

planned giving tomorrow

PRACTICAL PLANNED GIVING MARKETING IDEAS FOR ALL FUNDRAISERS

The Mind Hates Confusion

Want to be heard? **Oversimplify.**

Viken Mikaelian



The average American is bombarded with over 3,500 messages a day.

Each hour the Web grows by millions of pages. Satellites beam endless messages. Rotating billboards, telemarketers, marketing materials in our mailboxes. A child is exposed to over 150,000 commercials by age 18.

I could go on.

As a fundraiser, you are in the business of sales and marketing, that means you have an enormous amount of noise to cut through. If you want to be heard, you must differentiate. Make your differentiating idea simple and visible. Deliver it over and over and over again in a variety of formats.

The cure for "Indecisivitis"

I went into a Best Buy to purchase a cordless phone. There were so many options. I analyzed, over analyzed, and could not make up my mind. I left not buying anything. This happens to fundraisers, too. That's why fundraisers do not own cordless phones. But seriously... we all know non-profits are plagued by a disease called *Indecisivitis*. We meet, discuss, meet again. We call in specialists. Decisions are almost made. Then we want someone else to decide. Then it's delegated. Half the team changes jobs, and the process of indecision starts over again.

Am I being harsh? No. I'm just stating it as it is. I have lost clients because of addressing serious issues no one wants to hear. Jeff Comfort at OSU and I did it in

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The Sexiest Seven Words in Fundraising

An unconventional way to write an appeal letter.

Nigel Allen



Once upon a time in a market far, far away, I worked at FORTUNE Magazine.

In retrospect, selling advertising in FORTUNE had a lot of similarities to fundraising. It was a great magazine with a specific editorial mission that competed for dollars with a lot of other fine magazines and newspapers. During my time there, an editorial colleague posed this fascinating question: "What are the sexiest six words in advertising?" I've never forgotten how he answered it and have made it one of my fundraising mantras to live by: "Let me tell you a story."

My publishing days seem a lifetime ago, and I have happily spent 10 years working in the development field. And still—stories are sexy. Tom Ahern, a direct mail consultant I highly respect, says it this way: "Facts tell, stories sell."

Not just any story—an *authentic* story.

We're all wearily familiar with the deluge of solicitations and exhortations from charities that fill our mailboxes, especially around the end of the year. I started paying closer attention to these letters once I began working in development. I noticed that most, if not all, rang hollow in sincerity. Even the letters that attempted to follow

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Just Communicate

The happy moment when I realized that growing planned gifts doesn't have to be complicated.

Marcia Ferguson



I had worked on the fringes of fundraising and development for many years and finally took a job devoted entirely to development

(health care). During my first few years I attended several seminars in order to get myself up to speed on planned gifts. While the courses introduced me to gift planning tools, they did not offer enough training on how to educate our constituents about planned giving. Nor did they help provide a framework for building a strong Legacy Society. I found myself getting bogged

down with immense technical information, most of which I would not recall. I am not an estate or financial planner. Of course someone has to know the ins and outs tax law, estate planning and gift tools. But I was not that person.

This did not help my small shop grow planned gifts.

Those of us in the development field are in a relationship-building field. Our job puts us in relationships with people who want to understand the options that make giving really flexible and who want

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Ask Brian

Got a question itching for an answer? Ask Brian M. Sagrestano, JD, CFRE, at plannedgiving.com/brian.

Bashful? You can ask to remain anonymous.

Check online at plannedgiving.com/answers for replies that don't fit here and a lot more.

Q When a husband and wife fund a gift annuity, is it always joint and survivor?

A Not always. When a husband and wife fund a gift annuity with jointly held or community property assets, it should be a joint and survivor gift annuity. But if the assets (such as appreciated stock) are held in the name of just the husband or just the wife, the gift annuity is issued to the person owning the assets. In that case, the spouse would be the successor beneficiary, meaning he or she takes payments only after the person owning the assets has passed away. This can become a point of contention when spouses divorce during the term of the annuity.

Q I've heard it's possible in some states to use charitable gifts to completely avoid probate. True?

A Yes. If the donor holds all of his or her assets in a form that can be passed by beneficiary designation, there are no

assets left to be included in the probate estate. For example, let's imagine a donor has a checking account, a brokerage account, an IRA, and real estate. It is possible to name charities as the payable on death (P.O.D.) beneficiary of the checking and brokerage accounts, as the beneficiary of the IRA, and (in states that allow for this designation) as the transfer on death (T.O.D.) beneficiary on the real estate.

The converse is also true, however. If your charity is named as the residuary beneficiary of the estate (meaning you get what is left), and the donor passes all of these same assets to family members outside of the probate process, your organization will get nothing. With more and more assets able to be passed outside of probate, being named as the beneficiary on these assets directly is more important than ever.

Brian

Have Your Say

Comments, stories, complaints...

I hate you.

I have come to the conclusion that I hate *Planned Giving Tomorrow*. I hate it because:

1. It forces me to think in new ways, which makes me uncomfortable.
2. Its well-written stories force me to allocate some of my very limited time to read it.
3. It exposes me to other areas where my experience or expertise is limited.
4. It reminds me that my profession is a vocation, not a job, and that doing what is right is not always the "least expensive" way to go.

