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Denise,
Attached are my collected
notes and articles used to
train fund raisers... FYI.
Peter

Please cc → Loren

THE LANGLEY SCHOOL
CAPITAL CAMPAIGN MEETING

September 10, 1999

CONDUCTING A SUCCESSFUL SOLICITATION MEETING

I. SETTING THE APPOINTMENT

The first and most important step is to get the meeting scheduled. Call to arrange the meeting with the prospective donor with spouse. Define your role and the purpose of the call. Be positive, flexible and brief. Establish the date, time and location. Resist discussion during the phone call. If you have to leave a message be sure to suggest specific meeting dates and times.

When the meeting is scheduled, notify Valerie Embrey and she will arrange for Peg, Peter or another committee members to accompany you on the solicitation call. Experience has shown that having two people represent the School is the strongest way to approach people for a philanthropic contribution.

Meet with your co-solicitor at least fifteen minutes prior to the visit to catch up on last minute details and to review the script one more time. Be 100% clear about who will take responsibility for asking for a specific dollar amount.

II. THE SOLICITATION VISIT

Thank them for having you. Ask how things are going for them at Langley. Let them chat about whatever is on their mind. Just take in their views, show interest, make notes as appropriate but avoid rebutting or directing. Establish a warm and friendly atmosphere. Be confident.

Speak specifically about your involvement with the school and what has motivated you to become a donor. Your commitment will be a major motivation to others.

Ask questions, encourage your prospect to open up and talk. Do not feel you have to keep the conversation flowing, listen to your prospect. Frequently you will hear just what you needed to know to successfully complete the solicitation.

Be prepared and anticipate objections and deflections. Also, realize you can not anticipate everything. It is important to allow people to talk through their concerns; otherwise they will resurface later in the solicitation visit. Listen for a brief time, take notes, and repeat what you have heard, but avoid rebutting! Then move the conversation to the purpose of your visit. If a prospect asks a question that deserves research or follow-up, ask for assistance from the school and get back to the prospect promptly. It is critical not to get involved with a discussion of problems and/or concerns.

III. ASKING FOR THE GIFT

Discuss the Capital Campaign and its goals in detail. It is important to position this fund-raising effort as the next phase in a carefully considered master plan. Focus on the areas that are likely to interest them – the facility, the program, and/or endowment. Describe what their gift will accomplish. If appropriate describe gift levels and recognition opportunities. The importance of continued Annual Fund support should also be mentioned, however your job is to solicit for a capital gift.

You have worked hard to get to this point in the solicitation process, do not miss the chance to ask. Ask for a specific dollar amount. Most donors will expect you to suggest an amount and are flattered, not upset, if asked for more than they are prepared to give. You might say, "would you consider a pledge in the range of \$_____, which would be \$_____ a year over the next three years." Keep sights high and emphasize that this is a capital campaign.

- If asking for more than you gave: use the scale of gifts to indicate which category you would like them to consider.
- If asking for the same level as your gift: ask them to join you at that amount.
- If asking for less than you gave: simply ask them to consider the specific level.

After asking for the gift, try to be quiet and listen to what the donor has to say. Silence can be the best motivation, and it is often the hardest part of the solicitation. Do not talk past the closing. The more you say after the actual solicitation, the more excuses the prospect will find to stall.

Complete the discussion. Get a commitment or a "no"---do not leave the solicitation unresolved or hanging. If the prospect wants to think it over, offer to come back, and immediately schedule a return visit. Listen to the signals of resolution or indecision and act on them.

When a gift level has been determined, be sure to discuss the terms (pledge payment period, designation, etc.). **Be very appreciative and make the donor feel comfortable with the level of their gift.** NEVER show disappointment.

IV. FOLLOW-UP

Report success, failure, progress, or problems to Valerie Embrey. Return the pledge form (letter of intent) and note information that should be included in the donor's file.

You will be asked to report on your solicitations at the Campaign Committee meetings and follow up strategies will be discussed at that time. Remember you are a part of a team and if you need help ask for it

THE LANGLEY SCHOOL
GENERAL INFORMATION FOR CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE SOLICITORS

MAKE YOUR OWN PLEDGE FIRST

Your personal commitment to The Langley School will reflect your belief in the campaign. It gives you a psychological boost and helps you to ask others for their generous support.

PREPARE: KNOW YOUR PRODUCT AND PROSPECT

In order to speak with conviction, you must have accurate knowledge and be thoroughly comfortable with the campaign, its goals, gift opportunities, scale etc. Be able to present the Case concisely and with enthusiasm.

It is very helpful to know something about the person whom you are approaching. Valerie Embrey will provide a packet of information including a summary of the donors giving history, and the proposed ask level. Be sure to advise Valerie when a date is set.

Practice your solicitation with your team member before your visit. It is important to feel comfortable representing Langley and its campaign.

BE POSITIVE

The Langley School is proud to have you represent them and you are providing a great service to the school. People will be impressed with the time and energy you are devoting to the effort. You believe in Langley, be sure to show it. Remember, you are not asking for yourself but for the School.

A PERSONAL VISIT IS ESSENTIAL

Arrange to meet in the most convenient place for the donor (with his/her spouse, is preferable). A business-like tone is important but the meeting can take place at the prospect's house, office, and the school or during lunch. For leadership gift solicitations, **face-to face solicitations are essential.**

CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

Printed material is helpful, BUT not a substitute for a solicitation. Do not rely on a "case statement or other handouts to adequately motivate donors. Your personal ask is the best way to get a positive result.

KNOW WAYS AND METHODS OF GIVING

Gifts of securities, cash, real estate and life insurance policies are ways to give to Langley. Payments on pledges may commence at any time that is convenient to the donor and may continue over a three-year period.

LOOK FOR PLANNED-GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

Planned gifts are acceptable and important for building endowment but may not help Langley immediately with the Athletic Center construction that is urgently needed. If a prospect indicates that a gift of capital is possible only by means of a planned gift, this should be reported to the Development Office. In some cases, the actual solicitation may be targeted for a planned gift.

THE ANNUAL FUND

Langley must continue to receive annual contributions during and after this capital campaign. Be comfortable explaining the need for both annual and capital income.

PICK UP THE PHONE AND GET STARTED!

It gets easier after the first call, so set an early deadline for making initial contacts. Chances for success are diminished by procrastination; indeed unique opportunities may be lost. So, get started as soon as possible.

GOOD LUCK

CONDUCTING THE SOLICITATION MEETING

SETTING THE APPOINTMENT

The lead solicitor should call to arrange the meeting with the prospective donor with (spouse?). Define your role and the purpose of the call. Be positive, flexible and Brief. Establish the date, time and location. Resist discussion during the phone call.

If your team member is not available, Valerie will contact an appropriate substitute. It is important to get the meeting scheduled.

PREPARATION IMMEDIATELY PRIOR TO MEETING

Meet with your co-solicitor at least fifteen minutes prior to the visit to catch up on any last minute details and to review the script one more time. Be 100% clear about who will take responsibility for asking for a specific dollar amount or range.

WELCOME.

Thank them for having you. Ask how things are going for them at Langley. Let them chat about whatever is on their mind. Just take in their views, show interest, make notes as appropriate but avoid rebutting or directing. Establish a warm and friendly atmosphere. Be confident.

DISCUSS WHAT THE LANGLEY SCHOOL OFFERS ITS STUDENTS

Speak specifically about your involvement with the school and what has motivated you to become a donor. Again, your commitment is a major motivation.

ASK OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS AND LISTEN

Encourage/allow your prospect to open up and talk. Do not feel you have to keep the conversation flowing, listen to your prospect. Frequently you will hear just what you needed to know to successfully complete the solicitation.

ANTICIPATE OBJECTIONS, DEFLECTIONS

Be prepared for what your prospect might say. Also, realize you can not anticipate everything. If a prospect asks a question that deserves research or follow-up, ask for assistance from the school and get back to the prospect promptly. It is critical not to get involved with a discussion of problems and/or concerns. Listen for a brief time, avoid rebutting, and move the conversation to the purpose of your visit.

BE PREARED TO DISCUSS THE CAMPAIGN IN DETAIL

It is important to position this fund-raising effort as the next phase in a carefully considered master plan. Focus on the areas that are likely to interest them – the facility, the program, and/or endowment. If appropriate, make reference to the Betty Brown Faculty Development Endowment Fund. Describe what their gift will accomplish. If appropriate describe gift levels and recognition opportunities.

ASK FOR THE GIFT!

You have worked hard to get to this point in the solicitation process, do not miss the chance to ask. Ask for a specific dollar amount. Most donors will welcome your suggestion of an amount and are flattered, not upset, if asked for more than they are prepared to give. You might say, "would you consider a pledge in the range of \$_____, which would be \$_____ a year over the next three years." Keep sights high and emphasize that this is a capital campaign.

- If asking for more than you gave: use the scale of gifts to indicate which category you would like them to consider.
- If asking for the same level as your gift: ask them to join you at that amount.
- If asking for less than you gave: simply ask them to consider the specific level.

AFTER ASKING FOR THE GIFT, BE QUIET.

Silence can be the best motivation, and is often the hardest part of the solicitation. Do not talk past the closing. The more you say after the actual solicitation, the more excuses the prospect will find to stall.

CLOSE THE SOLICITATION

Complete the discussion. Get a commitment or a "no"---do not leave it unresolved or hanging. If the prospect wants to think it over, offer to come back, and schedule a return visit. Listen to the signals of resolution or indecision and act on them.

THE PLEDGE FORM

When a gift level has been determined, be sure to discuss the terms (pledge payment period, designation, etc.). Be very appreciative and make the donor feel comfortable with the level of their gift. NEVER show disappointment. Return the pledge form and note information that should be included in the donors file to Valerie.

ASK FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (if appropriate)

Depending on the tone of your meeting, it would be helpful to ask who else they might suggest soliciting and if they would be willing to help with future solicitations.

WRITE UP NOTES AND REPORT RESULTS

Report success, failure, progress, or problems to Valerie Embrey. Remember you are a part of a team and if you need help ask for it.

PICK UP THE PHONE AND GET STARTED!

It gets easier after the first call, so set an early deadline for making initial contacts. Chances for success are diminished by procrastination; indeed unique opportunities may be lost. So, get started as soon as possible.

GOOD LUCK



Raising funds

By Erma Bombeck
Universal Press Syndicate

CC → Susan
Pecore

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P. G.

Maybe you've noticed, but women do not raise money for charities the same way men do.

Men pick up the phone and say, "George, it's about this alumni drive. Can I put you down for \$5,000? Great. Just drop it in the mail. So, how's your golf game? Feel like another lesson Wednesday? [laugh, laugh] Put your girl on the line with my secretary and they'll set something up."

For the same amount of money, women will stage three luncheons, make 35 phone calls, slip a disk lugging three folding tables and 12 folding chairs in a station wagon, bake five dozen brownies, wash cars all day Saturday, grovel for hand-cream samples, beg for door prizes from local merchants, keep the house temperature down to fur-storage level so the centerpieces won't wilt, and write a personal check for a table of 10.

For some reason, women have always felt you should get more for your money than a canceled check, so they choreograph "events." They feel raising money should be a "fun" affair. Unlike men, they feel

that the more people involved, the more successful the event. This is how the 'ol' girl network evolved. Jeanette has a son who is a paper-boy so she is in charge of publicity. Nancy has a full dining room so she has room to handle the table favors. Barbara writes "real interesting letters" so she addresses the invitations. Helen missed the planning meeting so she is general chairman.

For some reason, men don't rely on the primitive custom of "pay-back." Women do. For every ticket they ever bought, the person who sold it is expected to buy a ticket back from them. For every favor that was ever granted, that person is expected to grant one in return. Some have memories that date back 15 or 20 years.

Women bring a certain personal touch to fund raising. They issue little name tags that tell you who you are. They print programs that list the names of underwriters, and they thank everyone, right down to the man who parked your car. They write thank-you notes and tell you how much money they made.

Are men or women more effective raising funds? Who knows? But for all the jokes women take about their "projects," you have to be impressed by the wife who comes home and, when her husband asks her, "So, what did you do today, Honey?" replies, "Oh, nothing much. I just built a museum for children, saved the symphony for another season, opened a shelter for battered women and children, funded a cancer research project, and fed an entire city of elderly people who are housebound. Drink?"

It works for them.

FUNDRAISING

Verbal tactics used by experienced fundraisers

▼
FYI: Edles' book, "Fundraising," is available from McGraw-Hill, 800-722-4726.

The difference between one word and another is the difference between lightning and a lightning bug, Mark Twain once said. Clearly, as a fundraiser the language you use makes all the difference when you're face to face with a prospect.

In his book "Fundraising," author L. Peter Edles discusses verbal strategies that get – and don't get – results.

// Put the donor in a decision-making position, then stop talking.
— Edles

Rarely, if ever, will a large contribution come to you effortlessly. You must ask for one. Unfortunately, finding the right words to frame your request isn't always easy, even for pros.

But there are fundamental principles that smart fundraisers understand, and that help them say the right things both when making an ask initially and when countering objections.

1. Making the ask

Here are some examples of wrong, and right, ways to ask for a major gift:

Wrong way: "...So, now that I've explained our need for a new wing to our building, what do you think you might do for us?"

Principle: *Don't hesitate to request a specific amount simply because you're afraid of shocking or insulting the donor. Letting donors choose how much to give allows them to make the smallest possible donation.*

Wrong way: "So everything I've said leads me to ask you to

consider a \$25,000 gift to help fund the new wing. I know that seems like a lot of money, but we're really counting on you. Ted Rose, the chairman, asked about you the other day..."

Principle: *Put the donor in a decision-making position, then stop talking. An effective ask requires a simple "yes" or "no" answer. Don't sidetrack the prospect because you think silence is risky or intimidating.*

Right way: "Jack, our project must be successful. I want you to consider making a gift of \$25,000 to fund the counseling room in the new youth wing extension." (There is silence. The fundraiser looks directly at the prospect, waiting for an answer).

Principle: *Make silence your ally. Granted, it can be difficult to hold your tongue. When there is tension, silence creates a void we often rush to fill. But smart fundraisers have trained themselves to let the prospect worry about filling the void. More often than you'd expect, they fill it with the magic word "Yes."*

2. Handling objections

Overcoming an objection is as much a natural part of the solicitation process as stating the case or asking for a donation. Good fundraisers anticipate objections and carefully think out responses to them.

Imagine the above prospect replies, "I told you over the phone that I'd give \$10,000" and offers a common objection: "I support other organizations and can't give any more to you

during this economy."

Wrong response: "Yes, I understand that you give to your college, but they have thousands of other donors. We're small and local, and we need your support more than your college does."

Principle: *Don't ever tell prospects to give to you at the expense of another. Donors have their own private motivations for giving, and implying that you're qualified to make decisions for a donor often provokes anger.*

Right response: "Jack, I understand how you feel, but you're a successful man. You've been that way for a long time. I'm confident you will deal with the problems of the economy. Believe me, I'm certainly not asking you to drop your other giving programs. I also support other causes. But funding the new youth wing extension is a one-time project, an investment for children of every age and background in our community. That's why I've made a special effort to make a larger gift than I might have otherwise and ask you to do the same."

Principle: *Empathize. Because of the language used, this prospect is unlikely to get defensive. Note how his objections were countered. Telling the prospect he's successful and will continue to be neutralizes his complaint about the economy. And pointing out that most philanthropists make multiple gifts skillfully defuses the objection that giving elsewhere precludes giving here.*

THE BASICS

How to Help Trustees Overcome Their Fear of Fund Raising

By HOLLY HALL

CHARITY EXECUTIVES often complain that their board members won't help raise money. One big reason for the problem: Many trustees fear rejection.

Non-profit officials would be surprised to discover how nervous it makes some board members to seek donations, says Burke Keegan, a fund-raising consultant in Corte Madera, Cal. She recalls a phone call from a man who had been appointed head of the board fund-raising committee at a prestigious San Francisco institution, which she declined to name. "Do you make private calls?" he asked sotto voce.

The man paid Ms. Keegan with his own money to visit his office for several confidential, one-on-one lessons in fund raising. "He was really scared," says Ms. Keegan. "He thought he was the only one who didn't know how to raise money."

To overcome such fears and to encourage board members to get more involved in raising money, fund raisers suggest these strategies:

Start small. Some non-profits find it best to pick out two or three trustees and ask them to solicit donations first. Other board members will want to follow their lead after they see that it is possible to succeed.

