



MASCAT Consultants

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Donor Cultivation in the Nonprofit World

Getting donations is never easy
but it is through the generosity
of our donors that our missions continue.

In a 2005 Giving USA Report donations made to nonprofit organizations were recorded to be from the following sources:

- ✓ 76.5% Individuals
- ✓ 11.5% Foundations
- ✓ 6.7% Bequests
- ✓ 5.3% Corporations

So what are the dynamics of levels of giving by a donor?

Annual Fund Gift:

The most common way for a donor to give is to your annual fund campaign. You send our newsletters with an “ask” statement, special project flyers with an “ask” statement, you do telethons, email solicitations, have a donor button on your web page for direct e-donations. You send out a major mailing in the giving months of October, November and December and then again during April and May.

- What for?** to help you pay for all your operating needs
- Donor Response?** gifts are given frequently, rationally made, quickly made, and often without spouse approval
- What do you need to do to get them?** Cultivate your donors some and ASK a lot!!

Major Gift

This gift is for a major amount of money given all at one time or over a span of time. It could help you with a capital project, get some much needed equipment or create an endowment or support a scholarship fund. It comes from donors who already know you and have had a relationship with you maybe as a volunteer, participant in a fundraising event and who really have internal connection to your work.

- What For?** Buildings, endowment, major project, equipment
- How Much?** Depends on your annual fund gift level but it should usually triple your top annual fund gift.
- Donor Response?** Infrequently given, decision is emotionally made, donor has to stop and think and the spouse is always involved.

- **What do you need to do to get them?** Cultivate a lot and ask less often and can only be obtained through personal solicitation.

Ultimate Gift

This is the gift of land, major stock or a major donation from an estate upon the death of a donor.

- **What for?** Primarily for an endowment fund.
- **How Much?** Is always a substantial amount usually several times your annual budget.
- **Donor Response?** It is usually a deferred gift from a long term relationship, decision is very emotional and will require that the donor seek professional legal help.
- **What do you need to do to get them?** Cultivate the donor over a long span of time with volunteerism, engagement, participation in events and activities and then ask if they would like to participate in a Planned Gift Program.

**For all of these donor gifts,
you as the nonprofit Board and Staff need to have a
Plan of Action.**

**The first step is to formulate a donor solicitation committee
who's job is to plan, implement, execute and evaluate the
growth of donors and their gifts.**

SO WHAT IS THE MAGIC FORMULA???
If you do not ask, you will not receive.

A successful solicitation occurs when...

The **right person** asks,

The **right** prospect,

For the **right** amount,

With the **right** purpose,

And in the **right** way.



You will need to really KNOW your donors:

- ? **What is their capacity to give?**
- ? **What relationship do they have with you or your mission?**
- ? **What are their interests?**
- ? **Why do they give????**

The “CULTIVATION” Process for Donor Building

1. Write personalized thank-you letters and mail them first class.
2. Send more than one thank you letter from just one person; an administrative staff person (ED) and a member of the Board of Directors should also send a thank you letter.
3. Recognize gifts in print over and over (Annual Report, Program Listing, Newsletters, Donor Plaque, Web Page, etc.)
4. Honor or memorialize with name displayed in a highly visible location.
5. Any gift items from you should reflect the culture of your nonprofit.
6. Give gifts that can be displayed (framed certificates, plaques, desk sets, paper weights, etc.)
7. Give appropriate awards and recognition for service.
8. Call the donor on the phone or visit personally, always with an objective in mind. Ask for their advice in their area of expertise.
9. Hold a special event at which donors can be thanked and cultivated again.
10. Invite donors to visit your organization, invite them to become involved, to speak, to perform, to assist at an event(s).

