

How Long Does a Church Capital Campaign Take?

The optimal capital campaign timeline (for all but the small church) from beginning of preparation and planning until commitment Sunday, is at least 23 weeks. After this, there is a giving period of 1 to 3 years (with 3 years being typical). The capital campaign timeline can be adapted to your church's timeline but do not try to rush it if you can help it. You will have a much more effective campaign, and will cause a lot less wear and tear on your church's capital campaign team, if you allow yourself plenty of time. A recent testimonial from one of our clients offered this piece of advice,

"If I could offer just one piece of advice, it would be to give your church plenty of time to prepare for the campaign."

There are several aspects of a church capital campaign that benefit from more time – vision casting and donor development being among them. Shortchanging your church on the timeline does not reduce the amount of work that needs to happen, it just gives you less time to accomplish that work. A shorter timeline will mean more effort and stress for your people, and can reduce the spiritual and financial benefit to the church.

When preparing for a church capital campaign, time is your friend. **Time is a critical factor in taking your church capital campaign from good to great.** Depending on the size of the church, it can take 3 to as much as 12 months to give yourself (and the church) time to prepare for and execute a capital campaign. While size is definitely a factor in setting the timeline, other factors can also impact the time you should take in preparation.

1. Church capital campaigns raise money for specific capital projects, like construction, renovation, or large capital purchases. If there is not high and across the board level of excitement, unity, and support, this would indicate the church should take more time to make the case for support.
2. If the amount to be raised is at the higher end of the normal range of results or will need to be a real stretch, this would certainly be an indicator that you should take more preparation time in order to increase the odds of reaching your financial goal.
3. If the church does not already have a culture of generosity and sacrificial giving, more preparation time will allow you to improve giving on a week-by-week basis, thereby transforming the giving patterns of your members for a lifetime, not just 3 years.
4. A lack of experience at successful capital fundraising is another reason to take your time. The more time you have to spiritually and tactically equip your staff and campaign team, the more effective the campaign will be.

Time is your friend in a church capital campaign:

- Time to get the right people
- involved Time to do proper donor
- development Time to create a culture of generosity
- Time to do the work without burning anyone
- out. Time to make the most spiritual impact.
- Time so that your church does not feel like it was "shoved down their
- throat". Time to do it right as opposed to "good enough".

Anything worth doing is worth doing right. Taking a little extra time will definitely reap both spiritual and financial rewards.