

***AFP Advancement Northwest
2023 Annual Conference
June 15 – 16, 2023
The Fundraiser's Toolkit***

Session title:

Lost but not Forgotten: Converting Donors from Lapsed to Loyal

Presenter: Nick Newcombe, CFRE

For your reference during and after the session:

1. Organization readiness to plan and implement a donor re-engagement strategy:

KEY QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

- i. Executive leadership's understanding of the importance of donor retention?
- ii. What is the volunteer leadership interest in and focused on? Acquisition, donor retention, major gifts?
- iii. What is the history of your organization's focus and previous strategies deployed re: retention?
- iv. What is the development staff's buy-in re: importance of retention vs. focus on acquisition?
- v. What are your current staff resources available to conduct effective donor engagement and retention?
- vi. What steps are you taking now?

2. Reasons donors disengage from an organization.

What you CAN CONTROL and what you CANNOT CONTROL.

CANNOT CONTROL

- I. Death – Deceased Suppression Services; cost varies by provider.
- II. Relocation - Find out via National Change of Address – cost varies by provider.
- III. Change in personal capacity (54% of lapsed donors)
- IV. Change in giving priorities (36% leave: other orgs. are more deserving)
- V. Life altering changes in personal life or national or global history i.e., pandemic, Great Recession.

- vii. Memorial, tribute, or peer-to-peer fundraising gifts: They may be intentional but possibly one-offs.

CAN CONTROL:

- i. Donor stewardship and donor communication: 50% = donor disengagement
- ii. Know your donor from the beginning and why they gave
- iii. Personal connection to your organization
- iv. Donor appreciation
- v. Mission marketing and communication

3. How to calculate your donor retention rate (example):

- Look back **two full fiscal years**: FY21 and FY22 (FY23 is only half completed and not useful for this calculation.)
- How many that gave in FY21 **gave again** in FY22. (123 donors)
- Divide **that number** of donors by the total number that gave in FY21 (456 donors)
- **Retention rate is 27%**

4. Advice for the effective donor survey

- I. Keep it short. 5 – 10 questions.
- II. Keep it focused.
- III. Rating scales from 1 - 5
- IV. No more than 5 multiple choice answer options i.e., list your programs or campaigns.
- V. No more than 2 open ended questions.
- VI. Send it out online via email.
- VII. Should take no more than 3- 5 minutes to complete.
- VIII. Test out with colleagues, staff, and friends before sending it out.

5. My favorite survey questions for the new or disengaged donor:

- I. Why is this cause important to you? (Add a field to write in answers)
- II. Which campaigns or programs interest you most? (List programs and/or campaigns)
- III. How much of an impact do you feel your gift has? (1 = no impact, 5 = major impact)
- IV. How many organizations do you support? (Give ranges: 1 to 3, 4 to 10, more than 10.)
- V. How do you prefer to donate? (Online, by check in the mail, at events etc.)

- VI. How would you rate your donor experience at this organization? (1 = poor, 5 = joyful)
- VII. Do you have any questions or concerns about this organization? (Yes or no and add a field to write in answers.)
- VIII. Would you like to volunteer at this organization? (Yes or no)

LIST OF THE 10 TOOLS FOR DONOR RE-ENGAGEMENT OUTLINED TODAY

1. Choose positive descriptors for donors.
2. Assess your organization's readiness to plan and implement donor re-engagement strategies.
3. Assess your donor retention.
4. Define your disengaged donor.
5. Perform donor database mining, segmentation, and research specific to re-engagement strategies.
6. Plan and implement a new and disengaged donor survey.
7. Craft and send a USPS letter for the disengaged donor.
8. Conduct board and/or major donor follow up calls to disengaged donors.
9. Plan and implement re-engaged donor focus groups.
10. Build realistic re-engagement strategies for mid-size and large organizations.