To summarize, I hate *Planned Giving Tomorrow* because if I don't read it, I'm doing a disservice to those who pay me and to those entrusted to my care. Thanks a lot!

— Jack Miller, Pittsburg, PA

I love you.

Thanks for your newsletter. It's really well edited. I get a lot of these things and yours is the one I make a habit of reading and showing to my colleagues.

—Randy Delp, Souderton, PA

Are you
talking to me?

Finally.

Donor-centric planned giving websites that speak to prospects first.


PlannedGiving.com



**SOME PEOPLE EARN A LIVING BY COMPLICATING PLANNED GIVING.
WE MAKE IT SIMPLE. 800-490-7090**

The Sexiest Seven Words in Fundraising

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the “let me tell you a story” approach felt contrived. Some of the stories were so polished and so perfect that they just seem... fake. And let’s be honest. Many of them are fake. The “true stories” in direct mail are often a conglomeration of stories from different people, perhaps with a dash of creative license exercised by the writer. They feel contrived because they are.

Prospective donors have highly tuned B.S. detectors. So why even bother serving up insincerity?

A few years ago I decided to try a new approach with Big Bend Hospice’s end-of-year letter. Instead of merely including a donor “story” as part of the letter, I decided to make the entire letter the story. And I decided there is really only one way to achieve a truly authentic feel.

It actually has to be authentic.

So I invited a donor to partner with me in writing the letter—his voice, his photo, his story. The process was time consuming. Because while on one extreme, an overly polished story makes people skeptical, on the other, a boring story makes people tune out. It took a lot of time and patience as the donor and I went back and forth to craft a letter we were both pleased with. But the end result was a genuine story that felt real. And, as I had hoped, it was a letter that raised more money.

Authentic story = great results

I’ve repeated this experiment the last three years for our end-of-year appeal letters, and each year the results get better. Take a look:

YEAR 1	
Cost	\$9,879
Number of pieces mailed	15,473
Total funds raised	\$41,130
▶ Cost to raise \$1	\$0.24
YEAR 2	
Cost	\$9,040
Number of pieces mailed	14,865
Total funds raised	\$56,353
▶ Cost to raise \$1	\$0.16
YEAR 3	
Cost	\$9,538
Number of pieces mailed	17,392
Total funds raised	\$73,307
▶ Cost to raise \$1	\$0.13

Only 13 cents to raise a dollar? I’ll take that any day. \$73,000 donated in support of our unfunded programs? Yes, please.

An added bonus

Giving comes in many forms. Our supporters can give money. They can give of their time and their talents. They can spread the word about us to others. And they can give their story. The gentleman I worked with on last year’s letter is an 87-year-old, highly intelligent, highly engaged donor and volunteer. His letter focused on the care our hospice provided the woman who was the love of his life. For a donor to share his or her experience—especially something as deep and personal as the loss of a loved one—shows a lot of trust in the organization. I can’t think of a better way to do donor retention than working together over a period of several months on such an important and personal project.

See the letter my donor and I co-wrote here:
www.plannedgiving.com/authentic-story.

My colleagues and I have been so pleased with the successful fundraising letters that we decided to expand our authentic storytelling approach to video vignettes. We worked with a local firm to create a video highlighting our bereavement programs to help teenagers who have lost a family member. Our video isn’t flashy or slick. It doesn’t use the latest greatest camera technology. It simply features real kids talking to the camera in their real voices. The end result is authentic and heartwarming. Donors love it.

I’ve adopted the question my advertising colleague asked years ago, and I’ve made a slight adjustment. My question: What are the sexiest seven words in fundraising?

And the answer: “Let me tell you an authentic story.” ●

Nigel Allen is the Executive Director of the Big Bend Hospice Foundation in Tallahassee, Florida. He was drawn to the mission of hospice care after experiencing the illness and death of his father who did not receive the benefits of hospice care, and the subsequent end-of-life journey of a close friend who did.
Contact: nigel@bigbendhospice.org

Just Communicate

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opportunities to make a difference and fulfill their philanthropic aspirations. I needed tools that would help me connect with people in their everyday lives more than I needed to know how to write a CRUT.

Thankfully, I found an article from the Advisory Board Company that cut through the noise and brought most welcome clarity into my world. In two words, the point of the research-based article was this: *Just communicate*.

Don’t memorize the tax code.

Don’t study the details of two dozen gift plans. Don’t try to be a financial planner. Just communicate. That’s it. Communicate regularly with people about a few basic planned giving opportunities.

So that’s what we did. My team developed a communication plan. I started working with PlannedGiving.com to set up a website and scheduled some postcard mailing campaigns. Everything had a simple, clear message about a few planned giving opportunities. I created a “Quick List of Common Ways to Give” and placed it everywhere—newsletters, flyers, packets for donors, etc.

Finally I had the tools I needed to do a better job. It was easier, it was enjoyable and best yet—it didn’t take long before I started seeing results.

It’s been about a year and a half since my team started our “just communicate” approach, and we’ve had 20 people ask for more information about planned gifts. I call these people our Legacy Circle prospects. Of course there’s no guarantee they’ll all make a gift, but they are regular

givers who are dedicated to our mission. And when I stop to think that only about two people had expressed interest in or committed to making a planned gift during the previous six years, I know I’m on a better path.

