



STRATEGIC CONVERSATIONS LEAD TO MAJOR AND PLANNED GIFTS

PG CALC WEBINAR

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I. INTRODUCTION

Agenda

1. Defining terms and goals
2. Providing context for our discussion
3. Giving you plenty of time to ask questions during the program
4. Assessing your listening skills
5. Improving your question asking skills, the types of questions, the flow
6. Planning meaningful and productive strategies and visits
7. And unleashing your superpower – donor stewardship and care

II. DEFINING TERMS AND GOALS

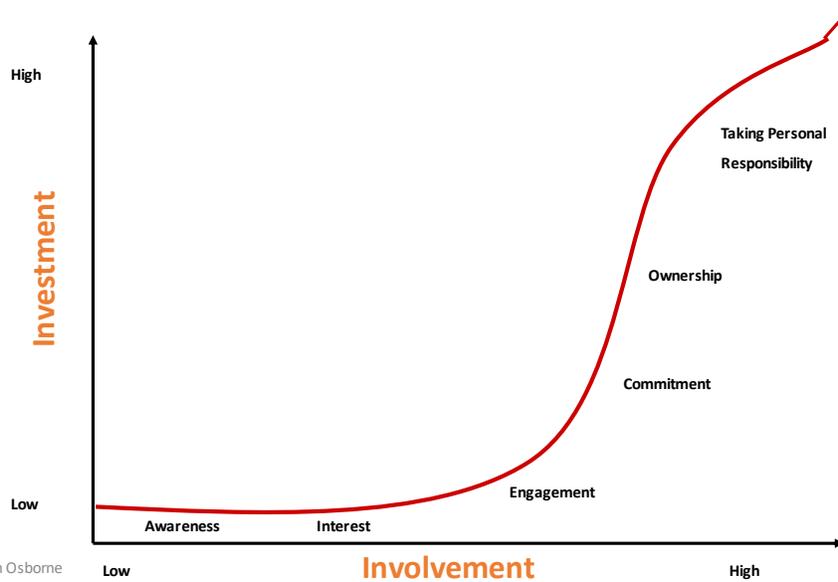
Your responsibility is to develop meaningful and productive relationships — meaningful for the donor and productive for your organization. If it's busy work, or idle conversation, you won't do a good job and, in many situations, the donor will notice it.

Your relationship building has purpose:

1. Through your strategic conversations and strategic initiatives, you should be able to uncover **The Rights** — The right investment purpose, pleasing to the donor and important for your mission and vision. The right amount. Appropriate for the purpose, in line with the donor's capacity and level of engagement and commitment to the organization. The right solicitation team or person — someone known, respected, trusted and made his/her generous gifts. The right location, participants (decision makers and perhaps advisors) and any materials that will facilitate the conversation.
2. You want to use the conversation and strategic initiatives to share the **vision and “why”** it matters that your organization address this societal problem. We've known this for a long time, but a new study confirmed it once again. Leadership Story Lab's “Transforming Partnerships with Major Donors,” confirmed that donors want to invest in societal problem solving and fewer are interested in recognition.
3. You're trying to **uncover your solicitation strategy**. Are you asking for a bequest, using PG vehicles to solve a donor problem, including an outright gift, and annual gift? Will this be a layered ask?
4. You are looking for **problems that might prevent the donor from saying yes (PRIOR TO SOLICITATION)** that PG might be able to solve.
5. You are going to **test your assumptions and park your biases**. Don't believe you know what the donor is thinking or feeling or cares about without asking questions and listening.
6. How does the donor like being engaged and where is he or she on the **Tarnside Curve of Involvement?**

The Tarnside Curve of Involvement

*Developed by Patrick Boggen, Tarnside Consulting, UK

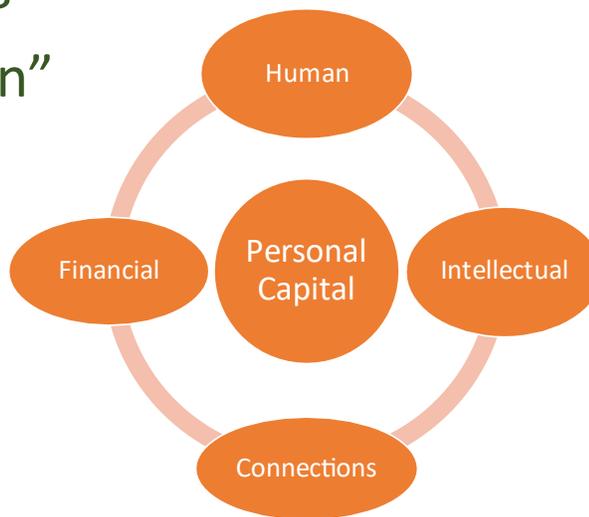


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7. Donors want to be desired for more than their money and contacts. Get to know the whole person and engage them intellectually based on his or her Personal Capital.

