

# Should you do a feasibility study?

By

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Feasibility studies are a necessary step in conducting a capital campaign, whether it be a church building, renovation, acquisition of equipment or any campaign that has a significant goal and is a one-time effort, even if conducted in stages. However, feasibility studies are expensive. So are there times when a church could forego such a study and use some intelligent reasoning and information that is available to make a decision about a campaign and its success.

Not conducting a feasibility study should be a very careful decision. Basically, a feasibility study answers the questions, “Can we do this?” It is a study to determine if a proposed process, campaign, action is possible to accomplish. Feasibility studies objectively and rationally uncover the strengths and weaknesses of a proposed campaign, opportunities and threats as presented by the environment, the resources required to carry through, and ultimately the prospects for success. Most importantly, a feasibility study will help determine whether a fundraising goal can be achieved, and who might be donors.

Before you decide whether or not you should do a feasibility study, answer these questions for yourself:

Is the goal small enough that perhaps funding sources are evident?

Can you, objectively, identify donors and funding sources and create your own giving plan (and a gift range chart—get more information from PSI)? Be sure you move beyond optimistic and wishful thinking.

Can you convene an objective group which can evaluate potential donors at all levels?

Even the process of considering these questions will give you a good sense of whether or not a feasibility study is mandatory for your campaign. The main objective is to have a plan for where the donations might come from, if there are more prospects than required for the goal since not everyone will give, or give at the level you expect.

A feasibility study also has many peripheral benefits and provides information that is vital to a campaign. These points might include:

Is there agreement in the Church about the campaign? Differences of opinion will emerge when an objective study is done.

Can we find donors outside of the church family? How would we identify them and determine if they might be donors?

Will people “stretch” to give to a campaign and not stop giving tithe and offerings?

Whether or not to invest in a feasibility study prior to a campaign should be a very careful, intelligently evaluated decision. If the choice is not to spend resources on this study, the reasons should be clear and rational. If in doubt, please contact PSI for further information.

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