Jane Warner, former executive director of the St. Louis chapter of the Arthritis Foundation, chose two board members and asked them to help her play host at parties and other social activities for potential donors. Gradually, she began asking the board members to tell people at the events about their work with the arthritis group, but she did not push them to ask for money until later.

One of the board members, a physical therapist who simply talked to a potential donor about her work with the Arthritis Foundation, was thrilled when the person made a gift of \$500,000 soon afterwards, says Ms. Warner. It helped the physical therapist and her colleagues on the board understand that fund raising doesn't have to be difficult, she says.

"I told them that it wasn't like they had to go to lunch with a stranger and ask for \$50,000 over dessert," says Ms. Warner, now vice-president of chapter relations at the Arthritis Foundation headquarters in Atlanta. "When they understood that you meet with a person three, four, even ten times before asking, it became much easier."

To allay the concerns of board members, Ms. Warner told them to think of fund raising as a romance. "When you go on a first date, how often do you ask someone to marry you?" she says. "Not very often. When you

Continued on Page 32

How to Help Trustees Overcome Their Fear of Fund Raising

Continued from Page 28

do ask someone to marry you—or make a big donation—both parties are often interested in the same thing by that point."

Don't start with one-on-one solicitations. Participating in other kinds of fund-raising efforts may build board members' fund-raising abilities. The Fort Collins, Colo., affiliate of Court Appointed Special Advocates, a nationwide program that helps abused and neglected children deal with the legal system, asks its board members to make presentations about CASA to community groups instead of asking for money. Board members give 20-minute talks at meetings of local civic and church groups. Staff members approach the groups for a grant or donation at a later date.

The Fort Collins CASA has received a total of \$2,000 from a local men's club since a board member gave a presentation to the club two years ago.

Board members become more knowledgeable about CASA by making the presentations, and their appearances help them gain confidence, says Tedi Cox, executive director of the Fort Collins group.

Many charities ask their board members to write personal notes on direct-mail letters. Hospice Care of DC asks its board members to add a personal note to annual-fund appeals that go to people they know. Donations are 30 per cent higher, on average, for appeals that contain the notes, says Anne Towne, executive director of the hospice.

Allow staff members to set an example. Board members sometimes feel more comfortable if a charity's staff members have tested a fund-raising idea before getting trustees involved.

Ms. Warner of the Arthritis Foundation says she had to prove that she could get money from corporations before her board was willing to solicit business donations. The board members were reluctant to help raise money for a special event, which involved getting companies to put up \$5,000 each to sponsor a car in a "Mini Grand Prix" race. The race is a popular event at many Arthritis Foundation chapters, but the board members at Ms. Warner's chapter "didn't think this would work," she says.

But, she adds, "after I went out and found a number of companies to buy the cars, several board members influenced their own companies to buy them."

Develop written materials. Some board members find that taking materials, such as brochures and outlines, with them on fund-raising calls helps decrease their anxiety. This month, board members at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Chicago started using an outline to help them guide the conversation and answer questions during visits to potential donors.

The 14-page document, which can be left with the donor, summar-

izes the history and mission of the clubs, described the types of programs, and provides such statistics as the number and type of young people served.

they, and everyone who's seen the outline feels comfortable with it," says Robert Hassin, president of the group. "We had two board members use it already, and they called and said they felt more comfortable with it."

Set a minimum goal for trustees. Many non-profits have adopted written policies that require their board members to "give or get" a minimum amount of money each year. Regional chapters of the Arthritis Foundation, for example, require board members to donate or raise at least \$250 to \$3,000 annually, says Ms. Warner.

But such requirements "can be counterproductive," warns Fisher Howe, a Washington consultant who leads workshops for the National Center for Nonprofit Boards. A minimum requirement, he says, could keep some trustees from giving or raising more than the minimum. It can also, he says, "undermine the very spirit" of non-profit boards by making a gift of money, rather than service, the primary requirement for membership.

Put fund-raising plans in writing. Some non-profits ask their board members to submit documents that detail how much money they plan to raise during the year. At the beginning of each fiscal year at the Baltimore Opera Company, for example, trustees fill out a form listing how much they plan to give to the opera, the individuals and corporations that they expect to solicit during the year, and the amounts they will request from each. The practice grew out of the opera's policy that each trustee must donate or raise at least \$10,000.

After the forms are completed, "we ask them to meet with us for assistance," says Leslie Marqua, the opera's director of development. Some trustees who are inexperienced or afraid to ask for money, she notes, don't have enough potential donors on their lists or have no idea how much money to ask for.

Give feedback to board members. Baltimore Opera trustees receive quarterly "report cards" on their progress toward fund-raising goals, says Ms. Marqua. She uses each trustee's goal and list of prospective donors to write the reports, which list the trustees' prospects and any contributions to date, including in-kind gifts.

While time-consuming, the report cards help keep trustees focused on fund raising. "It's easy with 31 trustees for individual solicitations to fall through the cracks," Ms. Marqua says. "I know they read the report cards because with everything they think is not right, I hear about it immediately."

Encourage competition. In March, a trustee of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Chicago challenged his colleagues on the board by promising to donate \$1 for every \$4 they raised from corporations by June 30. The goal is to raise \$700,000 from area companies.

Already, "we've seen more activity" among board members, says Mr. Hassin, the group's president. "Board members are coming in and identifying corporations

they want to solicit. Normally, staff has to go to the board."

Abolish board fund-raising committees. Some fund-raising consultants say that it is a bad idea to have a standing fund-raising committee on the board. They say it may perpetuate some board members' fear of fund raising because they do not have to ask for money unless they are on the committee.

"If you have a fund-raising committee and run out of money, everyone blames the committee, when in fact it is everyone's job to raise money," says Ms. Keegan, the California-based consultant.

Other consultants say that development committees work well, but only when they help to get all board members in the activity of raising money.

Ask one board member to oversee fund raising. Rather than giving all of the responsibility for fund raising to a committee or one or two people on the board, some charity officials recommend electing a board fund-raising chairman each year. That person then monitors and coordinates the money-raising activities of all the other board members.

The board of Battered Women's Alternatives in Concord, Cal., is dropping its long-standing "resource development committee" in favor of a fund-raising chairman and a written policy that requires all board members to participate in fund raising, says Rollie Mullen, the executive director. The fund-raising chairman will make sure that other board members are adhering to the policy, she says. And with a limited term, that person will not get burned out on fund-raising duties.

Get advice from consultants. Some non-profits pay a fund-raising consultant to help them train board members to raise money. While consultants' fees can end up

costing a charity many thousand of dollars, brief meetings with consultant may be affordable for smaller groups.

Board members from the Lawdale Community School, a private school that serves poor kids in Chicago, got some valuable pointers just two hours with a consultant Marce Bullock, a fund-raising consultant with Alford, Ver Schave & Associates in Chicago, help steer board members away from their plan to have a golf tournament to raise money.

"Marce pointed out that these are very labor-intensive," says Bill Cargill, president of the board. She also pointed out that the school did not have a wealthy constituency an often necessary ingredient for events featuring upscale sports like golf.

Send board members to workshops. Some management-assistance and other groups offer low cost workshops to improve the fund-raising abilities of non-profit board members. Among them:

► The National Center for Nonprofit Boards in Washington offer "Board and Staff: the Fund-Raising Partnership," a four-hour workshop, in various cities. The cost is \$90 for members of the center and \$120 for non-members. Some discounts are available. For more information, contact the center at 2000 L Street, N.W., Washington 20036-4907; (202) 452-6262.

► A workshop called "Board and Fund Raising" is offered regularly by the Support Centers of America, which has facilities in 11 different cities. The cost varies from \$45 to \$90 per person, depending on the size of the charity's annual budget. For more information on the workshop and the nearest Support Center, contact Support Centers of America, 2001 C Street, N.W., Washington 20036-5955; (202) 296-3900.

*Mission-driven,
 continual major gift programs
 can help institutions
 avoid the peaks and valleys of
 constant campaigning*

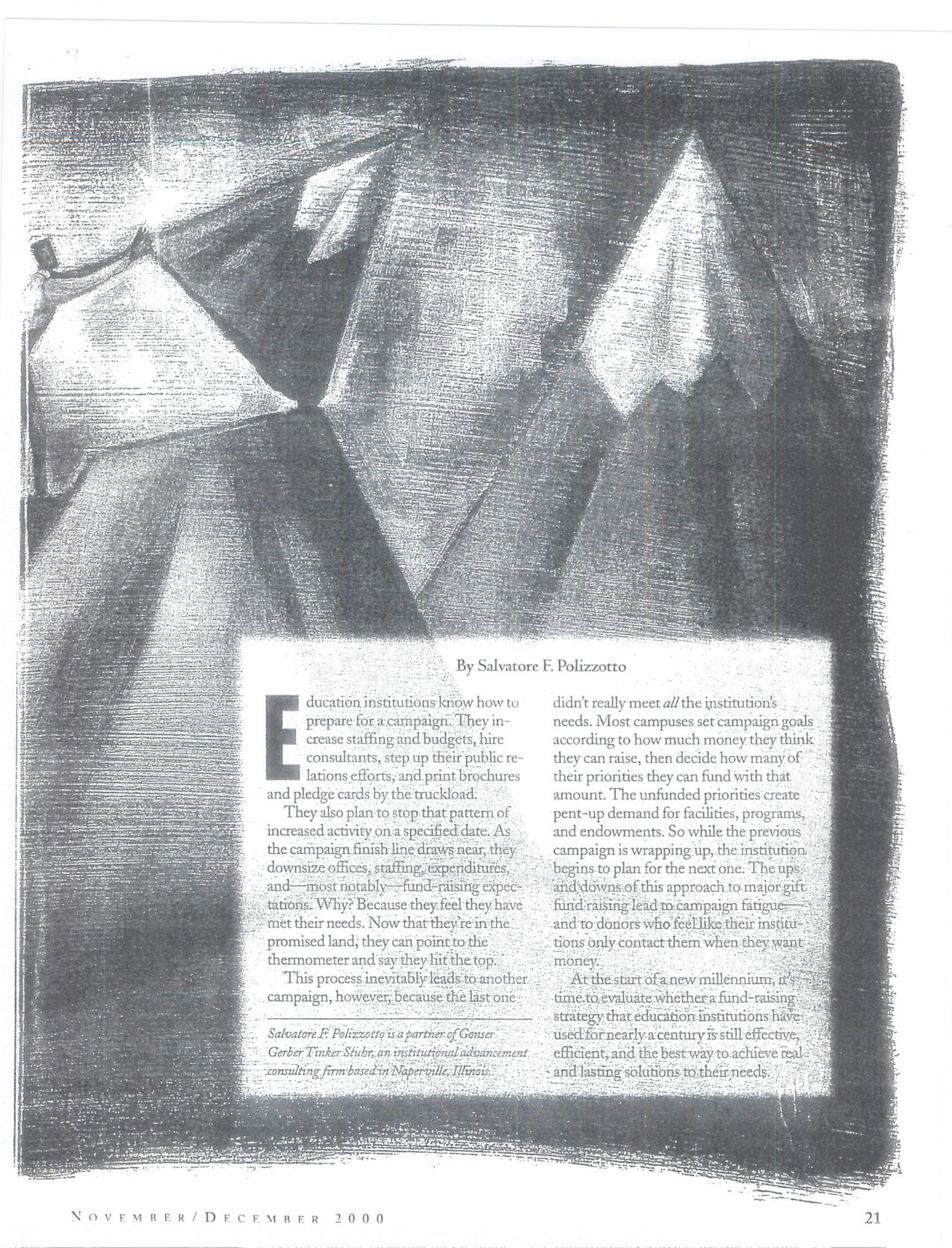
A STEADY ASCENT

FUND RAISING

IBT

John Dunning, Jr.

John
 Dunning
 Jr.
 Thank
 you
 so
 much



By Salvatore F. Polizzotto

Education institutions know how to prepare for a campaign. They increase staffing and budgets, hire consultants, step up their public relations efforts, and print brochures and pledge cards by the truckload.

They also plan to stop that pattern of increased activity on a specified date. As the campaign finish line draws near, they downsize offices, staffing, expenditures, and—most notably—fund-raising expectations. Why? Because they feel they have met their needs. Now that they're in the promised land, they can point to the thermometer and say they hit the top.

This process inevitably leads to another campaign, however, because the last one

didn't really meet *all* the institution's needs. Most campuses set campaign goals according to how much money they think they can raise, then decide how many of their priorities they can fund with that amount. The unfunded priorities create pent-up demand for facilities, programs, and endowments. So while the previous campaign is wrapping up, the institution begins to plan for the next one. The ups and downs of this approach to major gift fund-raising lead to campaign fatigue—and to donors who feel like their institutions only contact them when they want money.

At the start of a new millennium, it's time to evaluate whether a fund-raising strategy that education institutions have used for nearly a century is still effective, efficient, and the best way to achieve real and lasting solutions to their needs.

Salvatore F. Polizzotto is a partner of Gonsler Gerber Tinker Stubb, an institutional advancement consulting firm based in Naperville, Illinois.

THE PROBLEMS WITH CAMPAIGNS

To some extent, institutions conduct campaigns because that's what they've always done. They're like familiar habits that campuses find difficult to break. But institutions must escape from this hegemony because there are serious shortcomings in how they use campaigns:

They equate meeting short-term needs with success. Too often, an institution launches a campaign when its leadership voices a need for more money—not to implement a mission or vision, but to address the desire for more buildings or a larger endowment.

These campaigns are like oases in the

desert: They quench your thirst for the time being, but wandering from oasis to oasis won't get you out of the desert.

Meeting these short-term needs is not the same as creating a secure future. And like an oasis, a campaign may be a mirage hiding the real needs of the institution. This focus on instant gratification and the failure to continuously fund strategic initiatives are sure signs of an immature development operation.

Feasibility studies lead campuses to aim low. Most campaign consultants espouse the absolute necessity of feasibility studies for determining the campaign goal. But fund-raising consultant and

author James Lord has written a monograph about how feasibility studies actually limit campuses' fund-raising potential. (For a copy of the monograph, see "Fund Raising In Short" on page 24.)

Lord writes that consultants often suggest a campaign goal based on what they think the campus can raise within a two- to four-year period—even though a campaign can be nearly twice that long. This lowered expectation will result in lower fund-raising returns. Also, the amount an institution can raise is not necessarily the same as what it *needs* to address its strategic plan. An institution driven by its mission and vision should

TABLE 1: DEVELOPMENT CASH FLOW PROJECTION FOR EIGHT YEARS AND RELATED PROJECTIONS

7 percent inflation based upon the average of 1994, 1995, and 1996 gift receipts

Gift Source	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	Cumulative
Alumni	\$340,723	\$364,573	\$1,410,093	\$1,417,400	\$1,696,618	\$1,977,881	\$2,261,333	\$2,547,126	\$2,835,425	\$3,126,405	\$17,707,577
Faculty/Staff	55,218	59,084	113,219	142,645	172,380	187,447	202,868	218,669	234,875	251,517	1,637,922
Trustees	237,655	254,291	1,272,091	1,871,138	2,061,517	2,333,323	2,606,656	3,381,622	3,908,336	4,436,919	22,363,546
Friends	293,072	1,313,587	1,335,538	1,939,025	2,134,157	2,411,048	2,689,822	3,470,609	4,253,552	4,538,800	24,379,210
Businesses	282,778	302,572	423,753	596,415	770,664	936,611	1,401,374	1,604,080	1,735,865	2,019,876	10,073,986
Foundations	73,021	78,132	193,602	589,454	1,295,716	2,402,416	3,209,585	2,287,256	2,185,464	2,934,246	15,248,892
Other 1	21,844	23,373	25,009	41,759	78,633	80,637	85,781	85,076	87,531	90,159	619,802
Other 2	79,205	84,750	90,682	97,030	103,822	111,090	118,866	127,186	136,090	145,616	1,094,332
Total	1,383,516	2,480,362	4,593,987	6,694,866	8,313,507	10,440,453	12,576,285	13,712,624	15,377,138	17,543,538	93,125,276
Projected Cost of New Initiatives		1,000,000	3,000,000	5,000,000	6,500,000	8,500,000	10,500,000	11,500,000	13,000,000	15,000,000	

TABLE 2: HISTORICAL GIVING ANALYSIS (GIFTS OF 100,000+)

Gift Source	1991/92	1992/93	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00	YTD	Total
Donor 1	\$85,000	\$41,060	\$62,070	\$66,075	\$54,354	\$47,000	\$75,050	\$154,174	\$34,950	\$44,800	\$664,530
Donor 2	10,000	205,000	8,100	30,000	70,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	1,000	50,100	599,200
Donor 3	0	0	100,000	100,000	1,100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	1,800,000
Donor 4	0	0	0	0	0	0	50,000	100,000	15,000	50,000	215,000
Donor 5	7,265	5,800	3,843	8,150	7,275	11,293	225	144,109	12,020	10,012	209,990
Donor 6	5,667	41,750	25,250	26,800	51,285	35,100	65,100	111,000	68,500	44,000	474,250
Donor 7	1,000	133,488	1,000	0	12,000	1,000	1,100	1,000	1,000	1,000	152,588
Donor 8	67,573	110,625	71,250	78,250	124,625	72,500	74,125	80,375	54,675	51,000	785,125
Donor 9	0	0	0	25,000	40,000	35,000	0	100,000	2,000	0	202,000
Total \$ Given	176,505	537,723	271,313	334,275	1,459,540	376,893	440,600	865,658	289,345	350,912	5,102,760
Total Donors	6	6	7	8	8	8	9	9	9	9	93,125,276
Total Donors Who Gave	6	6	7	7	8	8	8	9	9	8	93,125,276
Total Donors Lapsed	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	93,125,276
Total Donors New	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	93,125,276

not mitigate its goals because the tool it chooses to meet them will not be able to do so.

