Designing Engaging Events

Three Questions that Matter



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Agenda & Goals

The difference between a good event and a great event can come down to the questions you ask while making your plans. The right questions can unlock new strategies and approaches to your event outreach, activation and follow -up.

Invitation

Who do you want at your event? Why would they want to be there?

Activation

You've got a full room for your event. Now what?

Continuation

How can you keep the momentum going after the event?



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About Me

- Chris Baiocchi, MAOL, CFRE (he/him)
- Background in journalism, corporate communications, and fundraising.
- Worked with big shops (St. Joseph Hospital), mid-sized shops (Habitat for Humanity of Orange County), and small shops (Oasis Youth Center).
- Help clients Align & Accelerate their fundraising and their mission.

Some Mindsets For Today

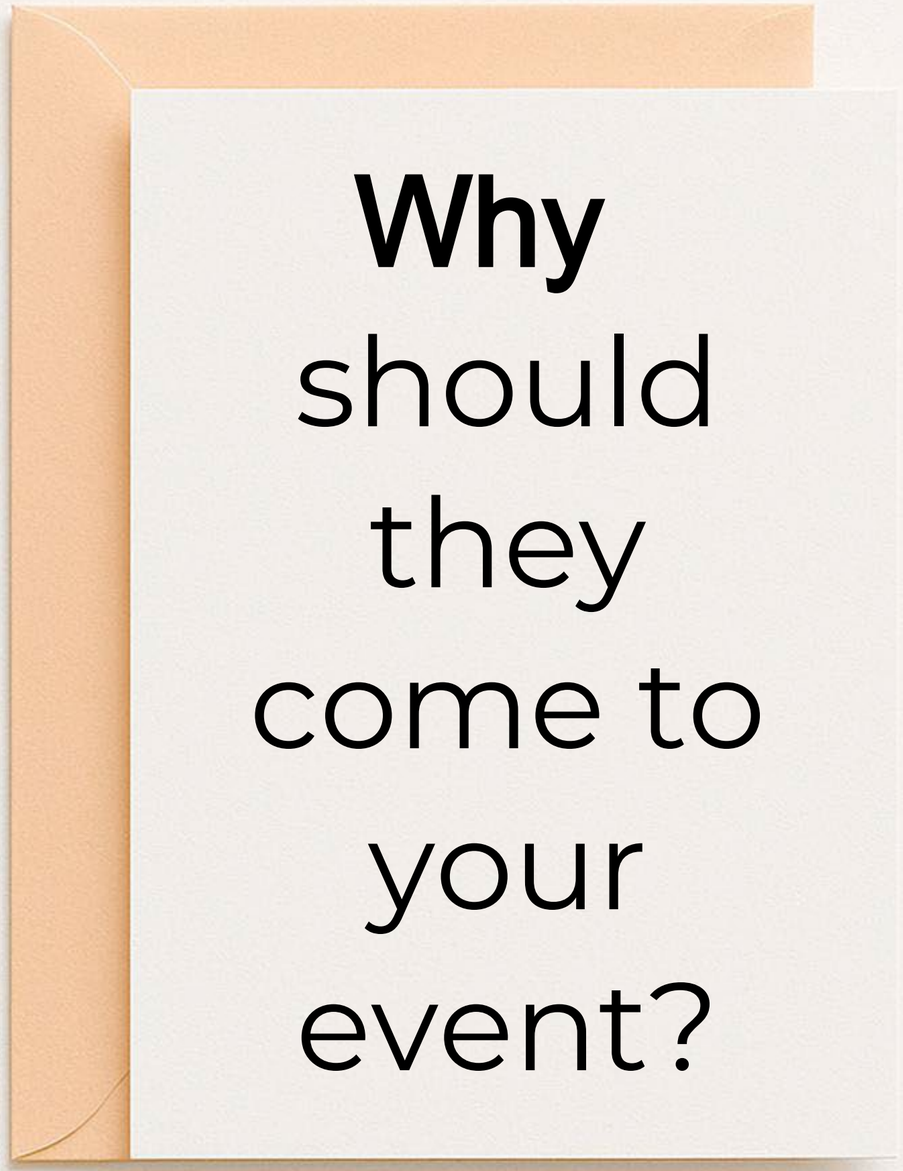
Fitness vs. Construction
Curiosity vs. Expertise
Inviting vs. Demanding
Strategy vs. Tradition