I will never go back. ●

Marcia Ferguson has been the Executive Director of the Parma Hospital Health Foundation since April 2007. Marcia’s health care service began as a hospital volunteer, and her hospital employment spans 25 years.
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Planned Giving: It's All About Relationships

Stewardship leads to trust, which leads to a relationship, which leads to a gift.

Mary-Helen McCulloch, Esq.



Arthur is my absolute favorite. We went for what I thought would be a quick coffee mid-morning. Little did I know this would become one of the longest but most important visits of my planned giving career. After two and a half hours and three cups of coffee, I knew Arthur would be very important to my school.

Over the following months I got to know Arthur not only as a donor, but as a friend. He is a kind and generous man. Although he lives out of state and rarely has the chance to visit, he loves the school. He also loves his three cats, his annual family reunion in West Virginia, and his grandchildren.

I came to learn that Arthur is not totally satisfied with everything about the school. But it's obvious his heart is in a good place. He has given consistently to the annual fund for a few years. Nine months after I first met him, he updated his will to include significant gift that will create a scholarship in the name of his late wife and himself.

In the busyness of the day-to-day, it's easy to lose sight of the importance of relationships in planned giving. I'm glad for people like Arthur who remind me.

Trust and stewardship lead to authentic relationships. Authentic relationships lead to increased commitment to your organization. Commitment to the organization leads to planned gifts.

Following are some of my best relationship reminders. Nothing here is rocket science. Just simple, common sense reminders that help keep me on track working to establish relationships, build trust, and translate those relationships into gifts.

Building trust

Building trust begins with learning about the person as an individual. We need to be asking questions about family, life experiences, favorite athletic teams, etc. Who is he? Who is she?

Genuine understanding of the person's affiliation to our organization is also a crucial step in creating trust. Phrasing questions to allow for wide-open answers generally allows the donors to feel most at ease. Attempting to steer towards a specific answer will not comfort the donor and

will not give any insight into where they feel most connected to our organization.

Listen! Even if listening means barely getting in a word during a two hour lunch ... at a place an hour away... with mediocre food. Listening builds trust. Listening creates connections. Connections bring the individual closer to our community.

Maintaining contact

The time in between building trust and authentic relationships is always crucial. Stewardship through invitations to events, sending anniversary and holiday cards, or calling to ask about family reunions—it makes a difference.

We are all busy. The simplest way is to set aside one or two hours every week, on the same day, at the same time—and just do it. Set a calendar reminder. Once it's part of a routine, this part is the easiest and often proves to be the most fruitful.

for the individual to make a planned gift, there must be some trustee member, director, alumnus, another volunteer, *someone!* Get the support you need to help create that relationship. The perpetuity of our organizations depends on it.

Translating relationships to gifts

When a person or a family makes the decision to make a planned gift, they are telling us that they want our organization to be a part of their family now and forever. That legacy is representative of a crucial personal commitment.

Every donor and relationship is different and a one-size-fits-all step between translating a relationship to a gift is neither practical nor effective. Once we have listened to the donor and established a strong foundation, asking that person to support the cause or program at our organization that *they* care about is most



Creating authentic relationships

Relationships cannot be surface level if we expect to get a large planned gift. Our donors need to believe we care. He or she will believe we care if... *we actually do*. It is hard to love every donor. In fact, many will drive us up the wall. It is unrealistic to have the same deep personal connection with one person that we have with another.

However, we must find something. If you can't, and if there is a strong potential

productive. Do we want the broad based unspecified bequest with no stipulations? Absolutely. However, we may have to be creative, not willing to leave money on the table, and flexible, to get that million dollar-plus gift. ●

Mary-Helen McCulloch, Esq. is in her second year as Director of Planned Giving at Malvern Preparatory School. Prior to Malvern Prep, she was the Director of Planned Giving at the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and the Catholic Foundation of Greater Philadelphia. Contact: mmcculloch@malvernprep.org

The Mind Hates Confusion

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our last webinar *The IRS Considers You A Business. Act Like One*. It was our least popular because some did not want to swallow the truth. But the non-profits who are addressing the issues are the ones rising to the top. They are my clients who are simplifying their message.

The power of simplicity

In 2002 we “created” the planned giving postcard. Another planned giving vendor proclaimed: “Complex features of planned gifts can’t be related with less than 150 words.” That vendor was heavily invested in producing newsletters 25 times that length and 10 times more expensive. No wonder they disagreed.

But we milked that statement all the way to the bank because we had something that worked and we knew it. Now that vendor is producing postcards. (13 years late.)

My advice. Please take it.

Simple words. Fewer words. Powerful words. Be ruthless about how you edit your message. Any language that requires analysis or a second reading... nix it. *Oversimplify*. And please—oh—please: *Do not have an attorney or an academic edit write your copy*. They may be smart—brilliant, even—but if you want people to actually read your stuff, let the marketing experts have the final say. ●

Viken Mikaelian is CEO at PlannedGiving.com



I couldn't resist snapping a photo of this rotating monitor attached to a faucet. More messaging and over the top. Still don't believe me when I say the average American is inundated with over 3500 marketing messages a day?
— Viken Mikaelian

9 Steps To A Solution

How to remain calm and solve problems under pressure.