When the campaign ends, campuses stop their push for major gifts. Because a campaign has a specified goal and timeline, when the campus reaches one or the other, it stops. Most institutions find no compelling need to continue raising major gifts beyond the campaign—or even beyond the major gifts phase of the campaign. But the downsized development program that remains is often not capable of funding unmet priorities.

A related problem is that campuses now frequently meet their fund-raising goals well before the scheduled campaign end date. When they do, the leadership must decide whether to continue the campaign with an increased goal or declare it complete. Obviously, most continue. But by doing so, they bring into question the entire purpose of setting a goal—especially through the use of a feasibility study.

If the campaign goal is tied to a set of tasks and not a vision, the campus should stop and go on to something else when it accomplishes those tasks—perhaps another campaign. On the other hand, if your institution's vision requires a continual stream of major gifts, why would you stop raising them just because you reach an arbitrary end date? Why not intend from the very beginning to continue well past what the campaign requires?

I'm not advocating the total abolition of campaigns. When used properly—to meet a defined need or reposition a development office for launching an ongoing major gifts program—they are a useful tool. But they are not a substitute for a continual, mission-based program of major gifts fund raising.

A NEW APPROACH

You may be asking yourself: If the way my institution has raised money in the past is wrong, what must we do now? What paradigm can dramatically shift our position for the better? And how can I convince my campus CEO, board, and development staff to take ownership of this idea?

Relax. For most institutions, it's not a question of right or wrong, just a new approach to your existing work in identifying, cultivating, and soliciting donors.

For example, one reason many campuses

rely on campaigns is that they are measurable. Typically, people like their work to have a defined beginning and end. This is driven by the human need to set goals, define tasks, and measure our success against the successes of others. To move away from the campaign paradigm, however, campuses must learn to measure their success by their ability to achieve their visions and missions—not by how much they raised in comparison to their peer institutions.

Another common rationale for intermittent campaigns is that they give donors' wallets "time to heal" by spacing out major-gift asks. But successful principal gift fund raisers understand that the institution's campaign timing and the donor's philanthropic timing don't always coincide. An institution that only looks for big gifts during a campaign will miss quite a few. An ongoing major gifts effort is more likely to be attuned to when its donors are ready to give. In addition, the best development efforts are constantly expanding their pool of major gift prospects, thus they are not soliciting the same people over and over.

MAKING A FRESH START

The three keys to long-term fund-raising success are focusing on mission and vision, not just the demands of the day; creating a continuous program of communication, involvement, and relationship-building with key donors; and keeping a good thing going.

You can start by moving your institution away from the start/stop madness of campaigns and toward a mature development program whose principal direction is meeting institutional strategic plans through the permanent structure of an ongoing major gifts effort.

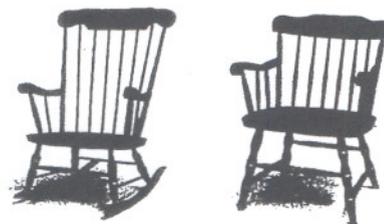
1. Create a development mission based on the institutional vision. Only a mission-driven development effort can build a shared vision with its constituents and engage past, current, and yet-to-be-discovered major gift prospects in that vision. In fact, consultant Tom Gonser defines development as "a concerted effort to analyze an institution's philosophy, formulate its mission, crystallize its objectives, project them into the future, and then take the necessary steps to realize them."

2. Set objectives based on the needs of the strategic plan. Start by projecting

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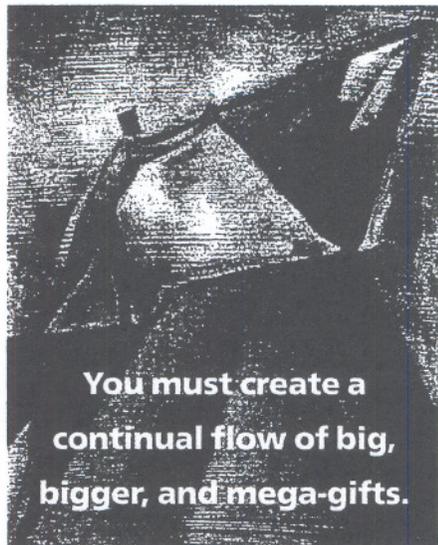
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the dollar amounts the institution will need to meet its objectives. Table 1 on page 22 shows how an institution might predict typical growth in its fund-raising returns and compare that to the amount of funding it needs to meet its strategic initiatives—the literal bottom line of the table. Don't just look at the number of gifts you'll need in the next two or three years, but at what kind of long-term growth in major giving will sustain the institution well into the future.



Second, analyze the institution's donor base to determine the number of gifts it typically receives at each of various giving levels and whether these gifts are from new, continuing, or lapsed donors. Table 2 on page 22 shows the analysis of donors at the \$100,000+ level for nine years.

Finally, put the calculations from the two tables together to project the number and size of major gifts the institution will need to raise for the next decade or so to meet its needs—and whether you have donors lined up who can fulfill those needs.

The numbers you come up with may look daunting, but if you are to change the fund-raising paradigm for your institution, you must create a continual flow of big, bigger, and mega-gifts.

3. Achieve the institution's vision through continuous fund raising. There is no easy way to construct an ongoing major gifts program. You will need to create committees and programs that get donors, board members, and key volunteers involved and keep them involved continuously, not just when you need money. This effort will almost always

require increased staffing and budgeting, not to mention a strong desire to succeed.

4. Look beyond the alumni base for potential friends and donors. The institution will always need to identify and cultivate new prospects because not every donor will give every year. Use the rule of threes to set cultivation goals: Assume that only one of every three potential donors will be a viable prospect and only one of three prospects you solicit will make a gift. Thus the institution may need to identify as many as nine new prospects for each successful solicitation.

Most fund-raising campaigns focus on the existing donor base, soliciting bigger gifts primarily from current donors. A continual major gift fund-raising program requires an *ideological* base of support, however, not just a base of constituents the institution has served.

While alumni will always be a great source of support, institutions should look for new prospects through the social and business networks of their board members, major donors, and influential friends. Likely prospects include entrepreneurial business owners or philanthropists interested in your institution's mission or in the project requiring support. Invariably, these people are leaders in their communities and want to accomplish a great deal with their altruism. They don't just give away money—they see philanthropy as a tool to accomplish mutual goals.

5. Measure your success by how well you meet your objectives. Ignore the campaign hype and publicity of other institutions. Evaluate your development program by how well it's meeting the objectives and goals you have set. That will tell you if you're really advancing the institution.

Some institutions will say they can't conduct a continual major gifts program because they don't have wealthy alumni or the money to spend on development. What they probably lack is the vision, the need, and the desire to set and meet internal expectations.

Some believe the future for their institutions will be rosier if they just raise more money. That is a fallacy. The future of those we serve is the real issue at hand. Build your development program to address their needs, not your own. Look into the eyes of your students to determine the path you will follow. **C**

FUND RAISING IN SHORT

Get your own copy.

You might be weeping if you don't pick up *Finders Keepers: Lessons I've Learned About Dynamic Fund Raising* by Jerold Panas. In his book, this longtime fund raiser debunks established but ineffective fund-raising rules and offers a behind-the-scenes look at the strategies and skills that have led to his success. Each chapter contains instructive anecdotes, true case histories and interviews, and quick-read chapter summaries. To order this 280-page hardcover for \$39.95 plus shipping, call (800) 225-3775 or go to www.bonus-books.com.

Here we grow again.

Use your president's report to prepare constituents for the challenge of a campaign. Ottawa University's 1997-98 report put its upcoming campaign in a historical perspective by showing how the campus had grown over the years. It featured photos and architectural sketches of past campus construction projects as well as captions that emphasized how alumni support was a crucial part of getting the job done. The publication received rave reviews—and reminded everyone that campaigns are part of a campus's growth process.

Selling yourself short.

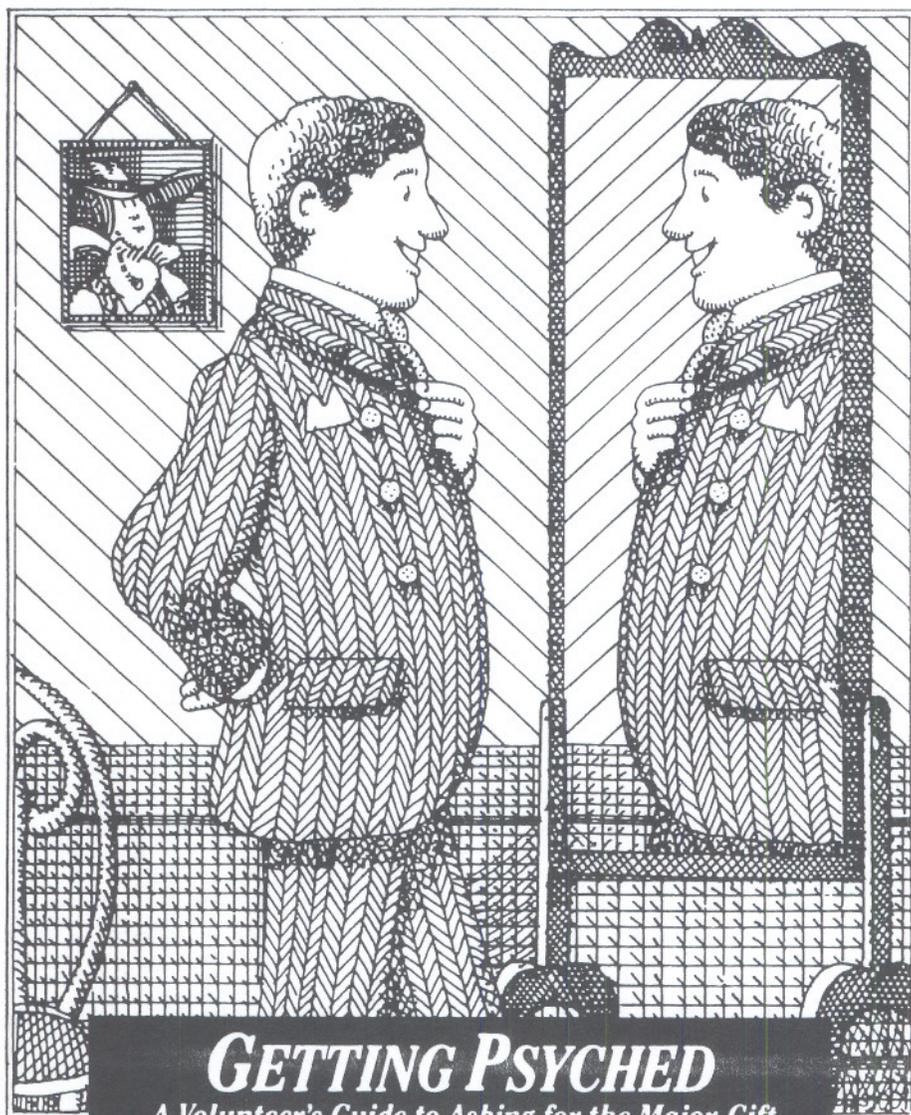
According to consultant James Gregory Lord, that's exactly what you could be doing by conducting a feasibility study to gauge your campus's fund-raising capabilities. In his 14-page monograph "How a Feasibility Study Can Actually Limit Your Potential," Lord cautions against curtailing donors' sights by proposing project price tags and relying on their sometimes deceptively cautious responses during interviews. For more on Lord's warnings—and his proposed alternatives—request his paper by contacting him at quest@lord.org or (216) 831-8511.

It's a piece of cake.

This might not be your experience when asking for major gifts now, but it soon could be. Just attend the CASE conference *Soliciting Major Gifts: Making the Ask*, February 7-9 in Miami Beach, FL, for techniques and advice on how to focus on your most promising prospects, develop written cultivation and solicitation strategies, anticipate and handle objections, and more. Registration is \$565 for CASE members, \$850 for nonmembers. For details, call (202) 328-CASE or go to www.case.org/training.

THE ART OF ASKING

A CASE CURRENTS reprint



Some volunteers enjoy asking others for money. This piece is not for them. This is for the great majority of us who find the task discomfiting.

As in most human activities, a great part of your success in solicitation rests upon the attitude with which you approach the enterprise. In approaching a prospect for a gift, nothing has a more positive effect on a solicitor than feeling comfortable. And nothing brings that comfortable feeling more quickly than a strong belief in the project. Faith in the project frees you to ask for the gift, because it means you're not asking for yourself. You're asking on behalf of a cause that is greater than you are. That is a good feeling.

Here are some tips that can help you approach your task in greater comfort.

1. *Believe in yourself.* You were chosen to make a particular contact because you are the best person to do the job. Your institution's staff made that determination on the basis of your personal relationship to the potential donor, the interests you have in common with that person, your geographic proximity to him or her, or other criteria that establish a common bond.

You were chosen because of your personality, leadership abilities, interests, and prestige. Any or all of these elements can contribute to successful solicitation efforts.

2. *Believe in the project.* When you approach a prospect for a gift, nothing will give you more comfort than having

W. Noel Johnston is a partner with the firm Ross, Johnston & Kersting, Inc. Located in Durham, North Carolina, the firm provides fund-raising counsel to nonprofit organizations.

It All Comes Down To . . . Asking For Money!

“The Eleven Suggestions”

Striking fear in the hearts of many, causing the adrenalin to flow in others, asking for money properly is the key to fund raising. Different techniques work for different people, but the following standard rules will increase your chances for success. Since the title “The Ten Commandments” was already taken, we call these “The Eleven Suggestions.”

1. Thou Shalt Know The Case. You will have a hard time convincing others to give their money away unless you know the facts and figures about your cause. Do your homework!

2. Thou Shalt Make Thine Own Pledge First. It's a fact – you'll do better soliciting gifts if you have first made you own commitment.

3. Thou Shalt Ask For Gifts In Person – Eyeball To Eyeball – As Much As Possible. Nothing works as well as a face-to-face visit with your prospect.

4. Thou Shalt Ask For A Specific Amount. This is a tough one. In order to suggest an amount or range, it's a good idea to have prospect rating information or advice about what might be appropriate. You can always negotiate down if you've suggested an amount too high, but you cannot negotiate up.

5. Thou Shalt Ask Your Best Prospect First. If your first calls are successful, the later ones will be much easier.

6. Thou Shalt Ask. Seems obvious, doesn't it? But many solicitations go awry because the volunteer never says those magic words, “Will you consider a gift of \$ _____ to help?” or some variation.

7. Thou Shalt Listen – Carefully! Pay attention to what your prospect says before and after you ask. Be sensitive.

8. Thou Shalt Overcome Objections Carefully and Positively. No need to argue – but you have a chance to correct misinformation between the prospect and your organization. Try to bring the conversation back to the case – then ask again.

9. Thou Shalt Not Leave A Pledge Card But Shall Arrange A Return Visit If Needed. It is better to complete the transaction while you and your prospect are together.

10. Thou Shalt Communicate With Staff Or Volunteers. You're five for five and have raised \$100,000. Great! Be sure to finish your job by reporting your results to your chairperson or the appropriate staff contact.

11. Thou Shalt Say Thank You! Of course!

A final suggestion: have fun!