*The goal is not a "perfect" organization - but an **improving** one.*

Invitation

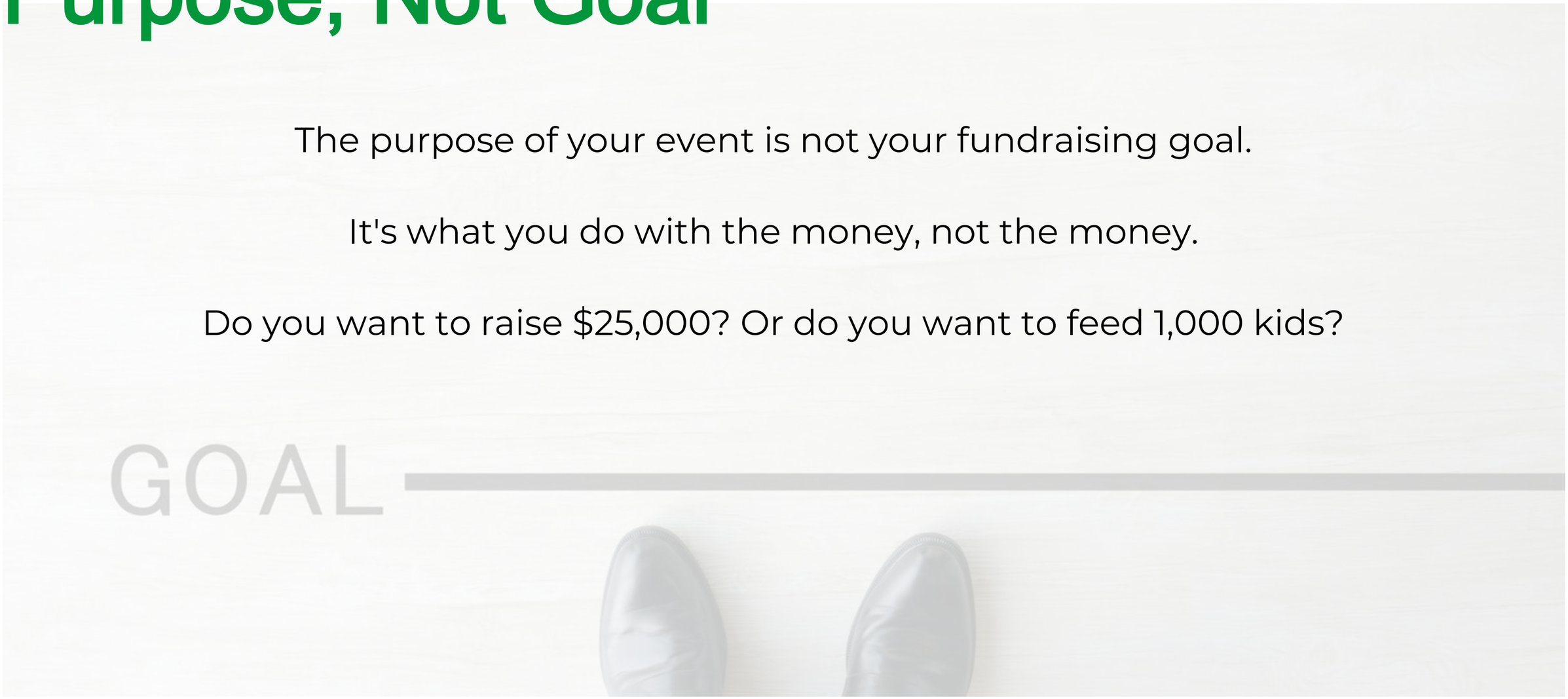


Purpose, Not Goal

The purpose of your event is not your fundraising goal.

It's what you do with the money, not the money.

Do you want to raise $25,000? Or do you want to feed 1,000 kids?



Invitation Strategy



- A single email is not an invitation strategy.
- Multiple channels - don’t ignore the phone.
- Early and often.
- Personal invites > Mass invites
- Who is doing the inviting?

Board Involvement

- Helping board members with their outreach.
- What can their guests expect?
- Why does the event matter to them?

Reflection

What is the purpose of your signature event?