Brian Tracy



1: Don't Blame Others

To be your own turnaround specialist, to take complete control over your life in a crisis, the first thing you must do is to accept 100% responsibility for yourself and for everything that happens from this minute forward. Anger and negative emotions of all kinds are dependent upon blame for their very existence. As soon as you stop blaming other people and take responsibility for the future, your negative emotions cease, your mind becomes calm and clear, and you begin to make better decisions.

2: Get the Facts

Instead of overreacting, keep yourself calm by asking questions of the other people involved. Listen patiently to the answers. If there is a solution, your job is to find it by fully understanding what has happened before you respond.

3: Remain Calm Under Pressure

Refuse to react unthinkingly. Take a deep breath to calm your mind, and then think carefully about your next words and actions. Imagine that everyone is watching to see how you will respond. Imagine that this situation is a test to see what you are truly made of. Resolve to be a role model and demonstrate the correct way to deal with a problem, as if you were giving a lesson.

4: Ask Questions

Ask key questions and listen carefully to the answers.

What is the situation exactly? How did it happen? When did it happen? Where did it happen? What are the facts? How do we know that these facts are accurate? Who was involved? Who is responsible for doing (or not doing) certain things?

The very act of asking questions and gathering facts keeps you calm and increases your courage and confidence.

5: Write it Down

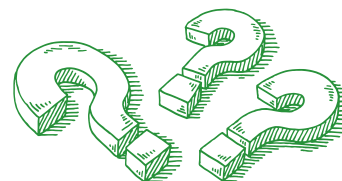
Begin by asking, “What, exactly, is the problem?” If you are working by yourself, write down a clear statement of the problem. Then write down what all of the possible solutions to the problem. If you can get the problem down on paper it starts to solve itself.

6: Try Something Different

By taking a different approach to solving a problem, you may find a new, more beneficial way to go about things, which will help you over the long run.

7: Communicate With Others

Sometimes, talking over the problem with a spouse or trusted friend will help immensely to keep you calm and controlled. Go for a long walk and review the situation, examining it from every angle. Look for something good in the problem or situation. Very often, what appears to be a major setback is an opportunity in disguise.



The very act of asking questions and gathering facts keeps you calm and increases your courage and confidence.

8: Make a Decision

Within every problem you face, there is the seed of an equal or greater benefit or advantage. When you discipline yourself to look for it, you remain calm, positive, and optimistic.

9: Get Busy Solving the Problem

Get so busy taking action that and solving the problem and bringing about a solution, that you don't have time to worry or think about the problem anymore. The only real antidote to worry is purposeful action in the direction of your goals. Remind yourself that problems come not to obstruct, but to instruct. ●

Brian Tracy is Chairman and CEO of Brian Tracy International, a company specializing in the training and development of individuals and organizations. Brian has consulted for more than 1,000 companies and addressed more than 5,000,000 people in talks and seminars around the world. www.briantracy.com

Confessions Of A Former Development Director

Four things I would have done differently if I had known better.

Randy Delp



I wish I knew then what I know now. For five years I worked as the development director for a small private Christian school in Philadelphia. I was fully committed to my role, believed in the mission of the school, and worked with amazing people. But it was a stressful job. Like many smaller not-for profit organizations, over half of our budget came from our annual fund. I felt as if the financial sustainability of the organization rested on my shoulders.

I often heard about other organizations receiving gifts from generous people through their will or trust and other ways. I knew these gifts were often for significant amounts. But how to facilitate those kinds of gifts felt beyond me. The details of tools like charitable trusts and charitable gift annuities were fuzzy at best. I was too busy running the annual fund and other responsibilities to feel like I could take the time to learn how to guide donors in the world of planned giving.

When we've personally taken the same step we are asking our donors to make, asking becomes so much more natural.

For five years we met our annual fund goals. But because I failed to integrate planned giving conversations into my donor visits, we did not attract the kind of transformative gifts that would have taken the school to the next level.

Seven years ago, I transitioned to a financial services organization where I work as a charitable advisor with a donor-advised foundation. We've been able to help clients donate a variety of non-cash assets, such as rental properties, vacant land, IRA's, appreciated stocks, and more. From this position, I've seen firsthand the power of planned gifts.

I've had the privilege of sitting with donors who wanted to think beyond the annual gift. I've seen their sense of satisfaction in making plans that will extend their giving beyond their lifetime. I've sat with children of those same people, years later, and reflected on their parent's legacy of generosity. I've also been privileged to

deliver five and sometimes six-digit checks to non-profit organizations doing important work. If I knew then what I know now, I would have:

- 1 Included an invitation during many of my donor visits to discuss how to make a gift to our school through their will.
- 2 Focused on identifying donors who were interested in exploring gifts beyond annual fund cash gifts. (The vast majority of a person's wealth is not in cash. I've seen statistics that indicate approximately 95% is in non-cash assets.)
- 3 Sought out an organization to partner with that could help implement planned gifts after I had identified interested donors.
- 4 Been bolder in talking about end-of-life planning issues with donors with whom I had built relationships.

There's one thing I did do as development director that I would do again.

I made my own planned gift first. My wife and I made a bequest to the school through our will. It's the corollary to the principle that every development director should personally make the first contribution to the annual fund. The same is true for a planned gift. When we've personally taken the same step we are asking our donors to make, asking becomes so much more natural.

