundraising can be broken down into parts to reach your goal.

Putting it in Perspective. Try to think about fundraising this way:

- Each time you raise \$350, you've made it possible for a cancer fighter, survivor, or caregiver to get the help they need through a Mentor Angel.
- Raise \$1,500 and you've made it possible for over four cancer fighters, survivors, and caregivers to be paired with a Mentor Angel.
- So when you reach your fundraising minimum, *you will be the reason that three or hopefully even more people get connected*. It's an extremely tangible goal knowing that your participation *directly* results in specific cancer connections.

Team Imerman Angels
Fundraising
QUICK TIP

Update your personal email "signature" with a link to your fundraising page and add text such as "I'm running the Chicago Marathon with Team Imerman Angels so that no one faces cancer alone- for more information on Imerman Angels and to donate, click this link." Also, update your status on social media such as Facebook and Twitter to keep everyone informed.

Quick Fundraising Wins. One way to make this all seem more attainable is to break it down into a matter of donation size and/or number of donors. Here are some examples of how Team IA members have focused their fundraising in the past:

- **Leverage the "power of 26"** – At this point, we hope you know the significance this number holds! Why not try asking 26 people to make a donation to you? You can "sell" the miles in a number of ways such as miles 1 – 10 for \$25, miles 11 – 20 for \$50, miles 21 – 25 for \$100, and mile 26 for \$262 – that gets you to just over \$1500.
- **Focus on the match:** each time you raise \$350, you've made a match. You can try to make a match every couple of weeks.



Setting Your Goal. Many Team IA members, at least at this stage, have the goal of raising the *fundraising minimum*. Others have already committed to a fundraising goal that exceeds this minimum. No matter the goal, you will be making a huge impact. That said, please consider setting a goal, perhaps after you start fundraising, which is higher than your minimum. A few important things to keep in mind:

- **You can't aim too high with your goal:** the fundraising minimum does not need to be the finish line for fundraising. Doing the marathon is a BIG deal - think about a fundraising level that will equal the challenge of the marathon itself.
- **Yes, you can change your goal:** We get it . . . committing to raise over the fundraising minimum can be intimidating. So if you're uncomfortable going beyond a certain amount – no worries. And once you realize how successful you are at fundraising and want to increase your goal, you can always adjust that number at any time.
- **The real goal isn't a number.** Always keep in mind *why* you are pushing towards a certain dollar amount. Let your potential donors know your goal is more than digits after a dollar sign. Instead, your goal is to *make it possible for more cancer fighters than ever before to be connected to a Mentor Angel – someone who had the same cancer, same stage and is now living proof that life after cancer can be amazing (or a caregiver to a fellow caregiver)*.
- **And, remember, your goal is a goal and not a minimum:** if you set a goal higher than your minimum, you will not be financially responsible if you come up short of the goal.

Personalizing Your Fundraising Page. When you signed up for Team IA, you created a Donor Drive fundraising page (if you cannot find your personal page, look for an email from the day you joined the team from Imerman Angels (dlouthan@imermanangels.org) that contains the link to your page or click [HERE](#) for the main Team IA page where you can log in.). This is the page that your donors will see when you send your link in an email or through social media. This page can be created and personalized in less than ten minutes (and edited/refreshed as often as you like).

What Should You Include on Your Fundraising Page?

- **Tell “Your Story”:** let people know why you're participating in the marathon and why you chose Team IA.
 - It might be that cancer has impacted you directly or a family member or friend.
 - You might be doing the marathon to honor someone or some people you know that have fought cancer.
 - Or it can be a more general approach that focuses more on the organization itself and its mission to connect cancer fighters, survivors, and caregivers.
- However you decide to write it, remember that it's *your story* and *your chance* to tell your donors about something that you are doing *to make a difference*. And, remember, it doesn't have to be “perfect” – you can and should edit it as often as you like. Remember that most people are giving because of *you* – *they admire what you are doing, why you doing it, and who you are doing it for*.
- **The Basics:** let your donors know a bit about Imerman Angels and the one-on-one cancer support that is its mission.
 - Add some photos and maybe even a video.
 - Refresh your page occasionally with updates on your training and/or your overall fundraising.



How to Donate?

- **Use your fundraising page to reach your potential donors.** Include the link in your emails or in social media posts.
- **Collect “off-line” donations such as cash or checks:** in those cases, we will credit your fundraising page manually within a week to ten days of receiving that donation. Please send any offline donation to the Imerman Angels office using the Team Imerman Angels Offline Donation Form (attached or request the form by emailing douthan@imermanangels.org).

Develop a Plan. Like training for the big day, reaching your goal can become easier if you have a plan to stick by along the way. Below are some recommended tips on developing a solid fundraising plan to make sure your fundraising goal is met.

