

The Fundraising Houseparty

By Morrie Warshawski

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The Fundraising Houseparty is primarily for filmmakers seeking funding for their work—Morrie Warshawski's primary clientele. However, as a fundraiser for a secondary school, I found this brief book to be informative and eye-opening.

The Fundraising Houseparty is expensive for its size and is hard to find on sites like Amazon.com (even with the ISBN number). Nevertheless, it can be a worthwhile investment of time and money for the potential relational and financial rewards of a fundraising houseparty.

Warshawski is quick to admit that not all houseparties are financially successful. Care must be taken. But it's hard to imagine losing money if following his detailed advice. Someone brand new to personal asks will find this work helpful. I believe an experienced fundraiser may find it beneficial as well.

The process begins with a planning committee to work out event details and host/hostess who personally signs event invitations. Invitations are sent to potential donors, clearly stating that the gathering will be a fundraising event. Houseparties start with a time of mingling and light refreshments. Then the person seeking the funding makes a brief presentation describing the project. Working with film projects, Warshawski is a proponent of using some form of video presentation—to showcase the artist's prior work and to, ideally, tug at the hearts of the participants. The key to the whole event is the solicitation by a well-respected peer. Follow-up is an important final stage of the fundraising houseparty.

Warshawski's work is eminently practical. Packed with checklists, annotated outlines, attractive and informative (and humorous) samples of invitations, and even scripts for the presenter and peer solicitor. It's easy to read in 30 minutes and fits very conveniently in your pocket.

I definitely recommend reading The Fundraising Houseparty, although you might want to loan a copy from someone rather than purchase it yourself. I'm excited to see how the fundraising houseparty concept will fit into my school's fundraising efforts!

Chapters include:

- Introduction
- Key Elements
- Pre-Party Checklist
- The Party
- Some Last Notes
- Appendix
- Bibliography
- About the Author