I have tremendous empathy for the development directors I work with. They have myriad responsibilities, they deal with boards or executive directors that may not fully understand development and fundraising, and they work with limited staff and shoestring budgets. Despite these challenges, I know that when done with integrity and respect for the donor, development is among the most noble of professions. Because, like the donors we work with, we have the privilege of changing and saving lives. ●

Randy Delp serves as managing director of the Everence Financial Advisor office in Southeastern Pennsylvania, and charitable planning advisor with Everence Charitable Services. Everence works with organizations and individuals to encourage and facilitate generosity. Contact: Randy.Delp@Everence.com

Yesterday is the time to build your planned giving program.

You need to secure planned gifts from Traditionalists (prospects born pre-1946) now, before it is too late.



60%

Almost 60% of Leading Baby Boomers, the generation following the Traditionalists, are retiring without **any** retirement savings.

Those who have means prefer current gifts over planned gifts. This means less planned gifts for your organization in the future.

Brian M. Sagrestano JD, CFRE
PlannedGiving.Com Consultant

Would You Accept Chevron Stock?

Personal preferences can't interfere with gift acceptance.

Betsy Suppes



Last year I wrote an article for this magazine about how non-profits should include “the ask” for gifts of mineral rights on their

websites. Shortly afterwards, I received an email from an advancement officer who thought no “self-respecting non-profit organization should consider a gift of mineral rights, particularly ones involving hydrocarbons.”

Her objections stemmed from personal opposition to hydraulic fracturing. But she represented an academic institution, so I welcomed an exchange of information.

Personal opinion vs. major gift.

Over the next couple of days, the advancement officer and I exchanged several emails. I asked if she would accept Chevron stock. Her answer: “Of course. We accept appreciated stock.” I reminded her that it is a “back-door” yes to mineral rights. Our conversation begs the question: should personal opinion stand in the way of a major gift to an institution?

What would happen if a donor gifted

a piece of art that offended the advancement officer? Or what about a major gift from a business made successful by overseas factories when the gift officer opposes outsourcing?

A revenue stream from royalties can be a significant contribution to a non-profit's endowment or operating budget. Royalties can come from songs, plays, movies, software, trademarks, patents, franchises, and ... mineral rights. As an advancement officer you may dislike or have a personal objection to the particular intellectual property the donor has to offer. But what if that's the one gift your donor can give?

You need a gift acceptance policy.

When your donors are organizing their estate plans, they often have more than one charitable organization they care about, and if you won't take their mineral rights (or their artwork), *someone else will.*

Advancement officers' personal beliefs should not get in the way of accepting a gift. But that doesn't mean those beliefs should be disregarded entirely. There's often more than one way to accept a gift.

For example, a recent client requested an evaluation of a gift of mineral interests. The organization accepted the gift and shortly afterwards sold the rights to another group. It was a win-win solution. The donor was able to gift the mineral interests, and the non-profit was able to monetize the gift.

Donors and gift officers, like all people, have a variety of economic, religious, political, and ethnic backgrounds. Our motives and philosophies are rarely cut and dry. If a donor wants to support the mission of the organization, and if the gift meets the gift acceptance policy, the gift officer has an obligation to the organization to accept the gift. ●

Betsy Suppes is a qualified appraiser and petroleum geologist. Contact: BSuppes@foragedalegeo.com



Your turn!

Have you ever accepted (or refused) a gift that you personally struggled with? Tell us about it and win a free copy of our popular 2015 Planned Giving Pocket Guide. Success@PlannedGiving.com

Finally.

A non-threatening estate planning guide with a focus on charitable giving. Now... that's *truly* donor-centric.

Take the fear out of estate planning by educating your prospects how to get started—and include charitable planning right from the start. Written in easy-to-understand, non-technical language that anyone understands.

This customizable guide doubles as a networking tool. Leave it behind on donor visits. Give it out at Legacy Society luncheons, donor gatherings, reunions, or board meetings. Hand it to financial advisors and attorneys to pass on to their constituents.

800.490.7090
Success@PlannedGiving.com


PlannedGiving.com

Some call it
an estate plan.
We call it a life plan.

Why you need a will and how to get started.
A very simple guide to estate planning.

Choose from
over 12 attractive
cover designs or
we can design a
special one just
for you.



 **Mellis University**
ALLERE FLAMMAM VERITATIS

Connection

Like air and water, we need it.

Jean Marie Martin



In my first community theater experience it was mandatory for the whole cast to be at each rehearsal, no matter our role. Many nights I dreaded

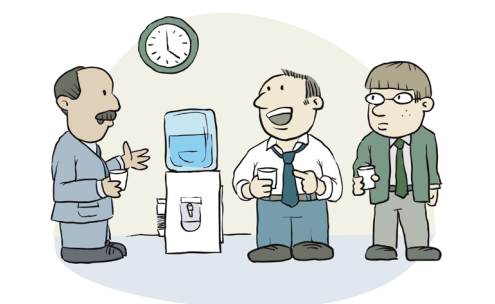
the drive to sit through scenes I wasn't involved in. I fidgeted and ran through a mental list of all of the better things I could be doing with my time. But I kept showing up, and eventually it occurred to me that I had a skewed perception of what it meant to be involved.

