

## **Transitioning Leadership Annual Donors to Major Donors | 10.12.2016**

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#### **Leftover Questions from the Webcast**

**Q: Our unit on campus is small - we actually are responsible for leadership giving and major gifts so we have a mixed portfolio. Would appreciate your thoughts on this**

Ans: I'm not sure what the exact question is, but I certainly understand the challenges of running a small shop. To me, being in charge of both leadership and major gifts provides you with the opportunity to focus on your top priorities and employ most of the tactics that were discussed in the webinar. It will just take discipline to ensure that you are working with your best prospects and with the strategies that will have the highest return.

**Q: What do you think about 5 year pledges in moving a leadership annual donor forward in this process?**

Ans: I generally do not look to do pledges for lower level leadership level gifts, but I think they are great if you are looking to move someone from something like the \$1,000 level to the \$5,000 level. I routinely used an annual named scholarship at the \$5K level to get donors to commit to that with a five year commitment.

**Q: If you have a new major donor prospect you've never interacted with before, do you make an ask in your first meeting?**

Ans: Yes. That's the simple answer, but there are always exceptions. If the meeting is managed correctly making an ask for a leadership annual gift is a natural outcome. I believe firmly that part of the cultivation/identification process hinges on making an ask at this level. If a prospect with great capacity turns this amount down after a donor meeting I would argue they are quite far from being a major gift prospect. Again, this must be done correctly and the meeting needs to lead to an appropriate ask. I usually do something like this –

It's been great getting to know you better and to hear about your experience at the University of San Diego. It's clear that your legal education has meant a lot to you and that you understand the impact that your philanthropy can have to help future students. With that in mind, I would be remiss if I did not invite you to join The Maudsley Fellows Society. The Maudsley Fellows Society is our leadership annual giving society and consists of donors who understand the importance of our law school and have chosen to show their leadership support of our efforts by making a gift of \$1,500 or more annually. Given our conversation today, this seems like something you would enjoy. Can we count on your support at the Maudsley Fellows Society level this year?

OK, I know that sounds like a lot in writing, but I know that in practice this ask can sound quite natural, but it is based on an entire meeting that leads up to this ask.

**Q: In regards to moving on, what are the clear indicators of this, as it hard to give up on a prospect.**

Ans: There are a number of variables that will determine when you should move, and there is no hard-and-fast rule. If you are trying to get a meeting with Bill Gates, you will likely stick with that longer than the CEO of a local company. Also, moving on for now doesn't mean the prospect is totally forgotten. We can come back next year or in a few months and try again, but we do need to not get bogged down by a portfolio of unresponsive prospects. I would generally suggest that after you have sent 3 e-mails, placed 3 calls to invite them to meetings/events and they do not respond that you can move on for now. That's three strikes in two different mediums. If you feel like you are a stalker that is also another good indication that it is time to move on for now. Also, I suggest looking at how you can engage others to reach the prospect. Have you engaged a classmate or board member?

**Q: Do you recommend removing LAG donors (\$1K) from all other solicitations in a fiscal year?**

Ans: NO!

**Q: Is there a book you would recommend for fundraisers to read? who do you admire?**

Ans: I can't say that I have been moved by too many fundraising books. I do like to follow a few people who I think are thoughtful in their approach to fundraising including:

- Jason McNeil: <http://www.jasonmcneal.com/>
- Gail Perry: <https://www.gailperry.com/>
- Jim Langley: <http://langleyinnovations.com/>
- Kathy Drucquer Duff: <http://kddphilanthropy.com/>
- Peter Wylie: <https://www.amazon.com/Data-Mining-Raisers-Peter-Wylie/dp/0899643809>