- **Make an initial list of key donor prospects.** This can include your immediate family; other relatives such as aunts, uncles, and cousins; friends; neighbors; and colleagues. These are the people that are closest to you and the ones that will likely make a larger donation to you.
- **Reach out to them.** The key is to be as personal as possible. If you have the opportunity to see them in person, that typically works the best. Otherwise, an email and a follow-up call can work as well. And don't be shy about asking them for a higher donation and offering some donation “choices.”
- **Identify who else would donate.** Once you have reached out to your closest friends and family, develop another list that includes anyone else you think would care to help. This is a larger list that will include everyone from your doctor to former classmates to your babysitter. Don't feel awkward about adding someone to the list - you never know if one of those people has a connection to Imerman Angels already (and will be happy to donate). And, even if they are not connected to Imerman Angels, they will hopefully see our mission and the free services offered, and be able to draw a connection or be inspired by your personal story.
- **Establish your means of spreading the message.** Once you develop your lists and reach out to your more personal contacts, begin to think about how you can reach “anyone else”. Maybe you have a particularly big following on social media. Perhaps, you are due to reconnect with old friends over a phone call. No matter the means, develop a plan around which mediums will work best for you and begin to utilize any you think may attract additional donors.

Team Imerman Angels Fundraising QUICK TIP

When composing an email (or letter) to be sent to potential donors, spend time to make it's a good one as many people will raise the bulk of their donations just by writing and sending an email. Make sure it's personalized. And you can connect your donors to the cause even more and involve the donor in your effort by asking for the name of someone to run in honor/memory of – you can recognize that person with a name on your singlet or race gear – or by dedicating a mile of the Marathon to that person.

Get Started Now. Now is the perfect time to get started with your fundraising. The final month leading to the event is historically the best time to fundraise. Keep your friends, family, and colleagues apprised of your runs and the big day and let them go along with you on this journey to the starting line of the marathon. They will see your commitment to the training, the event itself and, of course, the cause – connecting cancer fighters, survivors and caregivers at Imerman Angels. If you're just getting started, *the key is to ask for that first donation.* Ask a family member or a close friend and get that momentum started.



Here is one thing that worked very well for team members in 2015: make a donation to yourself. By receiving a free entry, consider making a donation in the amount that you saved, \$185, to your page or, if not \$185, maybe another amount. In this way, when you ask for a donation, your donors can see that you are right there with them.

Does Your Company Offer a Matching Program? If your company will match what you raise, that can double a donation to you and make them more likely to donate or to offer a larger donation. Your company may also allow you to do events in your company or department such as a jeans day or another idea where you can involve your colleagues and your office. Don't hesitate to reach out to us for ideas and how they work. In addition, it's possible that one of your donors may have company matching for their donation to you – make sure to mention this to them when you contact them.

Don't Feel Bad Asking. There may be things in life (like moving apartments for the third time in three months) where you might feel badly asking someone to help you. This isn't one of them. What you are doing – *the marathon* – is, quite frankly, a big deal and people know that. Why you are doing it – is inspiring. And who you are doing it for is perhaps the most important component. Nearly everyone you reach out to knows the devastating impact of cancer – and *they will respect you for having the will to do something about it.* And, the worst thing that can happen is that someone says no. Even when that happens, that person was able to learn a bit about what you are doing and about the important work done at Imerman Angels.

Don't forget that it is important to not limit yourself when asking. If you ask someone to donate \$100 or \$200, you may well get that (and often times more). Or, maybe they will donate a lesser amount such as \$75. But if you ask for a small amount such as \$25, you will probably only get that amount. Of course, it is certainly okay to add something to the effect of "or whatever you can provide – any donation and support will be much appreciated." It is appreciated – whatever the level of support.

Hosting a Fundraising Event. Many Team Imerman Angels participants have been able to make a major dent in their fundraising goal in just one night. All it takes is a well-planned event and a room full of potential donors. Team Imerman Angels will provide you with ideas/tips and contacts to Team members who have hosted successful events.

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Follow up is critical to helping you reach your goal: make sure that you reconnect with everyone on your list of potential donors who has not donated. Many intend to donate and just need a gentle reminder. Perhaps, the reminder can let them know about how your training is going or can update them on the status of your fundraising goal.

Use Facebook to Reach Your Friends and to Thank Your Donors. Below are just some ideas on how to effectively use Facebook (and other forms of social media) to reach your friends and potential donors.

- **Push out your story and your fundraising link.** It also acts as a news feed for your efforts as well.
- **Let people know that you just completed a training run** (and always include your fundraising link) and this serves as another chance to receive donations.
- **Thank those who support you.** Every time a Facebook friend donates to you, make sure you thank them and tag them on your page.



Remember: Persistence is Key. Whether it's an email or social media or something else, everyone you reach out to is juggling thirty things at any given time and may miss your initial contact. And the key in that last sentence is the word "initial" – it is critical to reach out several times and in several different ways to your friends, family, etc.

Consider this likely scenario: you send an email to a friend and they open it on their phone when they are walking to a meeting or on the bus/subway. While they may be planning to donate, they will probably not make a donation right then and there. Instead, they will wait until later, but may get distracted. Before they know it, they forgot or can't find your email.

Make sure that you connect personally with your friends and family. Last year, one person had great success using a letter with a handwritten signature (remember those?) on it. It worked, she raised over \$2,900 just by writing letters and sending them off to friends and family (and she followed up with a phone call a few days after sending the letters and offered to send the online link). So, *it all works* – emails, social media, phone calls, letters – but not in isolation typically. It just takes a few tries!

Questions? If you have any questions ranging from developing a strategy to setting up your fundraising page on Donor Drive, please contact Dave Louthan at dlouthan@imermanangels.org or 312.273.1312.

You've Got This!