

MODULE 6: Blending Your People Story With Your Money Story

CORE CONCEPTS

 Finding Your Money Story

★ **MODULE SPOTLIGHT:**
Calculating Your Funding Gap

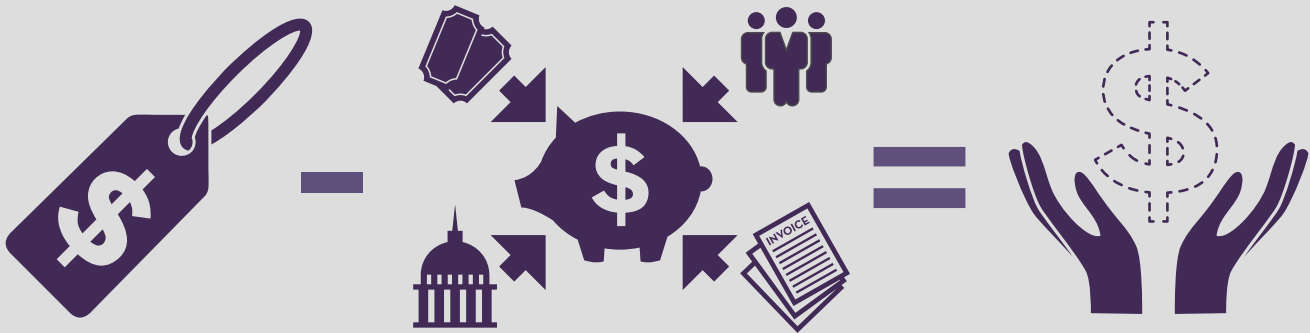
★ **MODULE SPOTLIGHT:**
Melvin



★ **MODULE SPOTLIGHT:** Calculating Your Funding Gap

A significant component of your money story is your *funding gap*.

Your funding gap is what you project in expenses minus the money you’ve received as of today—including government grants, fees for service, United Way allocation, ticket sales, and gifts from individuals, corporations and foundations.



Let’s pause here to talk this through. I even can hear the conversation going on in your head right now. You’re thinking: We are scared to death to tell people we have a funding gap of \$225,000. OR We have NEVER talked about any sort of gap or shortfall before, and we’re worried that when we start telling people we have an \$800k funding gap that they will think of us as a lost cause. OR How do we tell people we have a “funding gap” without scaring them away?

Start with your funding gap: Know what the projected expenses are for the year for a particular service or program, or for your whole organization.

Then simply subtract the dollars that are in the door. Right now. Today. And no, you can’t count the “promised” money. Only what’s real.

Now calculate the dollar amount you have to raise between now and your deadline or goal date. There’s your funding gap.

 **MODULE SPOTLIGHT: Melvin**

This is an actual story from an Ignited Fundraising client who embraced blending and sharing his money and people stories:

I wish you could meet Melvin. He used to talk about the “organized chaos” of his life. Wise words from a shy, gangly teenager. We met after Melvin had many difficult years fending for himself on the streets. His mother abandoned him at 9 years old. He’s now in college, but when he came to us he was 16 years old and in high school. What he’s told me is: “The one thing I knew how to do was to PUSH with all the strength that I had inside because I was never going to allow a bad situation define who I was inside.” Melvin found a bed to sleep in at the Salvation Army. He would walk miles to and from school—and in between sleeping and school he worked a part-time job.

He’s smart but so very quiet and shy. He found his way to our After School Mentor program because one of his teachers saw the special spark that consumes Melvin. She saw his potential and worried that without a caring adult in his life he’d end up homeless for the rest of his life. Our staff took a shine to Melvin and the rest is history. For a few hours a week Melvin got to belly laugh, play basketball, study with other kids and feel like a teenager in our program, instead of a young man all alone in the world. His grades, his tenacity and guidance from our team got him a college scholarship. He’s now studying to be an electrical engineer. On his last visit he stopped by to let me know he’s on the Dean’s list. I will be honest, that news brought tears to my eyes.

And so I’m working hard to close our annual funding gap of \$1.8 million for young people like Melvin. The good news: As of today, 3 months into the year, we have received more than \$452,000 to close that funding gap.

We have our work cut out for us with more than 400 young people on the waiting list for our After School Mentor Program, the very same program Melvin participated in. That program currently has a \$32,000 funding gap from where we are today and where we’ll need to be at the end of the year. It takes just \$5 per student per day to support all the Melvin’s who walk through our doors. I’m proud that Melvin got to work less days and was mentored and “loved on” by our caring, trustworthy adults who spent hours with Melvin each week.

Your Checklist for Blending Your People Story With Your Money Story

- Carefully follow the checklist for building the foundation of a brilliant story to craft YOUR story.**
 - Use the *Story Framework* form (Worksheet 5.7A & B).
 - Make sure it's about an actual person.
 - Use a minimum of 5 descriptive words.
 - Eliminate jargon.
 - Share up to 3 specific examples of how your work helps the person you are talking about.
 - Keep it to 2 minutes or less. Keep it to 2 minutes or less.
- Include the cost per day, week or month for the program and person you are talking about.**
- DO NOT ask for a contribution while sharing your story.**
- Infer that there is MORE to do.**
 - A waiting list
 - Turning people away
 - Communities or schools waiting for your program
 - Other?
- Share your funding gap.**

(i.e., What is left to raise from your fund development efforts through year-end or fiscal year-end?)
- If you feel uncomfortable with the “money story” you are including with your “people story” –practice!**