PERSONAL GIFT SOLICITATION SKILLS

The seven basic skills necessary to solicit leadership gifts are:

1. The Opening
2. Questioning
3. Listening
4. Presenting
5. Overcoming Objections
6. Asking for the Gift
7. Finalizing the Gift

1. THE OPENING

- Your opening remarks set the stage for the call
- Talk with prospect, not to prospect
- Involve prospects – get them to talk about themselves
- Draw prospect out; help bring them into a meaningful relationship with Langley

2. QUESTIONING

- You have prospect's attention – now keep their attention and deepen their involvement
- Use questions because you:
 - ⇒ Get more information
 - ⇒ Show you are interested
 - ⇒ Shift pressure to the prospect
 - ⇒ Keep from "selling"
 - ⇒ Discover donor's needs
 - ⇒ Questions help you get to know prospects: "What do you think of the plans?"
- "Let me tell you more about what we're doing. . ."
- Lead to packet presentation

3. LISTENING

- Do more listening than talking
- Listen with purpose; give feedback to prospect
- Be empathetic in your listening
- Actively listen and participate: "Let me be sure I have understood you correctly." "So you are saying. . ."
- Your prospect will invest in the solution if they think you've understood their position
Listen with your eyes as well as your ears – watch prospect's body language

4. PRESENTING

- Read your information thoroughly before your visit
- Emphasize Langley's benefits and advantages rather than operations and problems

- Present your Case for the Campaign for Langley's Future
- Use phrases such as:
 - ⇒ I believe
 - ⇒ I support

5. ASKING

- Ask for the Capital gift in addition to the Annual – address any questions
- Explain that pledges can be spread over 3-5 years
- Don't be afraid to negotiate
- Keep in mind that many prospects may like additional time to think about the options
- Set a date (e.g., next Thursday evening) and time to call the prospect back
- Do not leave a *Letter of Intent*

6. OVERCOMING OBJECTIONS

- Realize an objection is not an attack, but a question
- Always address the objection and respond: "I can understand why you would have that concern and am pleased to say that the Board has addressed that situation."
- Never let the objection lead to an argument – respond with facts and never make excuses
- Distinguish an objection from a condition: "I am committed but I just pledged \$500,000 to my college. . . ."
 - ⇒ Listen for indications that a planned gift may be an attractive option for the prospect
 - ⇒ Discuss alternative designations (i.e., endowment vs. building) if donor shows interest in those areas
- Use statements such as:
 - ⇒ That seems to be important to you
 - ⇒ You are probably right about that
 - ⇒ That is a good question
 - ⇒ That is a good point
 - ⇒ Thank you for sharing your concerns with me

7. FINALIZING THE GIFT

- If commitment is made on initial gift call, fill in the *Letter of Intent* and have the donor sign. Return it to the Development Office.
- If a follow-up telephone call is necessary, try to close the gift at the time of the call, write the gift amount on the *Letter of Intent* and mail to the donor for signature together with your cover thank you note and a stamped return envelope addressed to the Development Office at Langley School.
- The School will also send all donors gracious acknowledgment of gifts and pledges.
- If you have any questions or need help, call Karen Thompson in the Development Office (703/848-2785).

A BRIEF GUIDE TO CONDUCTING A SUCCESSFUL
CULTIVATION CALL

Cultivation emphasizes the building of genuine relationships with donors. Your visit to meet with a donor will be a success if you remember to:

- * Be Yourself
- * Be Enthusiastic
- * Declare Your Purpose

When you make the appointment to meet with the donor:

- * Say that you are calling to thank them for their past support and to ask for their continued support OR
- * Say that you are calling to acquaint them with the important community services of the Alzheimer's Association of SE Wisconsin and talk about how they can assist

When you make the call:

- * Know the services offered by the SE Wisconsin Chapter
- * Don't expect to answer every question. "I don't know, but let me find out. I would be very interested in knowing that as well."

After your meeting:

- * Follow up with a personal thank you, preferably handwritten
- * Fill out the attached Call Report and return to:

Kathryn Hedgepeth
Fund Development Director
Alzheimer's Association of SE Wisconsin
1300 S. Layton Blvd.
Milwaukee 53215

A Guide to Conducting an Effective Cultivation Call (2)

AT THE MEETING

There are many possible ways to conduct a cultivation meeting and each individual session should reflect the Alzheimer's Association of SE Wisconsin, the members of the cultivation team and the uniqueness of the prospect. Typical steps in a cultivation meeting include:

Opening Introduce everyone, if necessary. Thank the individual(s) for the opportunity to meet. If you have sent materials prior to the meeting, ask if they were received. Discuss the donor's familiarity and relationship with our Chapter. Probe areas of common interest. Develop rapport.

Presentation Provide a brief background on the Chapter and how you became involved. If you are a Board member, talk about your role. Focus on the Chapter's needs and its future. Stress the more emotional and compelling components of the need but also present the facts. Talk about why the Alzheimer's Association of SE Wisconsin is the best place to meet the needs you've described. Include as much of your own personal experience as possible.

The video, "Remember," is available if you would like to use it.

Give the donor an opportunity to respond to the presentation with questions and comments. Respond to interests, concerns. Reinforce positive comments the donor has made. If you are unable to answer a particular question or objection, let the donor know that you will check and get back to her/him.

Closure Summarize the status of the meeting. Suggest and agree on an appropriate next step - a meeting with program staff, or another appropriate person; a visit to the Chapter office, etc. Close the meeting and thank the donor for his or her time.

Follow up Immediately after the meeting, fill out and return the Call Report form. Make notes on any requests or interesting information that may enhance our knowledge of the prospect or someone else mentioned during the meeting.

If possible, identify areas where ties between the SE Wisconsin Chapter and the donor need to be strengthened. Estimate how much future involvement and cultivation will be required before the donor is asked to support a particular program or join the Founders' Club or Good Company.

Send thank you.

~~_____~~
→ 88 10 11
Lino (Kison)

TECHNIQUES FOR PERSONAL SOLICITATION

- I. Preparation
 - A. Review Campaign **materials** and Personal Gift Solicitation Skills handout
 - B. Review prospect's biographical **data**
 - C. When working as a **team**: orchestrate the call with your teammate; determine beforehand which person will do the ask
 - D. Make **appointment** to visit prospect; inform Leadership Gifts Chairs of appointment date
 - E. Review **strategy** with your Leadership Gifts Chairs or Development Director Karen Thompson if you have any questions

- II. During the Solicitation
 - A. State your **own feelings** of support and interest in the Capital Campaign
 - B. Use Capital Campaign **literature**, scale of gifts
 - C. Ask about donor's **interests**
 - D. Ask if there are any **questions**
 - E. **Listen**
 - F. Talk about need for "**stretch**" gifts at top giving levels
 - G. **Ask** for gift, reminding them that it may be pledged over 3-5 years
 - H. **Pause** after the ask: it's awkward, but necessary -- allow prospect time to respond
 - I. Overcoming **Objections** (see Personal Gift Solicitation Handout)
 - J. **Closing** gift - use *The Letter of Intended Support* if prospect is ready to commit - otherwise do not leave it
 - K. If donor does not commit, set a **date and time for a telephone call**: "When would be a good time for me to call you?" Offer a second visit
 - L. Get **specific**: "Shall we settle on next Friday? Is the evening a good time for you?"
 - M. Express **gratitude** for their time and for any commitment

- III. **Debrief** with your Leadership Gifts Chairs
 - A. Immediately following contacts: make notes that can jog your memory later or provide **specific information** for background and future visits
 - B. Fill out **Tracking Form weekly** and fax directly to Leadership Gifts Chairs
 - C. Once commitment obtained: Send donor's **Letter of Intended Support** to **Karen Thompson** as soon as possible or notify her that you have finalized the pledge and the donor will be mailing in the *Letter of Intent*

- IV. Follow-up
 - A. Write **thank you** to follow up once donor commits; the school will send official thank you; Head of School will personally call major donors
 - B. Campaign Chairs and Development Office will periodically **update** you on status of prospect's pledge

31 May 94
RAD

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE BOARD MEMBER'S GUIDE TO FUND RAISING

Betty Brown loaned me a book of the above title by Fisher Howe (Jossey-Bass Inc., Publishers, San Francisco, 1991). While I commend it to all Langley Board members (and the Annual Fund chair), if you lack the time, here is a quick summary:

- All board members have *fiduciary* (protecting the "public" interest), *programmatic* (e.g., mission definition, participation in budgeting), and *financial* (assuring the viability of the school) responsibilities. "...[F]und raising is often the most vital and inescapable [financial responsibility].. The buck starts and stops with the board."
- "Boards of trustees of nonprofit organizations ... must stay clear of encroaching on management responsibilities. ...[H]owever, the fund-raising responsibility calls for more direct personal involvement and participation in the operations than in any of [the board's] other responsibilities.
- "As the board is ultimately responsible, it must oversee the fund-raising effort."
- A development office, and a development committee of the board, are useful organizations to handle some of the fund-raising tasks, but the board cannot turn its responsibility over to others. The board "... is responsible for assuring that adequate funds are raised for the organization."
- The six principles of philanthropic giving:
 1. *People give money because they want to.*
 2. *People don't give unless they are asked.* (A corollary: *People do not make large donations unless they are asked to consider large donations.*)
 3. *People give money to people.* "The one quality more than all others a contributor looks for in the person asking is *respect*: Does the prospect respect the asker?"
 4. *People give money to opportunities, not to needs.* "The chance to help an institution ... meet a challenge, is more appealing than to help make up a shortage...."
 5. *People give to success, not to distress.* "Everyone wants to help someone who is doing something positive, who is achieving."
 6. *People give money to make a change for the good.* "... people give because an organization is doing something worthwhile, is making a change for the good in other people's lives."
- Some characteristics of giving people and successful askers:
 - Ego is deeply involved in all giving; ego must be respected and even played upon by the asker.
 - Because people tend to give emotionally rather than rationally, they need to be offered hopes and visions.

- Though the impulse to give is usually spontaneous, ... the actual decision to make a gift is rarely made on a first asking.

- Few first gifts are major; wise askers gratefully nurture a small gift into a later big one.

- When a donor of a major gift denies interest in recognition, check it out: Frequently donors do want ... multiple expressions of appreciation. Reconfirm any requests for anonymity.

- Though tax advantages can be critically important to how a gift is made, ... only in the case of planned giving and estate planning are tax advantages a central consideration.

- Many major donors are either on the board or active participants in the institution's programs; recruiting donor prospects into the organization is therefore central to securing future major gifts.

- It is well to assume that husbands and wives share in gift-making decisions; involve couples in both the cultivation and the asking.

- The best person to ask for a gift is not necessarily the first one to volunteer nor a close friend of the prospect. Although such people may be of great help in the approach, the best person to do the asking is the one known to be most highly respected by the donor.

• "Trustees should hold two things in mind in addressing their responsibility for raising money: ...recognize ... that asking for money is not to be seen as hurtful and unpleasant. ... [and] boards must be ever aware of the importance of direct, interpersonal relationships in all giving and asking."

• Successful fundraising is based on a mission statement, a strategic plan, and a case as to why the fundraising is needed for the school. The case lays out the why, what, how, and who of the fundraising. The board must be actively involved in the preparation of all three items.

• Capital fundraising is the board's special responsibility. "Capital gifts can be thought of as at least ten times annual gifts. People give in annual contributions ... from their *current income*. They give to capital funds from their *personal capital*. ...from inherited money, accumulated wealth ..., or from disposable income ... from the sale of personal property marked by unusual capital gains."

• A successful capital campaign includes ..."a clear analysis of the *funding needs*, a compelling *case*, a realistic judgment of the *potential* to raise such capital funds, an objective evaluation of the *readiness* of the organization to mount such a large undertaking, and a comprehensive *plan* for proceeding."

• "Trustees have to understand and make a firm commitment to the [planned giving] program, recognizing as they do so that many years may pass before substantial income is received. Starting such a program is making a long-term investment in the organization. Ideally, members of the board will create their own planned gifts in advance of announcing the program...."

• "Past donors are the best prospects for further contributions. The habit of giving brings strong loyalty, but it needs constant nourishment. Major donors deserve and demand constant special treatment. If you deny them such treatment, you remove their primary

incentives for giving. Major donors should be provided with a ... communications program, emphasizing personal recognition of their contributions.... The feeling of being an insider, of having personal contact with organization leaders, provides powerful psychological satisfaction.' Board members can be especially effective in expressing appreciation for donations by regularly sending notes to donors, making known as a trustee that they are aware of the gift -- especially if they themselves made the solicitation."

- "Because cultivation is such a personal matter, and because it involves the donors and prospective donors of major gifts, board members must do the work."
- "Asking causes different torments for different people. '[P]reying on friends:'.Do you see your friends as preying on you when they request donations? '[U]nwilling to risk asking for a contribution for fear of being turned down:' An asker will be positive, will try hard to get a gift, but must be ready for a no. '[P]rocrastination:' Trustees must deal with it openly. Built-in deadlines, firm schedules, reporting sessions, and follow-up phone calls are all devices to combat the human tendency to put off the asking."

The book contains many other fine points regarding boards' roles in oversight of development-related activities in the school, as guardians of ethical behavior in fund-raising, and in other fund-raising-related activities. It also offers scenarios for soliciting funds for capital campaigns and how to prepare and execute the solicitation.

ASKOPHOBIA

A Guide for Anxious Fund-raising Volunteers

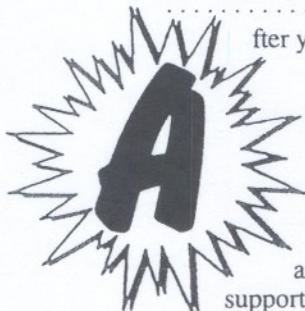


Illustrations by Miller Stanford for CASE

THE ASKABLE

MOMENT

*A volunteer's guide to
approaching a supporter
for the major gift*



After years of research and cultivation, members of the fund-raising staff have pinpointed an important prospective donor for a big gift. They've determined the person's interest in the campus and probable ability to support a favored project.

They've also figured out who would be the most effective asker—a friend who's committed to the institution and has some influence with the potential donor as well.

That person is you, the volunteer.

You may have asked others to support a worthy cause a hundred times; you may never have done it at all. Either way, you are the best person to invite this particular friend of the campus to support the project.

You won't need much of the person's time. In contrast to all the preparation—months or years of general cultivation—the actual call should be brief. If you've anticipated all possibilities, worked closely with the development or major gifts officer, and gotten com-

fortable with your own mission as a supporter, it should take only five minutes to arrive at the askable moment.

PLANNING THE CALL

You will seldom go alone on a call; a partner often helps keep the meeting focused. Your co-caller may be a development officer or another volunteer—though it's not unusual for the campus president to come along.

Let's say you're going to work with the director of development, Lee, who's brought you the material you'll need to plan and make the solicitation call. This packet contains a case statement for the project or campaign, a summary of important points, a gift table, and a letter of intended support. There may also be a confidential biographical profile that summarizes the donor's relationship and history of giving to the institution.

We'll call the prospective donor Joan Canada. The development office, other academic or administrative departments, and campus friends like you have probably worked with her for years. She may have served on an alumni board, a phonathon committee, or an advisory council. But during this meeting with her, you and Lee need to share your good feelings about the institution and let her respond to your invitation to invest in its work. Let's walk through a sample solicitation call and see how it might go.

MAKING THE ASK

When you and Lee arrive at Joan's office or home, get right to the point of the call. Small talk only makes everyone anxious. The donor already has some familiarity with the campus, and

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by Donald E. Craig



HOW WILL I KNOW
THE RIGHT MOMENT
TO ASK?

GOSH! I WISH
I FELT MORE
CONFIDENT ABOUT
THIS!

BEFORE, JOHN AND MARSHA FELT
UNPREPARED TO ASK FOR GIFTS.

she knows why you're visiting. So set the tone by telling her why you're excited to support the campaign.

After introductions, start with something like this:

You: "Joan, thank you for seeing us today. Like you, I have a high regard for Siwash College. When I was invited to invest in the college's campaign, I was pleased to make my leadership gift. I want to invite you to join me by becoming one of the eight people in the top leadership giving category."

At this point, you can present Joan with the gift chart you brought. As she looks it over, state more specifically how you're asking her to help.

You (pointing to the leadership gift section of the chart): "Picture yourself here among this group of donors."

By suggesting a level rather than an amount, you're giving Joan greater control in deciding on her gift.