I began to reach out to my fellow actors to get to know them better behind stage. As the weeks passed, my connections with them grew stronger and more meaningful. We joked with each other during costume and scene changes. Our dialogues improved on stage. When, as a group, we finally stood for curtain call in front of an audience, the feeling of connection was wonderful. I've never forgotten it.

Our interpersonal connections are essential to growth, progress, and achievement. Each day, we connect in myriad ways, starting with our routines, work, family, friends, faith, and hobbies. On the surface level, we make small

connections in the checkout line at a store, walking past a stranger, and in water cooler conversations with our co-workers.

Our connections are reliable and familiar. They bring us pleasure and success. Our connections chart our course.



When we gather at the water cooler or plan a get-together after work, we are following our instinctual need to connect.

The more I experience, personally and professionally, the more evident it is to me

that underneath the loaded inbox, unending text messages, and the pipeline to closing gifts, is a deeper need for connection. When we gather at the water cooler or plan a get-together after work, we are following our instinctual need to connect. And when we connect, we learn, listen, acknowledge, and become acknowledged—all important to our personal and professional growth.

I need connection. So do you.

And so do your donors and prospects. They are looking to connect with someone who has similar interests and beliefs—or maybe different interests and beliefs with the ability to discuss them respectfully and gently. Geoff Harrington has a great article on page 9 that talks about connecting with donors even when they think and live very differently from you. So: Who will you connect with today? ●

Between the University of Pennsylvania and Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, Jean Marie has over 15 years experience in development communications. Contact: JeanMarie@PlannedGiving.com

$$f(x) = a_0 + \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \left(a_n \cos \frac{n\pi x}{L} + b_n \sin \frac{n\pi x}{L} \right)$$

You don't need to learn another language to "get" planned giving.

Don't simplify. Oversimplify. Be ruthless about how you edit your message. Any communication that requires analysis or a second read... nix it.

This goes for your planned giving website, direct mail, display ads, videos, and digital outreach. Anything that can't be simplified, such as a planned giving newsletter, ditch it.

This philosophy is what sets us apart in producing simple, easy to "get" planned giving websites and marketing tools that get results.

Like our approach? Contact us. We'll show you what your peers are doing, who is succeeding, how, and why.

800-490-7090
Success@PlannedGiving.com


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The Conspicuous Irony Of The Non-Profit World

Five steps to create trust and build relationships with the wealthy 1%.

Geoff Harrington



It should have been a slam dunk.

The college president and I, the chief development officer, were having dinner with an alumna and her husband. She'd stayed in touch with her former mentor and professor, who was also a donor to the college and chairman of the college's board of trustees. He had helped arrange a meeting for the president and I with Alicia and Ed en route to an alumni event in a sunny southern state. The setting, their seaside private club, was perfect.

Ed was a very personable former FBI man who then worked for the Department of Homeland Security and taught courses in criminal justice at several colleges. He offered to help fund, strengthen, and grow the college's fledgling criminal justice program.

But then, despite my best efforts to steer things along a more productive path, the discussion strayed into current events. The couple's views on the Iraq war upset the president, who served on the board of an international organization dedicated to world peace. The more he thought about the conversation after returning to campus, the less inclined he became to make a follow-up call. The call never happened, and the criminal justice program languished for lack of leadership and funding. We'd lost a potential champion.

A socio economic and political divide can be bad news for your students, patients, or clients.

The above scenario is more common in the non-profit world than many would care to admit, and it is rooted in a conspicuous irony of the non-profit world. The staff members of those organizations are for the most part service-minded liberals of modest means. On the other hand, board members and leading donors of those institutions are successful, wealthy, and often politically conservative business owners or corporate officers of major employers in the community.

As a result, non-profit staff members (particularly the young and idealistic ones) see only the drastic differences in socio-economic status, lifestyles, values, and political sympathies and fail to find common ground or see donors and

trustees as friends to be cultivated and welcomed into the heart of the organization. The result is lost opportunities.

Here are five steps you can take to help your development team prevent political differences, personalities, or other sensitive matters from scuttling potential gifts and squashing opportunities to advance the mission of your organization.

1 Do your homework.

Do the best research you can with the resources you have, and then bring in the president to seal the deal. In the case I described, pressed for cash, we fast-tracked our best prospects and often had our president making a first contact to alumni that had not been cultivated in years. Better research might have revealed the potential political conflict and enabled us to revise our approach.



2 Go with the strengths you have.

I would rather deal with an activist CEO than one who prefers the Ivory Tower. Although an improvisation approach may lead to the occasional dustup, it is far better to act and to reach out to donors than it is to let fear of a culture clash scuttle potential victories. That same college president was very comfortable seeking the generous support of a lead donor we identified for our new nursing program. That donor was, like the president, a staunch liberal. As a result the nursing program received excellent private support and got off to a strong start.

3 If you make a mistake, make amends and move on.

People are often forgiving and surprise us with the allowances they make for human foibles and personality differences. Much

to their credit, Alicia and Ed continued to support the college. Their affection for the college and Alicia's friendship with her former professor overcame their hurt from the tense Iraq war conversation and the lack of follow-through by the president

4 Read your job description.

You signed on to work with all potential donors, not just the ones who make you feel affirmed in your political views or outlook on life. You are not in the "feel good" business. You owe it to your employer and the people served by your non-profit to do your job. Success depends on the resources you bring in through your efforts as a development officer.

