

Major Gifts

Donor & Prospect Profile

Find out everything you can about a major individual donor's interests, past philanthropic activities, and philosophy of life. The essence of a good solicitation is knowing as much as possible about the individual or family from whom you will be requesting a contribution. Fund raisers should be able to answer the following questions about every prospective donor they plan to contact:

1. In what aspect(s) of the organization is the prospect known to be interested?
2. How strong is that interest, and how has it been demonstrated?
3. Has the prospect established a relationship with someone in the organization?
Who?
4. Does the prospect have a business or social relationship with one or more of the organization's major contributors? Who?
5. What are the prospect's personal interests and avocations?
6. Does the prospect have control or influence over philanthropic funds?
Which ones?
7. Has the prospect taken any public stand on issues of concern to the organization?
What are they?
8. What other organizations has the prospect supported and for how much?

Fund raisers need to be able to see their organization and the world from the prospect's point of view. They must anticipate how a prospect is likely to react to a request that he/she support a particular cause, program, or project.