You: "Would you join me and the others who have already committed?"

You've now set the stage for her decision and possible discussion. You didn't spend time trying to warm her up. If her previous involvement hasn't accomplished that already, there's no way you and Lee can do it now.

With the ask made, you'll have the opportunity to respond to Joan's need for further information. Don't be discouraged if she or any other prospective donor doesn't say yes right away. You probably thought carefully about your own gift before making it. Even a strong supporter will have to give some thought to your request.

RESPONDING TO YES— AND MAYBE

From this point, the call can take many directions. But the important thing for you, the volunteer, is to keep the conversation brief—unless Joan requires answers to her questions. The more you delay the invitation, the more uncertain you appear and the more apt Joan is to put off a definitive answer.

So what might she say? One possibility is this: "Yes, I'll give \$1 million to Siwash because I believe completely in the cause."

Naturally, you'll thank her and say how much her gift will mean to the faculty and students. Then ask her to sign the letter of intended support that you brought along.

In another scenario, Joan might say, "No, I'm sorry; I don't believe I can do that much. I need some time to think it over."

Try not to feel discouraged if a potential major donor doesn't say yes right away. Even a strong supporter will have to give some thought to your request.

Now you at least know that Joan may not be thinking about a leadership-level gift. But you don't know why she wants to delay her decision. When you and Lee were planning the call, you probably decided that if Joan put off a decision on the gift, Lee would join in to try for clarification or direction.

Lee: "Joan, let me ask you this: Would you like to make a gift at the upper leadership level?"

Joan: "Yes, I would, Lee, but I'm overextended now and won't be able to. I need to take a long, hard look at my resources."

Joan has come through on Lee's question: She's established her commitment. Don't suggest a lower amount now. Instead, take her at her word; offer to work together to make it happen.

Lee: "Would you consider activating your pledge when you have some relief from your other commitments? Or maybe setting up a more flexible time frame for payment?"

Here you're offering to set up the gift at a better time for Joan—not downgrading her interest. After all, she'd like to help; you're offering alternatives that can enable her to join you in supporting the campaign.

However, don't complicate the ask by presenting options such as an estate gift at this point. Avoid saying something like, "If you can't do it all now, Joan, you can do it through an estate gift. I know you must be familiar with the grantor lead trust where you can

give us the money and then get it back later. It's like not giving at all, and if you fund the trust with tax-free securities, you won't even have to pay taxes on the gift to the institution."

Joan would probably say, "That really sounds interesting, Lee. I need to know more about it. Why don't I meet with my accountant and attorney and see what they advise?"

You've now put off the gift. During the next several months, or even years, Joan will be able to keep you and the campus at arm's length by deferring to her advisers. An approach like this declares loud and clear that the need may be important, but it can wait until she finds an easy way to be generous.

Let's go back to your offer to establish a flexible time frame to examine more fruitful scenarios. Introducing the idea of lifetime giving, even with an estate gift, is a possibility when the donor is committed but says your first ask is too high.

Joan: "Exactly what do you mean by flexible? I thought this was a five-year campaign."

You: "It is a five-year campaign, but your giving to the college is measured as a lifetime commitment. Our records indicate that you've already invested \$178,000 in our various campus programs. What we are asking you to do is continue building on what you've already done."

"The lifetime level we're asking you to consider is as flexible as your resources will permit. Ultimately, your lifetime giving can be completed by your estate or conclude at your death."

You may well have made the same pledge to the campus yourself. If you have, say so! There's no better encouragement than inviting someone else to join you in a project in which you've made a great investment.

You: "The donation method I'm describing here is exactly what I've chosen. My available resources fluctuate, so I need flexibility in order to be more generous. I fully intend to keep adding to my lifetime gift to the college. It makes me feel good to know I can think in bigger terms."

This statement shows Joan she's not alone in her support of the institution, and you've offered her several possibilities for joining her fellow contributors. The best thing to do now is to invite her reaction.

You: "Joan, what are you considering now that we've explained this flexibility?"

Joan may choose to join the campaign at this point, or she may tell you she's not comfortable. You've asked for a decision, so wait quietly for her response. Don't interrupt her thinking or change the question now.

Let's assume she stays with her first decision to defer her pledge until she can look over her resource base.

Joan: "I still need to hold off until I can get a good feel for my financial situation."

Now you need to respect her need for time to think and plan.

You: "Joan, we want you to take the time you need to make a decision like this. The Siwash program is so important that we need to do all we can to ensure its continued success. The campaign committee will be meeting at the end of this month, and I'd like to be able to make a report on your decision at that time."

Joan: "I will make my decision by then. I'll call you later next week."

It's not customary to leave a return call in the donor's hands; after all, you are the one who made the request of her. But Joan offered to call. You should mark your calendar to get in touch with her if she doesn't phone by the time she mentioned.

DISCUSSING THE AMOUNT

In another possible outcome, let's say Joan is ready to make a pledge but continues to be apprehensive about a leadership gift. You've presented the lifetime giving idea, and you may now need to ask her to consider a pledge that builds on her previous giving—even though the campaign totals will not include her previous giving.

Joan: "I'm still concerned about making a pledge that I won't be able to handle. But I will consider a pledge of \$250,000 to the campaign."

You: "That's wonderful and we thank you! I need to ask you a question, though, that may appear ungrateful. But you know me well enough to understand that my personal interest in the college is serious.

"Would you consider pledging \$322,000 to the campaign, thus increasing your lifetime giving to \$500,000?"

There is no doubt that Joan is a friend of the college. Most people feel challenged by the concept of lifetime giving, and Joan will probably feel complimented that you and the institution see her as a lifetime participant in its work. This concept is the best idea

of planned giving I know, but most donors have never thought of their gifts that way. They'll enjoy seeing the long-term view you present.

MORE COMPLEX SCENARIOS

Of course, these situations are hardly the only ones that might occur. Here are three more matters to consider.

1. An estate gift

Earlier I cautioned against suggesting this because Joan might decide to postpone a pledge. However, a plan of lifetime giving can legitimately include an estate gift as its concluding element. Note that as the pledge was negotiated, the askers encouraged Joan to make an upper leadership pledge and to consider guaranteeing any unpaid portion in her estate at death.

Some potential donors will automatically respond to a solicitation by saying they intend to provide for the college in their estate. It's good to encourage such thinking, but keep in mind that the best person to make an estate gift is one who is currently giving. Along with lifetime giving goes lifetime asking. If Joan decides to make a leadership gift now as part of a lifetime giving plan, it is appropriate for the staff officer to introduce estate giving.

If you're alone on the call, introduce the subject and suggest that a staff officer come by to explain further.

You: "Thank you for your generous pledge to the campaign. With your permission, I would like to ask Lee to visit with you again to show some ways you can increase your pledge beyond cash or securities. As you're paying against your lifetime pledge, you can also be considering your options to bring your total giving up to your desired amount of a million dollars."

Joan: "Send me some information, then, and I'll review it with my advisers before meeting with Lee."

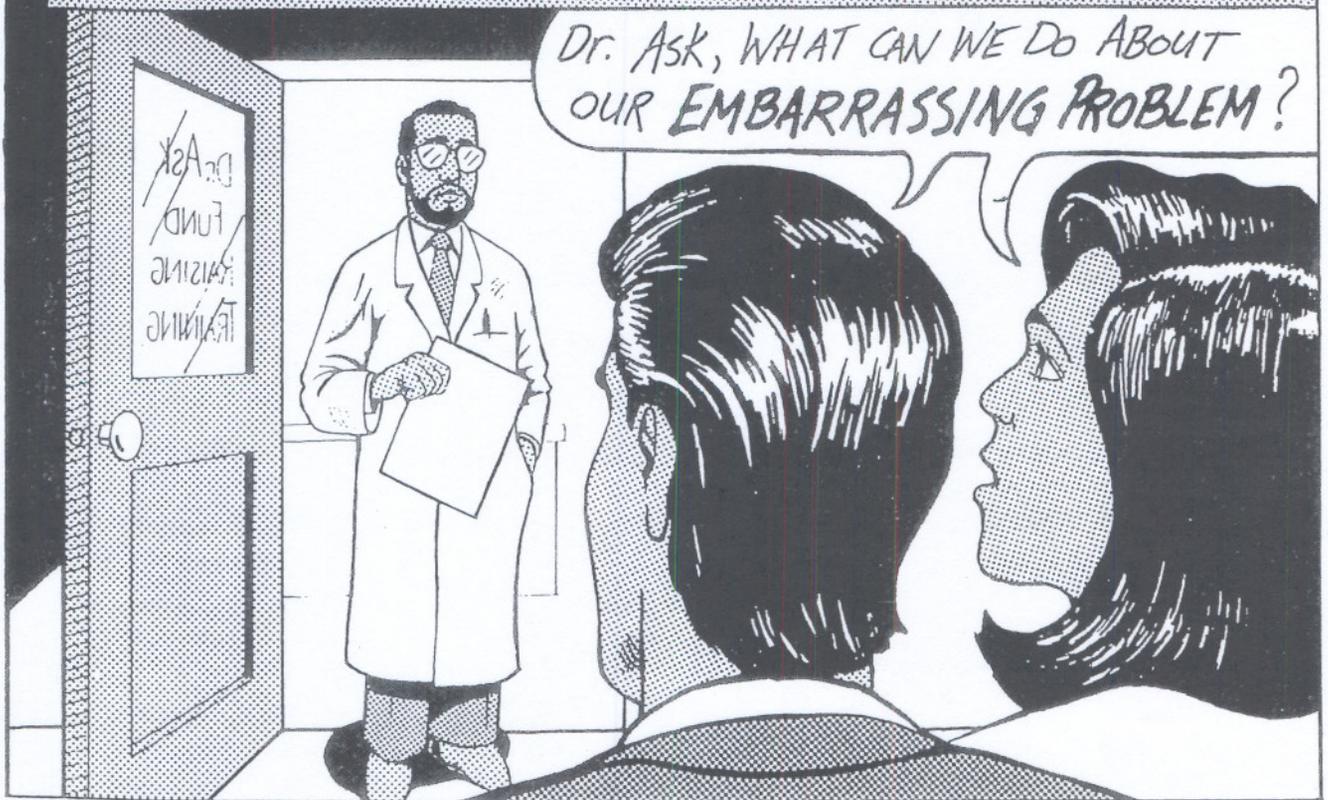
2. Refusal

Every potential donor has a right to say no. There can be any number of reasons for a refusal—so if you really want this prospect to be involved, have a plan that continues to cultivate and request gifts.

Joan: "I appreciate the two of you coming by to see me about the campaign. But I need to tell you I have no more intentions of contributing to the college. I've been dissatisfied for some time about a number of things. You're right when you say I have been gener-

(Continued on page 7.)

JOHN AND MARSHA KNEW THEY NEEDED PROFESSIONAL HELP.



INTUITION OR INTELLECT?

*How to recognize the
askable moment*

by Johanne H. Hall

W

hen you're choosing the perfect time to ask for a gift, which should dominate—intuition or intellect?

That's easy.

Facts and figures prepare the staff member and volunteer for the pitch; they tell you *how much* to seek and for what purpose. But that inner urge—gut feeling—tells you *when*:

Intuition without intellect is impulse; intellect without intuition is mere mechanics. Each is necessary to

Johanne H. Hall retired in August 1991 as senior vice president for development and college relations at Scripps College; she is now contemplating the Pacific and her future in Dana Point, California. L. Victor Atchison, who collaborated with Hall on this article, is vice president for college relations at Lewis and Clark College. Formerly he was vice president for development and secretary of the board at Claremont University Center.

fund-raising strategy. The most successful development operations depend on a healthy mix of both.

Likewise, everyone knows the best team to make the ask consists of a staff officer and an informed, committed, peer-level (or above) volunteer. Less certain is who determines how and when.

Back in 1933, John D. Rockefeller Jr. wrote, "If I am asked for a contribution, naturally and properly I am influenced in deciding how much I should give by what others are doing." That, obviously, is a vote in favor of letting the ask come from a volunteer who is also a donor.

However, to think that the volunteer knows more about strategies and timing is to believe either that the volunteer has inside information (rare) or that the gifts officers have not done their homework. Timing the ask should be a joint venture—at least in the planning stages.

In practice, at the actual moment of asking, those who know the rules have the privilege of breaking them. That is, the best instincts on popping the question may belong to either the

volunteer or the staff member—or to someone else entirely. Here are three examples from my own experience:

Volunteer initiative

I once heard a marvelous story about volunteer intuition and chutzpah in pursuit of a major gift.

The trustee knew that his friend Charlie had an interest in the campus and the capacity to make a large contribution. Before the solicitation call, the trustee and the staff officer looked over their records and decided to ask Charlie give between \$150,000 and \$200,000 to help fund a new science center.

Charlie, though, had given some thought to the project himself and tried to get the jump on his callers. "We all support this project," he announced, "and to demonstrate that support, I've already decided to donate \$125,000 to help launch it toward success."

The trustee showed neither surprise nor disappointment. Instead, he leaned across the table and looked his friend in the eye. "Charlie, that's just not enough," he said. "We need \$500,000."

The staff officer stared in amazement, but this time it was the prospect who showed no surprise. He agreed to the \$500,000.

This trustee was obviously the right choice for the job: His knowledge, stature, and long history with Charlie persuaded the prospect to give at a leadership level. On the basis of information, intellect had established the strategies and initial ask. But the volunteer knew Charlie, and Charlie wanted to stay in his peerage. Volunteer intuition seized the day.

That volunteer and the officer made many calls together. Neither questioned the other's timing, which, in looking back, gave each an enormous degree of confidence in the other. It was a remarkably effective team built on strategy but operated on instinct.

Development gumption

Scripps College once had a seven-figure prospect, a man who had played no role there other than as a close friend of a late artist/professor who'd helped develop its premier art program. The project we wanted to

fund was a sculpture building at the core of the new art center. (Because this project is ongoing, I've changed the participants' names.)

The homework was done, the stage was set: lunch at the president's residence, the prospect seated next to the artist's widow. Other guests included the president, dean of the faculty, department chair, board chair, campaign co-chairs, and vice president for development (me). We'd carefully scripted the pitch: For \$1 million, the prospect could name the building for his friend as well as himself, if he wished. Each guest had a role in the denouement, which was to climax with the board chair's ask.

The donor's immediate response? "You've got sculpture in the wrong place. Sculpture is a noisy, messy business, and it should be located where the noise and mess can be tolerated. I have no interest in putting Henry's name on this misplaced building. What I really want is the gallery."

The campaign co-chair responded gently that the gallery had already been named for the late mother of two of our alumnae, and they had raised the majority of the project's funding.

"Then that's that," our prospect quickly replied. "You have nothing that interests me."

A long, agonizing silence engulfed the luncheon table. The only sound was the ticking of a grandfather clock in the corner. My head was spinning as our best hope began to fade away.

My usual role at such a gathering was one of implementation, not solicitation. But because the "appropriate" participants were mute, it was up to me to speak. "What would you think," I said, my as-yet-unused voice cracking, "of making a gift to name the entire center after Henry?"

"Well," said our prospect, "that is an interesting idea."

Throughout our little drama, the widow's face had reflected a play of emotions. At this juncture, her expression moved from keen disappointment to wild anticipation. With tear-glazed eyes, she turned to our man and said, "I think that would be just perfect, Dick. Could you really make that happen?" Patting her hand gently, he replied, "Yes, I can make that happen."

Intuition, desperation, whatever—the right moment was clearly at hand. Someone had to jump at the opportunity. This time it was the development officer.

Donor inspiration

George had donated toward a weight room in the gym, supported the wrestling team, and provided scholarships for basketball players. While we were lunching one day, George just popped out with, "What's the top priority at the university these days?"

The response was almost automatic: "It needs \$150,000 to renovate the theater. Unfortunately, George, I know that's not in your line of interest."

"I didn't ask you about my interests," George replied. "I asked about the priority need at the university. You have your \$150,000."

Some months later, after the inaugural production in the beautiful new theater bearing George's name, I asked how he enjoyed the show. "Slept right through it," he said.

Some lessons learned that day:

- Don't underestimate donor largesse. George wanted to make a gift. Though intellectually the facts and circumstances didn't suggest him as a prospect for this project, a development officer should never presume the reasons or interests of a donor.

- Keep an open mind about intuition. You never know who'll seize the best moment to propose a gift. It could be the volunteer, the gift officer, or even the donor.