5 Don't judge your donors.

My predecessors had warned me about a donor they'd met only by phone. She is difficult and irritable, they told me. After two years of cultivation, I finally got an appointment in her exclusive gated community. I discovered her to be a pleasant, youthful, athletic New York Islanders fan. She was nothing like the cranky older woman she'd been portrayed as. Instead she struggled with a learning disability that caused her to hesitate while organizing her thoughts. Her pauses were perceived by my predecessors as annoyance with their questions. Years later I discovered that I was the only development officer of myriad charities, to ever have a face-to-face meeting with her. All because I was pleasantly persistent and made an open-ended effort to engage her with the college.

You make a difference.

You are creating opportunities that enable your donors to realize their hopes and dreams of helping a cause they believe in. You aren't "hitting them up" as some of your friends and colleagues would have you believe. Be proud of what you do and your ability to create trust and to build relationships with people—even those with whom you may disagree on politics or social justice. You'll be helping the people you serve. Isn't that why you joined your organization in the first place? ●

Geoff Harrington is a fundraising executive and consultant who has raised over \$60 million for higher education, health care, the arts, culture, recreation, and animal advocacy. www.facebook.com/JackJeffriesLLC

How To Be Advisor-Centric

A new approach to working with financial advisors.

Dan Rice



Once upon a time, fundraisers asked donors mostly charity-centric questions. *Why do you give to our organization? Toward which projects are you interested in designating your gifts?*

Then came the donor-centric approach: *What happened in your life to make this gift possible? In what way is this gift meaningful to you and your family?*

When donors consider planned gifts, their financial advisors enter the picture. So the next step for savvy charities is to be advisor-centric. An advisor-centric approach begins by simply asking your donors who their financial advisors are, and then explaining the resources and programs your charity has available to support them.

Then you need to make your organization stand out—which may seem a daunting task considering that many advisors already have in-house planned giving resources, sit on the boards of charities, and may already have been supplied with planned giving resources by other fundraisers.

Your solution? Focus on the financial advisor's most important and unmet business development needs. Explain to the advisor how you can help her retain and grow her Assets Under Management. (That's AUM—the most cherished acronym in the financial advisor vocabulary.)

These enterprising charities have figured out that it is not their job to invest and manage their financial assets.

What savvy charities have learned

A growing number of charitable organizations, including community foundations, are being advisor-centric by offering donor-advised funds and endowment funds that are managed by financial advisors. These enterprising charities have figured out that it is not their job to invest and manage their financial assets. They've realized they can greatly accelerate the growth of these funds if they allow the donor's qualified financial advisor to continue managing the assets the donor has given.

This is how you ensure that the financial advisor doesn't become your "gift prevention department." On the contrary, involved advisors will want to introduce new clients to advisor-centric nonprofits!

How to be a savvy charity

Wait a minute, you might be thinking. Doesn't the charity have to open its own account with the financial advisor, so that the donor can transfer their gift from their account to the charity's account?

Yes.

So if the charity has 100 donors in 50 states and each donor has their own advisor, the charity would need to open 100 investment accounts in 50 states?

Yes.

That's crazy.

You call it crazy. I call it savvy.

I want to be savvy. How do I start?

First, consider revising your gift acceptance policies to allow Registered Investment Advisors (RIAs) to manage your donor-advised funds and endowment funds. Next, you have a few options:

You can outsource administration work to a third party, such as the Charitable Trust Administration Company (CTAC), which has the infrastructure and resources to administer the fund program.

You can affiliate with a non-competitive charity that operates an advisor-centric program. Having most of the donor's gift, or a generous percentage of the gift, is better than no gift at all. That's why some charitable organizations, churches, and even donors who sit on the boards of other charities, have affiliated with Convoy of Hope, for example.

You can design and create the administration infrastructure yourself.

Once the program is established, investment accounts can be opened with each participating RIA who is managing donor investments. Some farsighted charities have developed a Memorandum of Understanding between themselves and the financial advisors, which includes two provisions to encourage the success and growth of their funds:

1. The RIA has current clients, who together, intend to make a \$50,000 irrevocable charitable gift of property to the ABC Charity Permanent Endowment

Fund, which is acceptable under ABC Charity's current Gift Acceptance Policies.

2. The RIA will endeavor to grow the endowment fund assets, under their management, to \$1M within 3 years from the date of this memorandum.

As a fundraiser, remember how you keep score: Raising increasingly valuable gifts as quickly as possible. Imagine the value of having an expanding network of financial advisors looking for and bringing to you new donor prospects! Isn't it time to stretch beyond donor-centric and become more advisor-centric? ●

Dan Rice serves as the Philanthropy Architect for Convoy of Hope and assists individual donors and their professional advisors in making current and deferred charitable gifts. Contact: Drice@convoyofhope.org

Most People Do Not Get It:

Marketing Rule #1027-A

Viken Mikaelian



Never, ever take marketing advice from a CPA, tenured professor, an MD or an attorney.

I do not say this in a bad way... it's just the way it is. My dad was a perfect example. He could perform flawless surgery, had great bedside manner, and got standing ovations when he lectured. But he did not know the first thing about marketing.

We recently developed a planned giving postcard for a major university in California. The development staff decided to run the concept by a tenured professor.

Big mistake.

