

Talking About Bequests

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donors?

Things that REALLY MATTER:

Connection / Trust / Understanding

Impact / Competency / Commitment

Regular communication /Gratitude

Things donors don't really care about:

Planned Giving technicalities

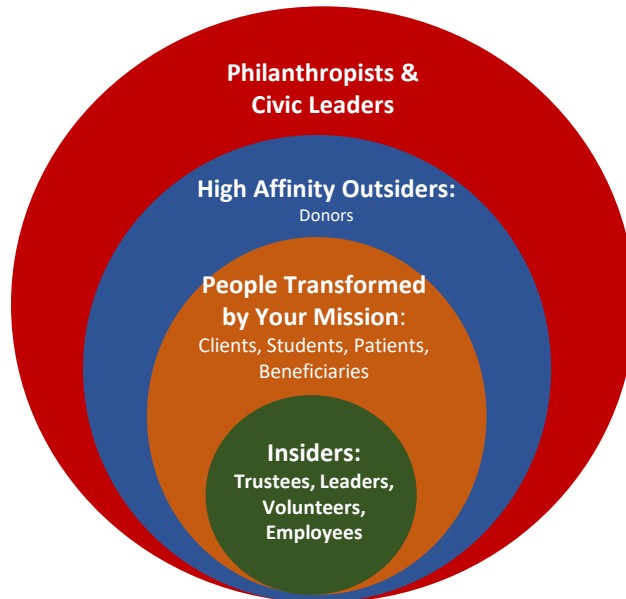
Tax regulation

Institutional issues and deadlines

Your goals and metrics

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Picture a donor in your mind



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Ask Permission

“You’ve been such a consistent donor and we are so grateful. May I have a conversation with you about another way you could support (organization name). Many loyal supporters and volunteers have also included (organization name) in their estate plans. I would be grateful to talk with you about that sometime, if it is something you would be comfortable considering.”

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Gift Indication

“Some time ago you indicated that you had included (organization name) in your estate plans. Thank you so much! May I ask what prompted you to include us in your plans? Did you have something specific in mind that you want to accomplish with your bequest? Would it be possible for us to complete this gift notification form together so we are certain your intentions are understood?”

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Another Donor Example

“We’ve had a number of wonderful gift commitments this year. Jasper Smith just made a commitment to endow a fund in memory of his parents. He did this with a simple bequest provision in his will.”

OR

“We just received a wonderful gift from Jill Adams. She passed away recently but left a provision in her estate for her favorite program at (organization name).”

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Longtime Donor

“Have you ever considered endowing your loyal support to (organization name) through a charitable bequest so that it will continue beyond your lifetime?”

OR

“Some friends, like you, who have been so faithful with their annual support of (organization name) have taken the extra step of including a bequest for (organization name) in their estate plans. Is that something you might consider?”

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Gentle Nudge

“I recently updated my will and am so glad to finally have my affairs in order. Have you had a chance to do that recently? One of the things I found most satisfying in the process was selecting the charities I want to benefit from my estate after my family is taken care of. Have you ever considered benefiting (organization name) through a charitable bequest in your will, or naming us as a beneficiary on a retirement account or life insurance policy?”

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Legacy Society

“We recently held our first Legacy Society luncheon and it was a wonderful chance for (organization name) to thank the donors who have named the organization in their estate plans. I was wondering if joining the Legacy Society is something you might consider?”

(this gives you a chance to share information about your Legacy Society)

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Advisor

“I have been meaning to ask if you have found a good advisor you can depend on to help you with your estate plans? (Yes) That’s great! Have they already helped you in updating your will? (Yes) I was wondering if during that process you considered including (organization name) in your plans, or if that is something you would consider for the future?”

OR

“(No) I would be happy to provide you with a list of attorneys, if you like, as a place to get started. We also have sample bequest language that you can take to your attorney if you would like to plan a bequest for (organization name).”

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5 Minute Donor Plan

Donor Meeting Planning Sheet

Donor Name: _____

What is the donor's relationship to our organization—donor (annual, endowment, capital), volunteer, board member, number of years, etc.?

What is the donor's life situation? Who are the people in their life—children, spouse, friends? What is going on in their life—work/retirement, health, travel?:

What matters to this donor? What are their priorities? What is their hope for the future?

What are this donor's values and how does our organization's work impact those values?

What do I hope will be the best possible outcome of this meeting?

Which script will you follow?

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Script Ideas

Ask Permission

Gift Indication

Another Donor Example

Longtime Donor

Gentle Nudge

Legacy Society

Advisor

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Final Thoughts

You don't need special technical or legal expertise to have these conversations.

Remember, you are providing a service to your donors when you remind them of the importance of wills and reflecting on the people and causes most important to them.

Remind the donors that getting their affairs in order is easy to do and that you can help in any way with referrals and information.

Remind the donors that bequest plans are not written in stone, they can be changed at any time.

Some may want anonymity and you may need to assure them that their privacy will be protected.

Some may feel like they have little to give. Remind them that they can choose their level of support and that all gifts make a difference.

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Questions?

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