- Recognize a philanthropist. All campuses have lots of donors and we're grateful for each one, but philanthropists like George are awesome in their generosity. They're rare, they're wonderful, and, like any masterpiece, they're to be savored.

- Appreciate both intellect and intuition. Facts and figures prepare you for the right amount and the right purpose. The right moment, though, comes from inside—and from the right solicitor. That sense of timing is the gift of the true supporter.

Oh, George also said, "I had to respond to your answer. You never hesitated a second in saying what the priority need was, even though you believed it wasn't for me. I liked that."

So did I. CASE

ous, but now I choose to stop.”

Be honest but polite here, and ask how you can improve the situation.

You: “Joan, I obviously didn’t anticipate this. I didn’t know the college has offended you. Is there any way we can right the wrong?”

Joan: “I have given a great deal of thought to my relationship with Siwash. I don’t feel that it’s made good use of my gifts. I think the administration doesn’t care about me and my thinking but only about my money. I do respect you, though, which is why I’m taking the time to speak with you. It hurts me to see my alma mater slip into mediocrity because the leadership won’t lead and the faculty complain. Will I ever make a significant gift again? Only time will tell, but I can assure you that time is not now.”

Obviously Joan is firm on this, so don’t press for a gift. The important thing is to preserve her relationship with the campus.

You: “I want to assure you that I’m deeply concerned about your feelings. I need your direction on how I can make sure the right people on campus pitch in to resolve your problem. It’s important that someone hear your

views, and I want to assure you that I will not bring up the campaign again unless you ask me to. You are a special friend of the campus, and I can’t let your concerns go unaddressed.”

Joan: “I’m sorry I had to spring this on you. I would be happy to resolve my concerns.”

You: “Thank you again for seeing us. I’m going to ask Lee not to report the results of this call until we’ve had an opportunity to work through your problem.”

Joan: “I’ll look forward to hearing from you.”

You and Lee now need to address the situation. Depending on the details, the two of you should decide on whom to approach and what answers to collect.

3. A low pledge

As a concluding scenario, let’s assume that you’ve asked for a gift at the leadership level, but Joan agreed only to contribute \$25,000 over five years.

You: “Joan, thank you for your consideration. The campaign is the most important in our history, and we need to ask every person to stretch to the best possible gift. Would you reconsider a gift at the leadership level?”

Joan: “Absolutely not! My pledge is a stretch. If I can do more in the future, I will. But right now that’s my limit.”

Everyone handles this one differently. But if you’re convinced that this pledge really is all the donor can and will give, and that she’s giving it in good faith, certainly go ahead and accept it graciously. My style is then to ask whether I or another representative can come back to see the donor in a year. The answer is nearly always yes. This leaves the door open to an upgrade down the road.

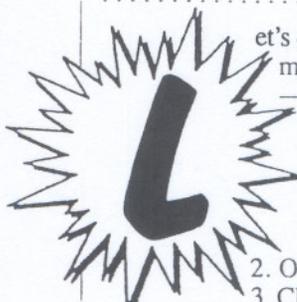
You: “I appreciate your making this stretch, and the college will too. We need to get your signature on this letter of intended support so we can record your pledge in the campaign totals.”

In the end, remember this: Whether a solicitation call goes well from the start or runs into complications, your contact is probably a prelude to yet another call later. In most cases you’re helping to build a friendly, supportive relationship between the donor and the campus. With diplomacy, practice, and the approaches sketched out here, your own askable moments should build on your prospective donors’ campus relationships—and your own. **CASE**

THE ART OF NEGOTIATION

How to close the gift once you've asked for it

by Royster Hedgepeth



Let's dispel a common myth. Most volunteers—even most development officers—think a major gift solicitation should go like this:

1. Ask.
2. Overcome objections.
3. Close.

The myth is that you can do these 1-2-3s in one visit, while sitting by the prospect's fireside or office desk.

In reality, if you've asked for a gift that truly makes a difference, one that probably challenges the person's financial or emotional capacity to give, it will take time to bring the gift to fruition. That may mean months or years—and it may involve you and a staff officer in dozens of follow-up actions, including receiving and stewarding one or more intermediate gifts.

But there's nothing wrong with that. As a volunteer, your greatest contribution is offering the opportunity to support the institution and helping to move this ask along until it becomes a beneficial gift.

More typically, the major gift process goes like this:

1. Cultivation.
2. Solicitation.
3. Negotiation.
4. Resolution (close).

5. Accountability, and back to cultivation.

Major gift negotiation is about making the right things happen once you request a gift. *You* can do that.

The best volunteers are open to learning the basics of gift planning and the skills of active listening. Committed volunteers carry out assignments on time, report what they hear and what it means, prepare for spontaneous opportunities to keep the ask on the table, and always consider how best to stimulate the prospect's thought, attention, and belief.

Besides listening, the most important thing about negotiating a major gift is always keeping the institution's mission and vision at the forefront. This is perhaps the single most difficult part of the work. The seductive power of ego and urgency can shift the focus of your conversation to tactical, practical considerations all too easily.

To help interpret the things your prospects say to you, I'll describe eight categories of donor response and what they may involve.

1. *Acceptance.* This one's simple: The donor agrees to make the gift. Focus on celebrating the opportunity fulfilled, thanking the donor, and moving forward with appropriate gift planning. Although an easy yes could mean that you and the development officer didn't ask for enough, you've probably done your work well. If you have undershot the mark, surely there will be new opportunities later.

2. *Denial.* On the other hand, the donor may decline your ask. This is a disappointment, of course, after all the time and effort you and the institution have invested. But if the donor means

no, be sure you get the message. Prospective major donors usually care for the institution and don't want to offend you, so guard against misinterpreting the kindness with which donors can turn you down.

Remember, the prospect is not rejecting *you*. Listen actively for his or her reasons, then repeat them to make sure you've interpreted correctly. Look for clues about what you need to do to have greater success in the future. There will almost always be another opportunity.

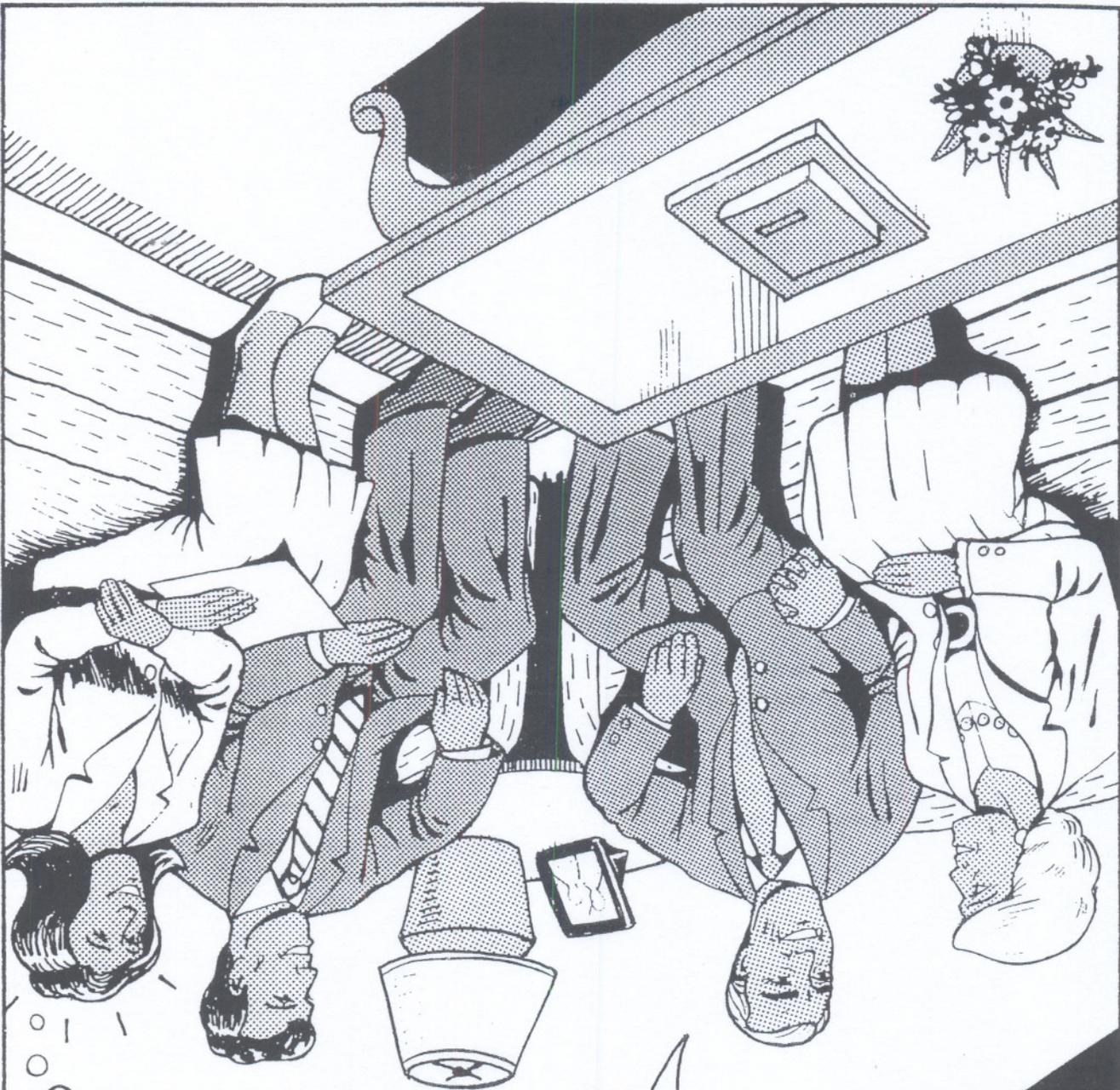
3. *Informational.* Despite your best efforts, donors may say they lack enough data to evaluate the proposal.

A request for more information may be just that—a need for facts and figures. More often, though, donors want to know if the request is really important to the institution and, if so, what difference their gift will make. When they have doubts, most prospects find it difficult to ask, "Is this really important?"

Here again, you must practice active listening to find out what prospects really want. Because you are the prospect's peer and (supposedly) stand outside any campus politics, you can listen for informational concerns and ask what they really want to know far more positively than a development officer can. This is one reason the institution so appreciates your help.

4. *Institutional.* The prospect may have concerns about the institution. Perhaps a granddaughter, nephew, or neighbor's child was not admitted. Perhaps the donor dislikes a certain liberal or conservative professor, or thinks the campus overemphasizes or underemphasizes sports, or believes it

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WE'RE CURED OF
OUR ASKOPHOBIA!
I CAN'T WAIT FOR
MY NEXT ASK!

NOW THAT WE'VE
IRONED OUT THE DETAILS
WE'VE DECIDED TO
MAKE A GENEROUS
GIFT!

THE GOOD TRAINING DID THE TRICK.

exerts too much or too little control over students.

But emphasizing vision and mission lets us discuss the fact that our goal isn't just money, scholarships, professorships, buildings, or programs. These are simply vehicles to carry out the institution's mission. Because they provide access for students, the tools and space for learning, and the potential for rich intellectual interaction, these vehicles allow our institutions to achieve their educational ends and thus enrich our society.

Active listening

But let's jump right to the point: your negotiation. Say you're in that meeting with the donor. You've made the ask. The critical moment is at hand. The donor is thinking. Now what?

Now let listening be your guide. Try to anticipate the donor's response, but clear your head of preconceptions so you can interpret what you hear.

Once your request is on the table, the prospective donor should be the next to speak. The wait, while it may last only a few seconds, can seem interminable. Avoid the temptation to fill the silence with your own words.

A colleague once told me that we can't hear clearly if we're busy thinking about what we're going to say next. If we'll just listen, donors will tell us what we need to know. So keep two things in mind:

A. Each conversation is a step along the road to resolution.

B. And, in most cases, the donor is as interested in the good of the institution as you are.

Active listening means making sure you understand what the other person actually means, not just what he or she says. If you're not sure what the message is—or even if you are—ask. Say, "What I think you're telling me is. . ." or "If I hear you correctly, you're saying that. . ."

This is called validating your interpretation. Practice asking open-ended questions that encourage prospects to express feelings, attitudes, and beliefs—what they're really trying to say.

Hearing the prospect

The response you get may well be an objection or stumbling block rather than an easy yes. Don't panic. You allow yourself to be misled if you concentrate too hard on responding immediately to objections.

To be sure, prospects raise objec-

tions, but bracing for them puts you in a defensive position. Listening, interpreting, and responding make you proactive instead.

Answering concerns like these requires diplomacy. Exercise care and patience in helping prospects gain a sense of understanding, if not peace, with such institutional issues.

As a volunteer, you can be especially helpful here if you have the right information. Ask your staff fund raiser for relevant campus records, study them, and bring copies with you. A volunteer can put the admissions question into perspective admirably by providing accurate facts and figures, then chuckling and saying, "That's why I probably couldn't get in there now myself."

5. *Idiosyncratic*. Your role is even more vital when donors make responses that are singularly rooted in their personal values and experiences. For example, a prospect might tell you, "I'm really angry that I was left off the dean's list by mistake" or "I'll never forgive them for tearing down [or putting up] the XYZ Building."

Keep three elements in mind as you deal with an idiosyncratic response. First, it's usually direct and emotionally driven. Often it deals with a slight, real or imagined, that occurred in the distant past. Second, it usually has little relation to your actual gift request. And third, you'll have to work through the prospect's feelings before you can refocus on the gift negotiation.

Idiosyncratic responses are difficult for staff fund raisers to handle without appearing to be self-serving. After all, development officers do work for the institution. But you, the volunteer, can create a sense of peer-to-peer confidence that allows the prospect to work through his or her feelings. You can then share your own reasons for belief in and commitment to the institution and refocus discussion on your gift request. And, at times, you and only you can say to the prospect, "Oh, come on! You're just making excuses to keep from getting involved!" (Sometimes the kid gloves have to come off, and volunteers are the best messengers.)

Informational, institutional, and idiosyncratic responses must be addressed before real gift negotiations can begin. Responses involving timing, purpose, or gift amount come to the heart of the matter.

6. *Timing*. When a donor says, "I can't do that much right now," the primary issue is often time and not

amount. "Now" is a signal word that should lead you to questions of "When?" or "What if?"

Anxious fund raisers too often don't wait for the donor's response to an ask; instead, they rush into offering two or more years to make the gift. But this misses the opportunity for a single lump sum. Make the ask and hear out the donor before negotiating the parameters of the gift. You might get a yes right away.

Of course, staff members *can* work out flexibility over a period of years, so this is your second-best option. But if you and the gift officer still seem to get nowhere, then simply ask, "Well, if you're not ready now, when would be a better time?" You'll often get an answer that brings out the prospect's true feelings and guides you as a negotiator.

7. *Purpose.* Questioning the gift's purpose is more direct than questioning its importance. Donors don't want to lose their relationship with the institution, but they may not want to give to the need for which you asked. One clue to this situation is a pleasant send-off from the donor—and no response to your attempts to follow up.

If one or more subsequent actions brings no response, find an opportunity to question the donor directly: "You know, we really thought this would interest you, but perhaps we've miscalculated. If you could make a difference, what would you *like* to do?" This doesn't negate your solicitation but gives the prospect an opening to share thoughts about support.

8. *Amount.* Finally, donors may indicate that the amount is not right. On one hand, you may have asked for more than they can give. When a prospect says he or she can't give at the level you requested, ask what you can do to make the gift possible. If the donor really seems not to have the capacity, accept that and seek a lesser amount—"Would you be more comfortable with a gift of . . .?" With the development officer's help, stay in control of how far the potential amount changes.

On the other hand, the prospect may be showing doubts about the institution or program. If so, you might steer toward a gift for current expense that allows him or her to test an interest in the program before making a major commitment. Never lose sight of the original intent, but remember that an intermediate gift has the potential to increase the prospect's confidence and involvement.

I f a prospect says he or she can't give at the requested level, ask what you can do to make the gift possible. But stay in control of how far the potential amount ranges.

Managing prospect responses

As an essential liaison with campus, you'll be most effective when you concentrate on the donor's words and feelings. You must be sensitive, specific, and focused on what the donor needs to convey. The following four approaches can make negotiating more successful.

1. *Empathize.* When a donor starts getting emotional—for instance, complaining about the institution or bringing up old, irrelevant issues—be empathetic. Then resolve the concern and move back to the request. A "felt-found" response is effective here. Work through the prospect's comments with these lead-ins:

- "I know how you feel . . ."
- "I (or others) have felt that way . . ."
- "I (or they) have found that . . ."

