

ASK THE EXPERTS

Who better to offer advice on making a Macmillan fundraising event or activity go with a bang than some of our super supporters? We asked four fundraisers who took on four very different challenges to share their **top tips** to help make Your Event a success.

After being diagnosed with ovarian cancer in 2005, Della received physical, emotional and financial support from Macmillan.

She wanted to make sure everyone affected by cancer was able to benefit like she did, so she decided to give something back by organising a ball for Macmillan.

The result was the extremely glamorous Splash of Green charity ball. The event raised an astonishing £20,999 in its first year and was so successful that Della has since organised two more, and has a fourth in the pipeline.

Play to your strengths

'Before my cancer diagnosis, I worked in marketing and I was also the office social secretary. So, when it came to my event, I tapped into my promotional and organisational skills.'

Tell your story

'I've found that the key to gaining support and donations from people is to speak from the heart. I share my cancer story and explain how much Macmillan helped me. Your passion for Macmillan can really inspire people to dig deep.'

Set a target

'Before I got stuck into organising my event, I set myself a fundraising target and worked backwards from that. It meant I knew exactly how many tickets I needed to sell, and I found it really useful for keeping my planning on track.'

Do your research

'When I was organising the ball, I thought about the 'side-entertainment' that always went down well at these kinds of events. I arranged a magician, face-painters, dancers and comedians – the guests loved it. There was something for everyone.'



**DELLA HAD
A BALL...**

BECKY USED HER HEAD



When Becky's friend's mum lost her hair during cancer treatment, Becky decided that shaving off her own hair in solidarity would be a great way to fundraise for Macmillan.

Losing her long, blonde locks was a big deal but, in order to raise as much dosh as possible, Becky bravely decided to do it in front of everyone she knew at a band night that she organised. Becky's event raised a fantastic £3,161 for Macmillan.

Tell everyone

'I found the prospect of losing my hair a bit scary but once I'd let everyone know what I was doing there was no going back. It was a great motivation.'

If you don't ask, you don't get

'It's amazing how generous local businesses can be if you just let them know what you need. I found that speaking face to face often gets the best results. I ended up with a hog roast from my local butcher's, and 74 brilliant raffle prizes.'

Get your timing right

'Local businesses often decide how they will be using their resources to help charities at the beginning of the year, so that's the perfect time to ask for donations.'

Use your contacts

'Some of my old school friends are in a band, so when I asked if they would play at the event at a discount, they said that they would be delighted.'

MEGAN DRESSED FOR SUCCESS...

As an enthusiastic Macmillan fundraiser, Megan had always been passionate about our work.

She was keen to take on a fundraising challenge with a difference so, with Christmas on its way, she vowed to get sponsored to wear a different festive costume every day in Advent.



Her 25-day challenge saw her sporting a weird and wonderful array of tinsel-tastic outfits to work, to the shops, on nights out and on her daily train commute. It certainly got people talking, smiling and – most importantly – donating. Megan raised a jolly superb £1,000 for Macmillan.

Dare to be different

‘The more unique and silly the challenge you take on, the more people will be interested in what you’re doing. Not only will that mean more money for Macmillan, but it also means you’re more likely to make people laugh and brighten up their day.’

Get creative with your fancy dress

‘Fancy dress needn’t be expensive. I pieced 25 outfits together with the clothes I already had and cheap accessories like elf ears and Santa hats. My auntie chipped in by sending me a Christmas tree outfit and a colleague lent me a light-up Christmas jumper.’

Stay on brand

‘I wore a Macmillan sash over my costumes and I found it was a great way of explaining to people why I was dressed so strangely. It was also a great conversation starter and a way of promoting Macmillan’s work.’

Use your social media superpowers

‘I set up a blog on which I posted pictures of my outfit every day. I promoted it on Facebook and Twitter and made sure that all my supporters could see what I was up to.’

MITCH GOT QUIZZICAL...

After sadly losing both of his parents to cancer, Mitch was determined to do something to thank Macmillan for the support that his mum and dad and the rest of his family received.

As a keen pub-quizzer, it didn't take long for him to work out what kind of fundraising event he wanted to organise.

After a little research – and a lot of help from his wife Cheryl – Mitch held his first quiz in the local church hall. It was such a roaring success that he did it all over again the following year and raised, in total, an incredible £1,400 for Macmillan.

Think about the little extras

'As well as charging people for tickets, we also held a raffle, a bring and buy sale, a roll-the-pound-coin-closest-to-the-whiskey-bottle competition, and we sold Macmillan pin badges during the interval. All of these things boosted the total.'

Ask people to bring their own food

'We held our event at a church hall, so we asked people to bring their own food and drinks. Some brought nibbles while others brought full banquets, so there was more than enough to go around. Hosting a fundraising event needn't be expensive.'



Plunder your phone book

'We texted everyone we knew and asked whether they fancied getting a team together for the quiz. The response was amazing. What's more, so many people who weren't able to make the event donated a tenner when they heard what we were doing.'

Google is great

'You don't need to be a boffin when it comes to creating quiz questions – just hit the internet and type in 'free quiz questions'. You'll discover loads.'

TOP TIP

It's always a great idea to say thank you to your supporters and the people who've helped out with Your Event.

A simple thank you card – which you can order for free at be.macmillan.org.uk – can go a long way.

What's more, if you decide to repeat Your Event again (or take on something new), you'll have built great relationships for the future.

These stories just give you a flavour of the types of fundraising activities you can do. Whatever activity you do, no matter how big or small, will make a difference to the lives of people affected by cancer.