The professor completely re-wrote the card. He made it softer than a newborn's tushie and so vanilla that it will not raise a single eyebrow. That is, he made it "safe," just like his tenured job. The coupons from the local supermarket will get more attention. Worse: the solicitation letter from the non-profit next door. Thanks to this professor, I expect this postcard will have a 0% impact on 100% of the readers. But the team did feel "safe" with it and had several excuses not to do otherwise. Ever notice people with more excuses end up having less success?

Marketers get it. Academics don't.

People in certain professions are generally regarded as "smart." Fine. But smart in what? Grammar? Physics? Fixing cars? Brewing the best coffee in the world? Everyone has his or her place. I almost went to med school to be a doctor like my father. I'm glad I didn't. (You should be, too.) And I'd make a terrible professor.

Sure, tenured professors are smart. (So are MDs, CPAs, and JDs.) But they do not know marketing. And they have a bad habit of re-inventing the wheel. There's something to be said about tried and true. Marketers get it. Academics don't. So if you want people to pay attention to your direct mail intended to raise money, let those of us who are "smart" in marketing have the final say.

Philanthropy, just like business, is about raising money.

It's not about academics. One of my relatives is an MIT grad and does quite well in his business. Another is a 3rd grade dropout who has made millions. The business side of philanthropy has to be seriously addressed. In fact, I just recently did a webinar with Jeff Comfort from Oregon State's planned giving department called *The IRS Considers You a Business. Act Like One*. You can access the recording at PlannedGiving.guru. It's compelling. Check it out. ●

Viken was the first to bring planned giving to the Internet back in 1999. His company PlannedGiving.com has helped over 1,200 non-profits get their planned giving programs online. Contact: Viken@PlannedGiving.com

technical corner



You've Got the Gift. Now What?

Camilyn Leone, Esq.

You've had a conversation with your donor and his or her advisor. She's decided to make a major gift that will transform your organization. The gift vehicle is real estate, life insurance, a trust, royalties, closely held stock, or some other asset.

Now what?

Those of you who are serious about raising more planned gifts spend a lot of time thinking about many important aspects of philanthropy. You need to know about current tax laws, estate and financial planning, and the mission of the charity. Most importantly, you need to know your donors, what inspires them, and when they are ready to make a difference in the lives of others.

But when the donor is ready to make the gift... what then?

Check your gift acceptance policies.

What due diligence and approvals are required to accept the gift? Most of the time, gift acceptance policies appoint a board level committee to review the gift and make a recommendation to the chief executive officer or chief financial officer to accept or decline the proposed gift. Every organization should have a gift acceptance policy—ideally long before a donor comes to you with a transformational gift. Misunderstandings, bad headlines, and legal hassles will be avoided with a good set of gift acceptance policies.

If you don't have gift acceptance policies, check your organization's bylaws. Bylaws tell you how important decisions are made and who needs to sign off. Bylaws generally give your board of directors the power to transact business on behalf of the charity. Unless, specifically excluded, gift acceptance falls under these powers. If you are relying on your bylaws to authorize the gift acceptance, then you will need to draft a board resolution for approval and entry into the corporate minutes. You can find templates, but know that board resolutions need to comply with state law and the bylaws to be valid. You should consult the corporate secretary or corporate counsel to assist you with drafting the board resolution.

When you know how gift approval works in your organization, you will be able to guide your donor along the path to become a philanthropist.

At that moment, planned giving is the best job in the world. ●



Wondering about this picture? We all have lives outside of planned giving. Read Camilyn's bio below.



Camilyn K. Leone, Esq., is an attorney who specializes in non-profit law and teaches the Nonprofit Law Clinic at the University of Virginia School of Law. She lives in Albemarle County, Virginia with her husband, two children, and flock of Navajo-Churro Sheep.

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The Donor-Centric Metric

(Hint: It's Not ROI)

Lauren D'Ambrosio



Return on Investment (ROI) is a familiar concept. It's what you get back for whatever you lay out. But ROI is a money-metric, and that means it's about as impersonal as you can get.

In a people-intensive field like planned giving, ROI can actually skew your marketing vision. So instead, think in terms of **ROP: Return on Prospect**. It's different because it takes into account the fact that prospects create value for you in two very valuable ways:

1: By contributing today.

2: By resolving to contribute in the future.

ROP focuses on the donor and provides a more accurate, more relevant, more donor-centric metric. So focus on your ROP to maintain a better and a well-balanced perspective on your marketing campaign. *It really gives you an overall, healthy big picture.*

This way of thinking even guides our business. We believe *planned giving is a people business. If you love people, you will raise more money than you have ever imagined.* In fact this philosophy is so deeply ingrained within us that it permeates into our products, services, and attitudes, and makes all of our offerings people-centric. Naturally.

And this is one reason we treat our clients as friends and our prospects as clients. Just as you should treat your donors as friends and your prospects as donors. ●

Lauren led sales and marketing groups at General Electric for 20 years. A strategic account manager at PlannedGiving.com, Lauren helps non-profits develop tactical and sustainable planned giving marketing programs to raise more and larger gifts. As a tidbit, Lauren's first job before GE was with Viken when she was 17. If you have read this far, email Lauren and tell her she has made a big mistake of coming back. Contact: Lauren@PlannedGiving.com