Statements like these, especially the last one, convey to donors that you understand, that they're not alone in their views, and that you can suggest a solution for their conflicting feelings. At the least, these statements allow donors to explain their concerns. When you understand better what a prospect is trying to tell you, it's much easier to agree on the next stage of the ask.

2. *Use logic.* If the donor's response to your presentation doesn't have a clear link to time, purpose, or amount, and you feel you're not making much progress, negotiate time first. Only when you exhaust questions and op-

portunities related to time should you move on to purpose. If you discover the gift's purpose is not the problem, then ask whether the amount is right.

Guard against adopting, however unconsciously, a win-lose attitude. You're not in competition with the donor; you're negotiating a gift that will make a difference for the institution and prove rewarding to the donor. "Felt-found" and "time-purpose-amount" are guidelines within which you can negotiate more effectively.

3. *Demonstrate benefits.* Always relate the institution's mission—and your shared belief in it—to the proposed gift at hand. Both before and during the negotiation, consciously articulate how the gift will

- benefit the donor,
- benefit the institution, and
- benefit society.

Making all these advantages clear puts everyone's role in perspective, keeps the institutional mission at the forefront, and fosters the positive attitude necessary for even the most intense negotiations.

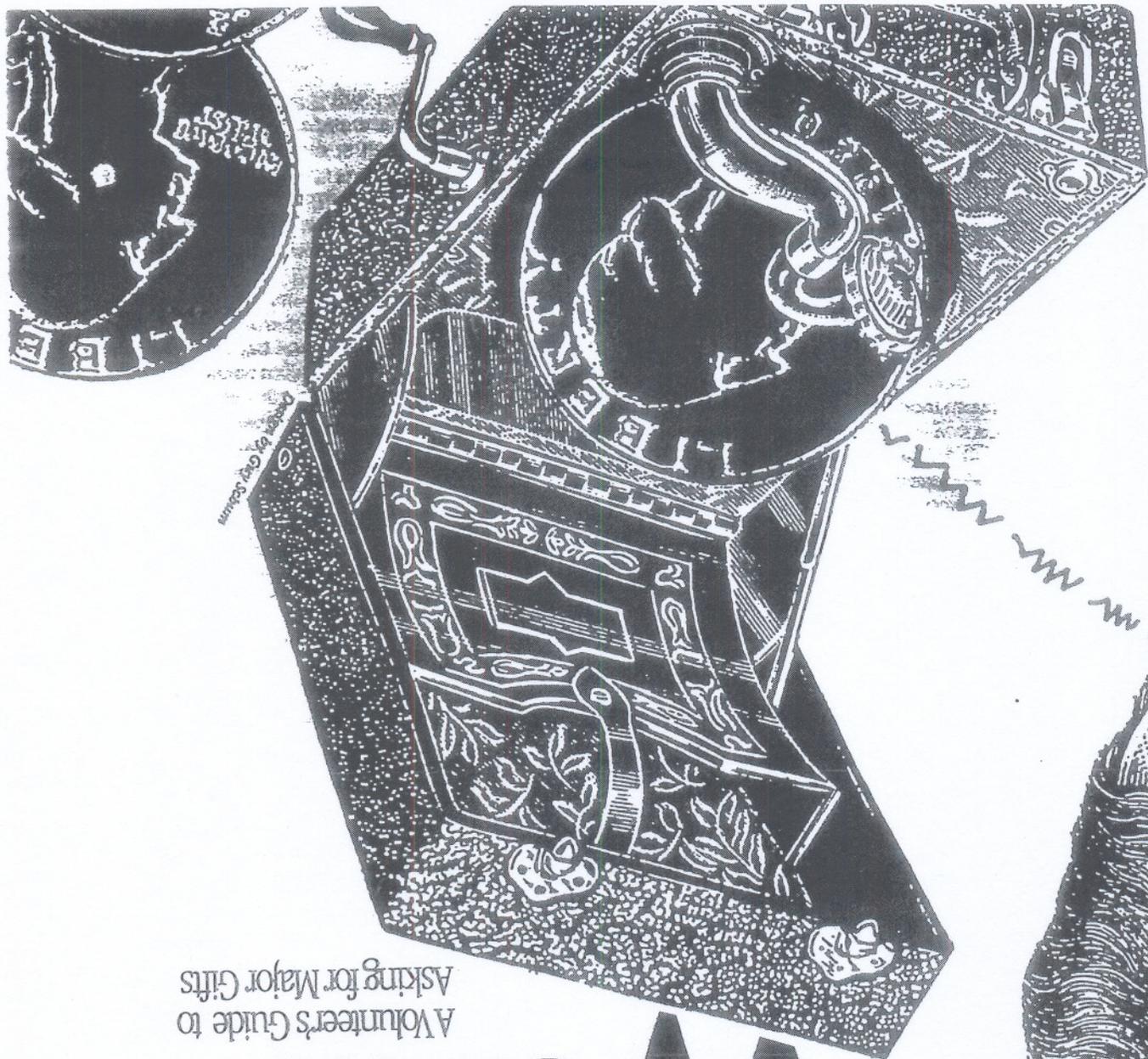
4. *Share dreams.* In nurturing your relationship with prospects and the campus, "seeking the dream" is your most powerful approach. Building good relationships means helping prospects develop their own visions of the institution and its value. Think: If you could suspend reality, if money were no object, what would this institution be? How would you help make it so? These are the most powerful questions you can ask a donor—or yourself.

The answers provide guidance for structuring solicitations, steering negotiations, identifying benefits, and enhancing the potential for success.

Pulling it all together

The art of negotiation is making the right things happen once you've asked a prospect for a major gift. It involves listening actively, interpreting accurately, and responding appropriately.

Though the responses I've described may not fit every major gift negotiation you encounter, their basic elements always will. After making the ask and before signing the final agreement, you'll never go wrong by listening to what prospects really mean and knowledgeably working through their concerns. After all, effective negotiation of major gifts is far less about money than about connecting supporters with the educational mission they—and you—believe in. 



A Volunteer's Guide to
Asking for Major Gifts

Winning Words

Not he who has much is rich,
but he who gives much.

—Erich Fromm



Give often, when you know your gifts are well placed.

—Cato

Going for the Gold

*A training manual for volunteer fund raisers
by James Gregory Lord*

America's Olympic runners and volunteer fund raisers have something in common: Both represent a noble part of the American character.

When you raise funds for a cause in which you believe, you exercise your right to develop the kind of nation you want. The fact that you care strongly enough about your institution to give it your time, your talent, and your substance makes a truly remarkable statement about the American character as well as your own.

To succeed, however, you must prepare. Runners train for races, and fund raisers need practice as well. So here's a handy checklist of techniques that can prove useful in preparing for and making a fund-raising call. You will want to practice them before you go for the gold.

On your mark

Here are some steps to follow in preparing for your first visit:

1. *Pick a partner.* Two solicitors are often twice as convincing as one. Take a staff member along, or recruit someone who has given to your campaign and who also knows your prospect.
2. *Research your prospect.* Try to find out as much as you can about your

James Gregory Lord is the author of numerous articles and three books: Philanthropy and Marketing; The Raising of Money: 35 Essentials Every Trustee Should Know; and Building Your Case. The books are published by Third Sector Press in Cleveland, Ohio.



prospect before the visit. What are your prospect's interests? What aspect of your institution best relates to those interests? How can you stress that relationship in your visit?

3. *Set your asking figure.* Your campaign chair or your institution's development office should provide you with this. This figure is usually determined by an anonymous committee of top volunteers. This group has probably worked with a list of the various levels of contributions that will be needed to meet the goal. It will also have determined, to the best of its ability, the level of commitment your prospect is capable of.

4. *Make the appointment.* Beware of the telephone. While it's all right to

phone to make an appointment, don't let yourself be drawn into discussing your purpose over the phone. Major gift commitments are *never* made over the wires; there's no substitute for a face-to-face conversation.

5. *Set your objectives.* On your first visit, you'll probably want to accomplish two things: First, you'll want to discuss with your prospect an aspect of your institution that will interest him or her. Second, you'll want to introduce a level of investment and a commemorative opportunity for consideration.

Don't ask for a commitment on your first visit. Use this time for cultivation. Make plans to get together with your prospect after he or she has had time to consider the "think about" figure.

Get set

As you get ready to make your call, think about the reasons why you really believe in your institution. Consider how you will convey your enthusiasm about its value and worth to society.

Here are several personal characteristics that you, the successful fund raiser, need to project:

- *Enthusiasm.* If you exude enthusiasm and self-confidence, you can go a long way toward convincing a prospect that this is a worthwhile opportunity to give and to take a voluntary private-sector initiative.

- *Courage.* It takes courage to ask for a major commitment.

- *Patience.* Almost all major investments require prolonged negotia-

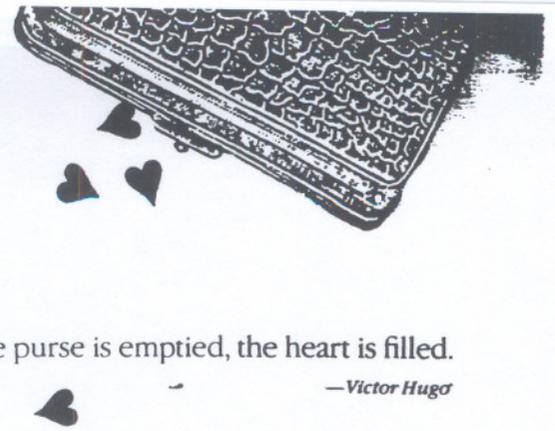
To give away money is an easy matter and in any man's power. But to decide to whom to give it, and how large and when, and for what purpose and how, is neither in every man's power—nor an easy matter. Hence it is that such excellence is rare, praiseworthy and noble.

—Aristotle



As the purse is emptied, the heart is filled.

—Victor Hugo



tions and consultations with others. Be patient if your prospect needs time to think it over.

● **Persistence.** Don't give up just because you receive a "no" your first time out. Remember that donors can change their minds.

Remember, too, that when you volunteer your time to make a fundraising call, you're making a strong statement about your cause to your prospective donor. You're saying, "This cause is so worthy that I'm donating my resources to it." Because your prospect respects you as a friend and peer, he or she will also respect the cause you represent.

Go!

Here are some steps for you to follow during the call.

1. **Discuss common concerns.** A good way to start your conversation is by talking about common interests. If you are both art patrons, for example, discuss a recent exhibit.

2. **Listen.** It's good to spend most of your time, particularly at first, listening to your prospect. Try to understand his or her interests, desires, and values.

3. **Find common ground.** Next, try to turn the conversation to how you think your institution's programs can help address your prospect's interests and concerns.

4. **Talk about your own commitment.** Talk about the reasons *why* you're involved—why you personally are investing your time and money. Tell your prospect just how much you've given—either personally or through your company—as evidence of your commitment. This way, you'll be inviting investment by example instead of by advice.

5. **Keep the conversation on track.** This is where a partner can really help. It also helps to keep the campaign brochure in front of your prospect at all times.

The home stretch

1. **Introduce the "suggested asking figure."** One way to do this is to mention a named commemorative opportunity that would be of interest to the prospect and that is at the appropriate financial level. The opportunity can be named to honor the donor, the donor's family, an individual, a corporation, a foundation, or another organization.

Don't say, "This is what we have you down for." Say, "We would like to suggest naming XX project" or "giving XX dollars." Then you can say that this is proportionate with what others are being asked to consider.

John D. Rockefeller, Jr., the great philanthropist, had helpful words on this subject:

I do not like to have anyone tell me what it is my duty to give. There is just one man who is going to decide that question—who has the responsibility of deciding it—and that is myself.

But I do like a man to say to me, "We are trying to raise \$4 million, and are hoping you are desirous of giving (blank) dollars. If you can see your way clear to do so, it will be an enormous help and encouragement. You may have it in mind to give more; if so we shall be glad. On the other hand, you may feel you cannot give as much... If that is the case, we shall understand."

2. **Discuss giving methods.** You can remind your prospect that his or her commitment can come from stocks, securities, real estate, or gifts-in-kind as well as cash.

Although federal tax incentives are rarely a prime motivator for a donor, a tax advantage can help you to convince a donor to make a more significant

contribution. You can also suggest to the donor that making a philanthropic gift is more effective than paying taxes and letting the government decide where the funds ought to go.

3. **Provide a rationale for the gift.** Remember that if a prospect is going to make an out-of-the-ordinary commitment, he or she needs time to get used to the idea and to develop rationales to use to justify this extraordinary investment to others.

For example, in one campaign, a volunteer provided a gas company executive with the following rationale: "Your company's pace-setting commitment could stimulate other companies and banks to give more. This would make the community a better place to live, which, in turn, would be good for the utility's kind of consumer-oriented business."

The executive's colleagues bought the argument.

4. **Assess the prospect's reaction.** Your prospect may react with an excuse or an objection. (See "Every Excuse in the Book—And How to Avoid Them" p. 39.) Don't treat such a reaction as a "no." Be patient. Remember that an objection may simply mean "not yet."

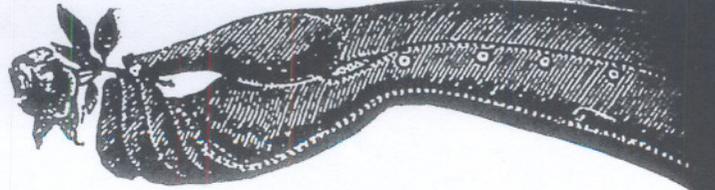
Your prospect may have a sharply negative reaction to your request. Listen without judging. Try to help your prospect see how he or she can influence the institution—and more—by participating in the campaign.

5. **Make an appointment for a second visit.** One way to make an appointment for a follow-up visit is to say, "I can appreciate that you will want to think this over before you make a commitment. How would it be if I came back at the same time next week?"

The prospect may also have questions that you can't answer. This gives you an opportunity to say, "I don't know the answer to that, but I can find out. Let me talk to our campaign chair [or whoever the appropriate person



The use of money is all the advantage there is in having money.
—Benjamin Franklin



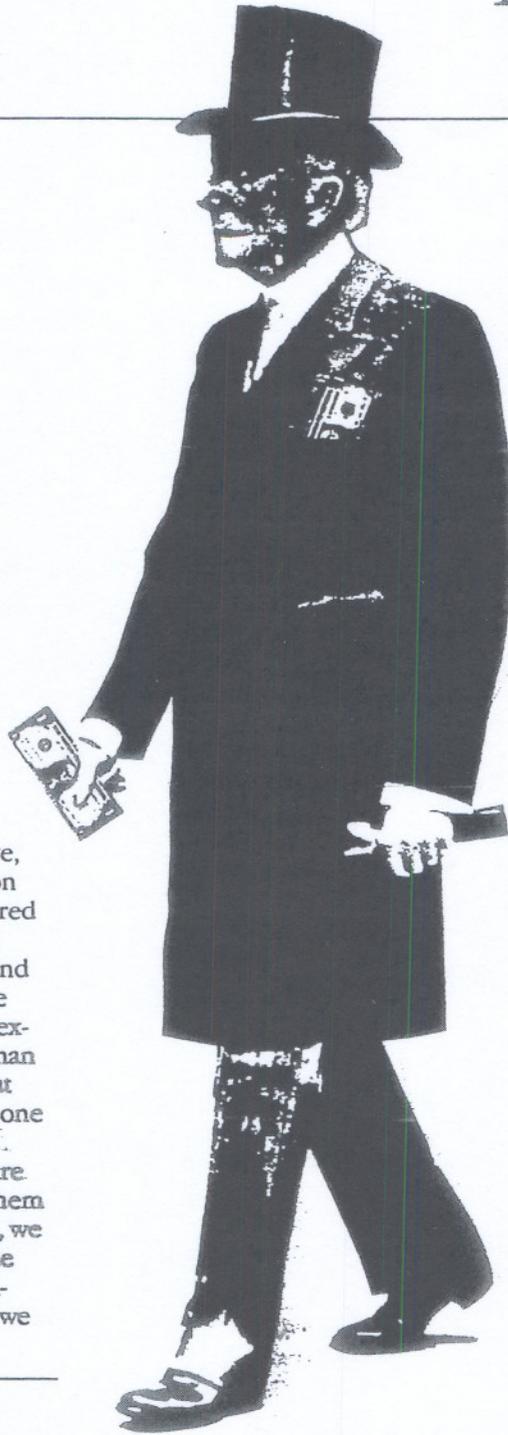
A bit of fragrance always clings to the hand that gives you roses.
—Chinese proverb

The Technique of Soliciting

by John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

I have been brought up to believe, and the conviction only grows on me, that giving ought to be entered into in just the same careful way as investing, that giving is investing, and that it should be tested by the same intelligent standards. Whether we expect dividends in dollars or in human betterment, we need to be sure that the gift or the investment is a wise one and therefore we should know all about it. By the same token, if we are going to other people to interest them in giving to a particular enterprise, we must be able to give them adequate information in regard to it, such information as we would want were we considering a gift.