Activation



Storytelling

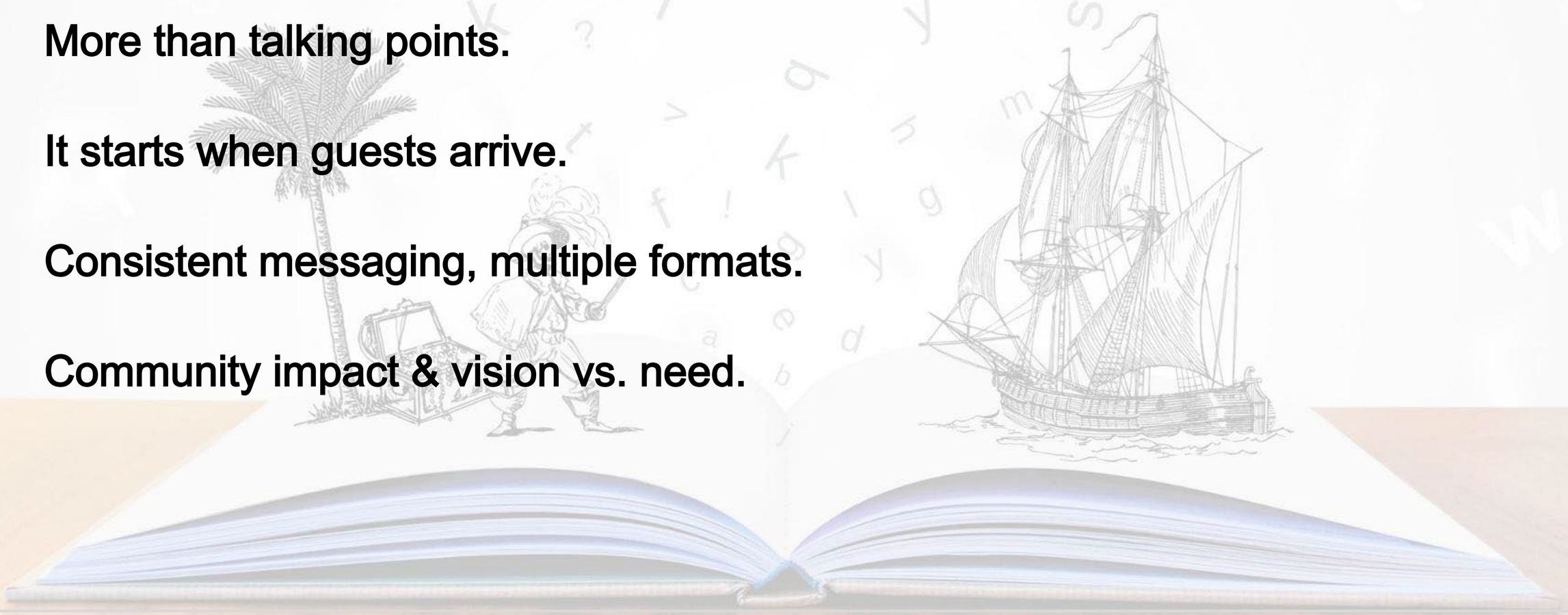
More than a slideshow.

More than talking points.

It starts when guests arrive.

Consistent messaging, multiple formats.

Community impact & vision vs. need.



Timing

Three key times in any event: start, stop, ask.

Timing and event flow - when are you asking?

What are they coming from?
What are they going to?

Who is making the ask?

Pre-event walkthrough.



Board Involvement

- More than networking - purposeful outreach for board members.
- Host, not a guest.
- Thanking sponsors, greeting tables, making introductions to key staff.
- Plan ahead!

Reflection

How can your board members support your next event?



Continuation



What is the next thing guests hear from you?

It Starts with Stewardship



- Stewardship is the key to donor retention.
- Stories of gratitude & impact.
- What does the next invitation look like?
- Tours, follow up meetings, impact reports.
- The end of an event can be the beginning for a donor.

Plan Ahead



- Post-event work starts before the event.
- Schedule follow up calls, pre-write notes, etc.
- Segmentation: who came? Who missed it?
- Plan ahead for post-event evaluation.

Board Involvement

Board members - your stewardship champions

- Thank you calls to sponsors, donors, volunteers.
- Thank you notes.
- Internal goals & accountability.

Reflection

How will you engage attendees when the event is done?



A Word About Evaluation



Asking the right questions: Was it fun? vs. Did this serve us?

Start / Stop / Continue

Tracking 1st time event donors? What did they do next?

From Stuck to Success

Fundraising Tools to Help Your Board Get it Done



Your Event Planning Guide

- Planning prompts for all three questions
- Discussion prompt for event evaluation



Questions?
Comments?
Takeaways?

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