

## *The Zen of Fundraising*

After re-reading Ken Burnett's book *The Zen of Fundraising* I paraphrased below several keen insights I feel are essential in philanthropy; particularly during these difficult economic times.

- ***90-Degree Shift in Perspective:*** Put yourself firmly but clearly in the donors' shoes. See everything your organization does or plans to do through your donors' eyes.
- ***Small Steps Count:*** Concentrate not on finding rare, elusive big breakthrough ideas to advance fundraising. Instead focus on implementing the myriad of small but cumulatively significant good little ideas that are all around us. Fundraising is likely to be most successful not with a few risky giant steps but with lots of sensible even obvious but demonstrably sound little ones.
- ***Donor Stewardship Counts:*** Offer the most appropriate, most friendly, most efficient, most effective "customer service" for donors to be found anywhere. So donors will like doing business with your organization. And they'll tell their friends.
- ***Laying Foundations for the Future:*** Current fundraising practice seems to emphasize asking fewer people for more money for better reasons. In doing so we need to realize that major gifts come from real relationships with real donors. Not from high pressure tactics. We don't sell to our donors. We work with them as respected counselors and friends, laying foundations for the future.
- ***"Inspiring" rather than "Asking":*** Fundraising isn't about asking for money. It's about inspiring people to believe that they can make a difference. Then helping them to make it.

*How are you dealing with these essentials for your organization?*