John D. Rockefeller, Jr. (1874-1960) delivered this talk to the Citizens Family Welfare Committee of New York City in 1933. Pictured is his father, John D. Rockefeller, patriarch of one of America's most philanthropic families.



First of all, then, a solicitor must be well informed in regard to the salient facts about the enterprise for which he is soliciting. Just what is its significance, its importance? How sound is

the organization in back of it, how well organized? How great is the need? An accurate knowledge of these and similar facts is necessary in order that the solicitor may be able to speak with conviction.

It is a great help to know something about the person whom you are approaching. You cannot deal successfully with all people the same way. Therefore, it is desirable to find out something about the person you are going to: what are his interests, whether you have any friends in common, whether he gave last year, if so how much he gave, what he might be able to give this year, etc. Information such as that puts you more closely in touch with him and makes the approach easier.

Again, one always likes to know what other people are giving. That may be an irrelevant question, but it is a human question. If I am asked for a contribution, naturally and properly I am influenced in deciding how much I should give by what others are doing.

Another suggestion I like to have made me by a solicitor is how much it is hoped I will give. Of course, such a suggestion can be made in a way that might be most annoying. I do not like to have anyone tell me what it is my duty to give. There is just one man who is going to decide that question, who has the responsibility of deciding it, and that is myself. But I do like a man to say to me, "We are trying to raise \$4,000,000, and are hoping you may be desirous of giving (blank) dollars. If you see your way clear to do so, it will be an enormous help and encouragement. You may have it in mind to give more; if so, we will be glad. On the other hand, you may feel you cannot give as much, in view of other responsibilities. If that is the case, we shall understand. Whatever you give after thinking the matter over carefully in

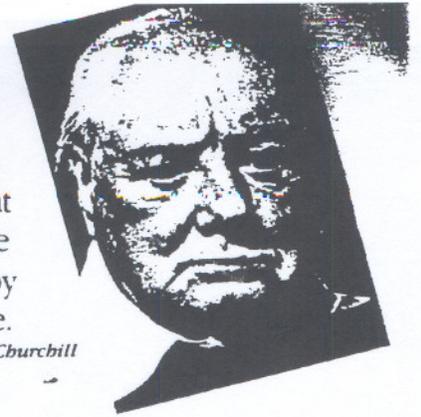


He gives not best who gives most; but he gives most who gives best. If I cannot give bountifully, yet I will give freely, and what I want in my hand, I will supply by my heart.

—Arthur Warwick

We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.

—Winston Churchill



the light of the need, your other obligations, and your desire to do your full share as a citizen, will be gratefully received and deeply appreciated." When you talk to a man like that, he is glad to meet you again and will not take the other elevator when he sees you in the corridor because you backed him to the wall and forced him to give.

Of supreme importance is it to make a pleasant, friendly contact with the prospective giver. Some people have a less keen sense of their duty and responsibility than others. With them, a little urging may be helpful. But with most people a convincing presentation of the facts and the need is far more effective. When a solicitor comes to you and lays on your heart the responsibility that rests so heavily on his; when his earnestness gives convincing evidence of how seriously interested he is; when he makes it clear that he knows you are no less anxious to do your duty in the matter than he is, that you are just as conscientious, that he feels all you need is to realize the importance of the enterprise and the urgency of the need in order to lead you to do your full share in meeting it; he has made you his friend and has brought you to think of giving as a privilege.

Never think you need to apologize for asking someone to give to a worthy object, any more than as though you were giving him an opportunity to participate in a high-grade investment. The duty of giving is as much his as is the duty of asking yours. Whether or not he should give to that particular enterprise, and if so, how much, it is for him alone to decide.

A letter may well precede an interview, but personal contact is the most effective. Know as much as you can about the man to whom you go, give him a general idea as to the contri-

butions being made by others in his group, and suggest in a gracious and tactful way what you would be glad to have him give, leaving it entirely to him to decide what he shall give. Be kindly and considerate. Thus will you get closest to a man's heart and his pocketbook. **case**

Every Excuse in the Book And How to Avoid Them

Top volunteer Jerome Stone talks about fund raising by Anne Lowrey Bailey

Jerome H. Stone, chairman emeritus of Stone Container Corporation (one of the country's major paper and container manufacturers), has served as a trustee of Roosevelt University in Chicago for 30 years. During the past 14, while he has chaired its board, the university's capital campaigns have raised \$39 million, much of it through his personal efforts.

CURRENTS spoke with Stone, now chairman emeritus of Roosevelt's board, in his Chicago office about strategies he has used in three decades of work with major private and corporate donors. A handsome man with blondish-gray hair, Stone gets down to business quickly.

Five Strategies to Avoid Excuses

Stone stressed that it's best to avoid situations in which excuses arise in the first place. "You should eliminate the reasons for excuses before you get them," he says. "You need to protect your sale." Stone spoke of ways to do this, and we have organized them here into five strategies.

Strategy No. 1: Only talk with prospects you know on a first-name basis.

If the prospect knows you, he or she knows you know all the excuses and whether they're manufactured or real.

For example, if I call on the president of a major banking institution, he knows me, he knows my company, he knows my account is large and I'm a prime customer, and so on. So he already knows he's going to give. The question is how much.

That's why the best person to call on a top prospect is a board member who has some sort of rapport with the prospect and to whom the prospect feels an obligation to talk.

Strategy No. 2: Call on your most important prospects first.

A leadership gift from a top prospect will raise the sights of the prospects' peers. For example, if you're going to make calls on banks in Chicago, you should be aware that there's a pecking order among them and call on the major banks first. If you go to the third largest first, you're going to insult and embarrass the two larger banks, and the third largest may only give you \$10,000 because you're not in a position to put pressure on it to do better.

Then, too, you'll have quite a time getting \$50,000 from a major bank because you'll have to say, "I've talked to

Anne Lowrey Bailey is the former executive editor of CURRENTS.

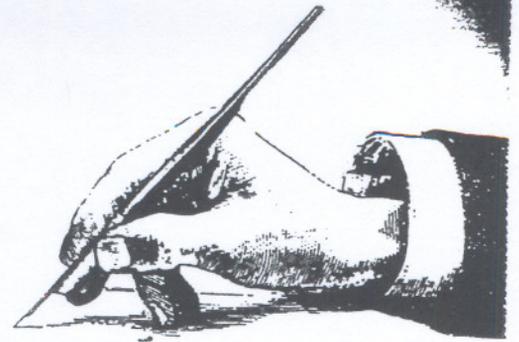


If a rich man is proud of his wealth, he should not be praised until it is known how he employs it.

—Socrates

The best use of life is to invest it in something which will outlast life.

—William James



No. 3 and they're making a \$10,000 commitment."

So you go to the top business establishment first and set its sights based on your belief that it's capable of making that \$50,000 commitment. Naturally, you need to be very well prepared on the topic of giving capabilities when you make your calls.

Strategy No. 3: Decide in advance exactly how you're going to approach the prospect.

The two things you need to concern yourself about in deciding your approach are (1) the amount the donor is capable of giving, and (2) the reasons why your prospect should be interested in giving to you. The best way to determine the amount is through a small committee of board members who can evaluate the donor's giving potential. The group should assess the donor's *ability* to make a sizable commitment rather than his or her *willingness* to give. Certainly, the development officer may provide information.

You need to appeal to the donor's vulnerable areas. For example, if a leading Chicago executive went to Harvard and we want him to give to Roosevelt, we can say, "You should do this as a public service for the city of Chicago and the Midwest."

Or, if we're approaching someone who made her money here in Chicago, we can say, "We appreciate the fact that you are helping to educate people who will then make a bigger contribution to the Chicago community. You're giving to an institution that provides top education at reasonably low cost to people who will help make Chicago a better place to live and do business."

Strategy No. 4: Decide who should accompany you. That's because, first, if the two board members know the prospect, the prospect has a difficult time—in fact, down. Second, the president's pres-



ence will also demonstrate that the donor's support is important to the institution. Also, the president will know intimately the university's programs and will be able to speak from a professional and comprehensive knowledge of the institution.

Three people are also helpful because two can keep the conversation going while the person who's doing the asking takes time to think.

Strategy No. 5: Come to the call well-armed with background material.

If you're asking for a high figure—say \$1 million and up—you've got to make a presentation based on that. You can't walk in and say, "Please give us \$1 million." You've got to present the program, and you've got to present a lot of specifics. Be sure you've got a flip chart or its equivalent for a well-organized presentation. You need to arouse the donor's interest and clearly show how the gift will benefit the donor, the donor's family, or the donor's own institution.

Keep in mind that when you're fishing for a whale, you don't use a minnow for bait. You have got to be sure that the prospective donor identifies with your own consuming interest in the fact that he or she is able to make this gift. Try to give a tinge of romance to the project, an idea of something that will capture your donor's imagination. In other words, if you bring a flip chart of financial data, also bring a beautiful book of artist's renderings of a possible building, student scholarship beneficiaries, or other specific examples of what the gift will do. This book should be prepared with skill and taste. Don't denigrate the project with a mimeographed report bound in a paper cover.

Finally, of course, your own conversation should show the significance of your institution. It's important to what the

Giving is true loving.

—Charles H. Spurgeon



Answers to Six Common Excuses

Stone also spoke about ways to counter prospects' reasons for not giving. We have organized them here into common excuses and good responses.

Excuse No. 1: I just don't have time to see you.

Response: Try to give the donor reasons why he or she should see you. Say:

"It would be mutually beneficial for us to meet. There is no way we can put the scope of the institution and its value to our community into our literature. This campaign could have special benefits for you, and I would like to have just 10 to 15 minutes of your time to outline these benefits. I want to outline for you the things this institution is doing, the kind of students we have, and the reasons for our campaign."

Try to appeal to the prospect's vulnerable areas. For example, if the prospect has worked his or her way through college, you might say:

"Some 85 percent of our students are working to put themselves through college. I think you might have an interest in supporting their efforts."

Don't ever allow yourself to make a telephone call for a large contribution. Only use the phone to solicit smaller sums. Don't let a donor say, "I'll call you back" or "I'll send you a check." You won't get the largest gift you can that way. Say:

"I don't want to bother you every year. I just want to come in and explain our campaign. Surely you can give me 15 minutes, so let's set a time."

Excuse No. 2: Our budget is especially tight this year.

Response: "Well, we're in a five-year giving program, and consequently we are not here for this year but for future years. The university will go on for years after today, and thus we're introducing this five-year fund-raising pro-

gram. And as a responsible member of the community I knew you would want to support your local institution."

Excuse No. 3: I am supporting state universities with my taxes.

Response: "Basically, America works in education as it does in business. Would you let the state run your business? I know that, by virtue of your being a business or professional person, you know the value of the private enterprise system. Don't you want to see to it that students have the choice to be educated by private higher education so that the values of private enterprise are sustained?"

Excuse No. 4 (for corporate calls):

We give money to institutions that send us employees. We have looked into our records, and while XYZ institution sent us 130 employees last year, your institution sent us one. Consequently we feel our giving should be 100 to 1.

Response: "I think it would be wonderful if you'd tell us about why you think this is so. In addition, we'd like to offer placement services to your corporation on a more personal basis. The president of the university here will go on-line with his people to serve your corporation better if you promise to go on-line with your people to hire his graduates."

Excuse No. 5: I'd like to give you \$5,000 (from a person who should be giving at the \$1 million level).

Response: It's better to turn down the gift or to postpone it until you've solicited your other major gifts. If you accept a gift of this type, you will open the door to other rejections. You allow another person who should be giving at the \$1 million level to say to you,

"Well, if so-and-so gave you \$5,000, I'm not going to give you \$1 million or \$100,000 or \$50,000." Say:

"I appreciate this offer. I just can't

take that contribution, at least not at this time. It would be unfair to the campaign to accept it now, as we are presently looking for leadership gifts of \$50,000 or more. Please let me call on you again later."

Excuse No. 6: I'd like to think it over.

Response: Try to set a deadline with the prospect. Otherwise the prospect may delay a response for several months, at which point the flavor of your meeting will have faded. Say:

"Certainly, I'd like to have you think it over. Why don't I call you back in a week or 10 days to set up another appointment?"

If you're soliciting a corporation that you know has a contributions committee, say:

"When does the contributions committee next meet?"

If the meeting is on January 10, say:

"I'll call you back on the 11th, and we'll get their evaluation of the gift."

Conclusion

As a fund raiser, you should enjoy the prospect of a "sale" as much or more as you would a business sale. Unless you feel that you are going to get a kick out of bringing home a significant contribution, you will only devote lukewarm attention to fund raising on behalf of your institution. It's most important for you, as a volunteer, to feel you are accomplishing something on a grander scale than simply giving money or contributing your ideas to an institution's board. The fact that you are able to bring funds to back up your interest in the institution is, to me, a crowning achievement of service.

If you serve as a trustee—no matter how important or wealthy you are—you need to think not only of giving but also of getting funds. As a board member, you really are its ambassador of good will in the community. **END**

Some Common Donor Questions... ...and Some Good Answers

How much am I expected to give?
You are the only person who can decide what your gift should be, but we do have some hopes, and we wonder if you might consider giving XX. [Name a specific giving opportunity, such as a scholarship or a mini-computer for the science department.]

What would that cost?
If you'd like, you could do that for \$XX a year for XX years.

Are all commitments expected to be on an XX-year basis?
This is only the suggested pay period to make it more convenient for donors. You may wish to spread your gift over XX or XX years, which would be perfectly satisfactory.

This is a bad time for me since I'm heavily committed to a couple of other causes.

Perhaps you would like to delay the start of your payments and finish up in XX or XX years. Would this help?

What if I am unable to complete my pledge?
If there are any changes in your circumstances and you wish to change your commitments, such changes will, of course, be honored. Just drop a note to us explaining your request.

May I keep the Letter of Intent and send it to you?
It's really no trouble at all for me to stop back as soon as you have made a decision. Would you prefer to make it Thursday evening or the following Monday during the day? [Note: If you keep the Letter of Intent out of sight until the prospect is ready to pledge, there is less tendency for the prospect to ask that it be left.]

May I pay my pledge in cash now?
Of course you may, but would you be willing to repeat your payments again next year and the year after? This is an XX-year capital gifts campaign. We are hoping we can count on you for backing during each of the XX years of this special program.

I cannot give anything at the present time.
It is not necessary to give something immediately. You may make a pledge with payments to start at some future date: next month, next year, etc.

What about annual giving?
We hope our alumni will continue their strong support of annual giving and at the same time make an exceptional effort to support the campaign.

*This piece was taken from the "Hollins College Volunteer Guide." **CNSC***

continued from page 3

is], and perhaps we can make an appointment so I can give you that information next week."

Another approach is to ask what the likely timetable will be for the decision-making process and then request an appointment relative to that date. Keep the ball in your court.

You can also discuss your prospect's relationship to the overall campaign. You can say, "Other people will be waiting to hear our results. We're trying to achieve our goal of \$XX by the week of ABC, which means we really need to have completed our first calls on all prospects within the next week. So how would it be if I made an appointment for some time next week to discuss your commitment further?"

6. Hold on to that pledge card!

Whatever you do, keep the pledge card in your possession. Such a card is the main tool of control for the campaign office. Without that control, you can't pledge the prospect twice. If you give a pledge card to a prospect, the chances of the



prospect's returning it to you are not too good.

7. *Make the second visit.* On your second visit, your prospect will have considered the program and how he or she fits into it. Review just how important this program is to both of you. (After all, the prospect has already given time to consider the request; you are giving of your time to make a second visit.)

Try to secure the pledge verbally and then use the pledge card to record the pledge along with the details of the donor's investment. If you've taken the first steps like a champion, this part will be easy.

Crossing the finish line

Congratulations! At the end of a successful solicitation, you haven't asked for anything for yourself. You've asked for something for your institution, your community, and beyond. And you've helped someone else exercise his or her right of choice—to voluntarily make commitments to society through you. **CNSC**