Engage the Whole Person

“All In”



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8. Your strategic conversations and initiatives should help you meet your philanthropic goals.
 - Secure the largest gift possible

- In the shortest amount of time possible
- For an organizational priority
- In an ethical and professional manner
- Resulting in INSPIRED, JOYFUL, GENEROUS INVESTMENTS

Context of Strategy

Seeking this information and strategic initiatives is all done in the context of strategy — written donor plans and visit plans.

Strategy requires designed or planned conversations and initiatives that serve a purpose. In other words, they have measurable goals.

III. STRATEGIC CONVERSATIONS

Extraordinary Relationships are Based on Great Conversations* Sobel and Panas

1. Stop presenting and Pitching. The Leadership Story Lab study agrees. Donor's want engagement, conversation, being part of the solution
2. Start listening to understand (rather than to respond)
3. Bring passion (your and theirs) and emotions into the conversations
4. Use your questions to ensure you are discussing the right topics

***Clients for Life** Sobel**

You want to be a trusted advisor interested in the relationship and a collaborative partnership. The best gifts come when the donor believes it was his or her idea.

And honest, authentic curiosity is essential.

Listening

What are your listening struggles? Are you a...

- **Mind Reader?**
You know what the other person is going to say before they say it and you are filling in the blanks.
- **Sentence Finisher or Gap Filler?**
Not only do you know what they are going to say, you say it for them.
- **Interrupter?**
You consistently break in before the other person has finished speaking.

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- **Rehearser?**
You are always thinking about what you are going to say next.
- **Filterer?**
You suffer from selective listening, hearing what you want to hear.
- **Dreamer?**
You tend to drift off during conversations, having to ask, “What did you say?” or “Can you repeat that?”
- **Identifier?**
“It’s all about ME.” Everything you hear you relate to your own experience and share that experience.
- **Placater?**
Agreeing with everything you hear just to be nice or avoid potential conflict.
- **Derailer?**
You change subjects abruptly so that you can get back to your agenda; or you tend to discount what others are saying before hearing them out.
- **Talker?**
You talk more than 30% of the time in any given conversation.

A Few Listening Fixes

1. Seek feedback. You’ve identified what you believe are your problems but confirm it with trusted friends and colleagues
2. Enlist a buddy to help you. “You just interrupted me,” the buddy points out.
3. Practice listening to understand. Use questions to confirm what you thought you understood.
4. Make a personal commitment to do better
5. Using tools to help – a notebook to jot a key word so you don’t forget what you want to say but can focus on the speaker. Admit you didn’t hear. “I’m sorry. Could you repeat that? I want to make sure I understand your point.” What else might work for you?

Questions are the Language of Strategy* (HBR)

The questions you ask and the points you make depend upon visit purposes:

- Discovery
- Building a new relationship
- Advancing/deepening an existing relationship
- Moving toward solicitation
- Solicitation and closing

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Questions work because: (from Dorothy Leeds)

1. They demand answers. If you ask a question, and are quiet, the other person will answer
2. Great questions stimulate thinking
3. Uncover needed and invaluable information
4. Put you in control of the conversation
5. Get people to open up
6. Lead to quality listening
7. Get people to persuade themselves “What impact do you believe this initiative could have on the people we serve?”

Strategic and Generative Questions

Strategic questions uncover:

- Philanthropic motivation and values
- Identify decision-makers and advisors
- Uncover potential issues to a joyful, inspired, generous yes
- Engagement and stewardship preferences
- List of preferred organizations and where your institution is on their list
- Opinion about, feelings for your organization

Generative Questions inspire more introspection

They allow space for the donor to open up
They help you co-create a future in partnership

“What if...?” I wonder...?” What would it take for us to achieve this...?”

