Major Gifts

How Volunteer Solicitors Should Conduct Solicitation Meetings

Opening---Questioning---Listening---Presenting---Overcoming objections---Asking for the gift

1. Opening: How they are handled will determine their outcome
   - Talk about the prospects' interests
   - Talk with them, not to them
   - Involvement is the objective here
   - Work to see things from their point of view
   - Ask about their accomplishments

2. Questioning
   - You are not at the point yet to talk about the project---don't rush
   - Make them aware of the need before you show them how the need can be met
   - Be certain we do not force "yes" or "no" answers
   - We work at fact-finding and uncovering their motivation and needs

3. Listening
   - Communication is an active and a selective process
   - Anticipate the points they will make
   - Judge what they already said to you
   - Be empathetic—putting ourselves in the prospects' position
   - Listen with the entire body
   - "Let me be sure I have understood what you said" to really be sure
   - What they have to say is important and they must feel that they can relate to us that way

4. Presenting
   - Emphasize the benefits of what we do, rather than dwell on the problems and needs
   - They want to know about our organization: (Do this by talking about benefits and gains)
     - They will most likely ask:
       a. Is your organization at its best?
       b. Will it perform the way you say it will?
       c. Will it remain at its best in the future?
       d. How will I be paid back for my investment?
   - Use people success stories

5. Overcoming the objection
   - It is not an attack nor a rejection of us---don't take it personally
   - All objections are really questions---opportunities to correct real or perceived problems
   - "I see your point......" is the way to be gracefully accepting criticism
   - Let them know it is fair, if others share their view, it will help us find constructive solutions
   - Make no excuses, and certainly do not cause arguments

6. Asking for the gift---the closing: Failures usually occur here
   - They know that you are there to ask for money
   - Ask for more than expected, but not more than they can give
   - Suggest the amount desired
   - Be flexible with payment schedules