How you ask matters. Frame your questions. “I was visiting with another supporter, and she asked me... I wonder what you think about that.”

You can ask permission. “May I ask you about...”

Start with broad questions before moving your organization. This might feel counter-intuitive since the organization is what you both have in common, but it cuts off important conversations. Ask about generosity, philanthropy, decision making, values and impact.

Then move to your institution.

Be sure to ask follow-up questions. Unpack and probe. “Can you say more about that?”

Here are some great PG Questions:

1. *Some of our supporters believe it is important to leave respected and beloved charities in their wills. What are your thoughts? How does your family feel about that?*
2. *We’re listening to and sharing the philanthropic life stories of our most loyal donors, people just like you. I’d love to hear about your philanthropic journey. How did you learn to be generous? What have been your best experiences?*
3. *How important is it to you to continue that legacy? Can you say more about that?*

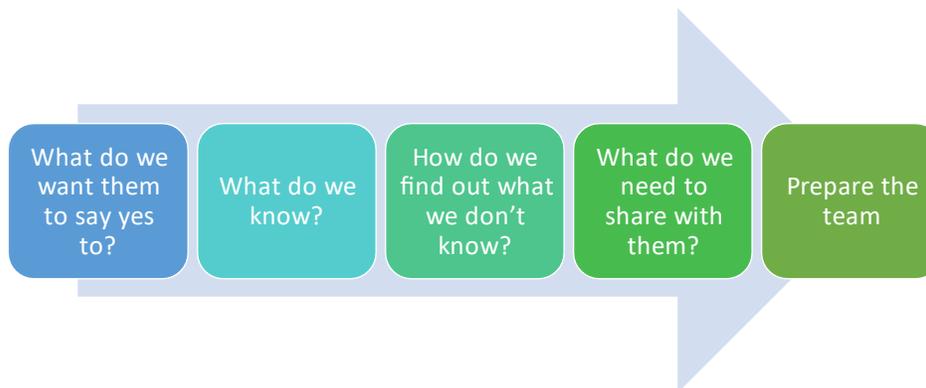
4. *If we could help you continue that legacy, would you be interested in learning more?*
5. *May I ask, what roles do your children (grandchildren) (financial planner) (lawyer) play in your philanthropic decision-making?*
6. *What issues do you weigh (did you weigh) when you are making decisions about your estate plans?*
7. *To what extent do your current interests dovetail with those your spouse had when she was alive? How important is that for you?*
8. *May I ask, what other organizations are included in your estate plans? How did you decide who and how much? Where do we fit among them?*
9. *Who else knows about your wishes? How do they (he, she) feel about that? How supportive are they? We'd love to meet them. How might we arrange that?*

IV. SUCCESS FORMULA AND VISITS

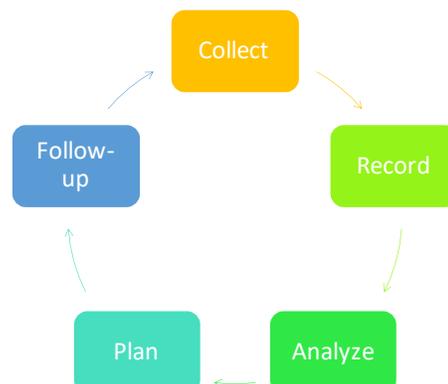
Proven Practice + Innovations – Unworthy Activities = 2021 and beyond Success

In person matters. Zoom is a good substitute. The phone still works.

Five Step Visit Prep



Closing the Visit Loop



V. STEWARDSHIP YOUR SUPERPOWER

Stewardship defined:

1. Thanking within 24 to 72 hours – warmly, personally
2. Documenting the details of the gift and the donor’s motivation for the gift
3. Recognizing in a way that matters to the donor
4. Sharing impact and outcomes (months after the gift)
5. Engaging the donor with the impact and outcomes (remember the Tarnside Curve)
6. Steward ALL investments – ideas, service, time, contacts, introductions, money and gifts in kind
7. Make the donor the hero of the story
8. We are a visual society, use photos, videos
9. Make it personal and authentic
10. Build in WOW and surprise

As PG and Major Gift Officers stewardship matters the most

- Most major donors started with an annual gift
- Loyal donors of all size gifts tend to leave you in their will
- Pay attention to what your organization is doing and not doing about stewarding smaller gifts.