

From Business Value to Charitable Legacy

WHAT FUNDRAISERS SHOULD KNOW
ABOUT CHARITABLE GIVING



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Jason is a Wealth Advisor and Principal at Bartlett Wealth Management in Cincinnati. He provides strategic income tax planning, estate planning, and comprehensive wealth planning services to business owners, individuals, and families.

Jason earned a BS in Accounting and Finance from Indiana University. He is a CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER® professional and a licensed CPA in Ohio and Illinois. He earned the Certified Exit Planning Advisor® designation in 2019 and the Accredited Estate Planner® designation in 2026.

Before joining Bartlett in 2017, Jason spent more than seven years providing comprehensive financial and tax planning services at a single-family office and four years at Deloitte. He has more than 19 years of industry experience.

Jason serves as president of the Cincinnati Estate Planning Council Board of Directors and as a board member of the Goering Center.

Why This Matters to Fundraisers

Business exits can be one of the few moments when philanthropic capacity, tax planning, family purpose, and legacy all converge.

75%

of business owners would like to exit within 10 years

73%

of privately held companies in the U.S. will transition within 10 years

\$14T

estimated wealth transfer opportunity tied to business transitions

Fundraiser Takeaway: The most impactful charitable conversations often happen before the transaction becomes inevitable.

Exit Strategy Matters Across Generations

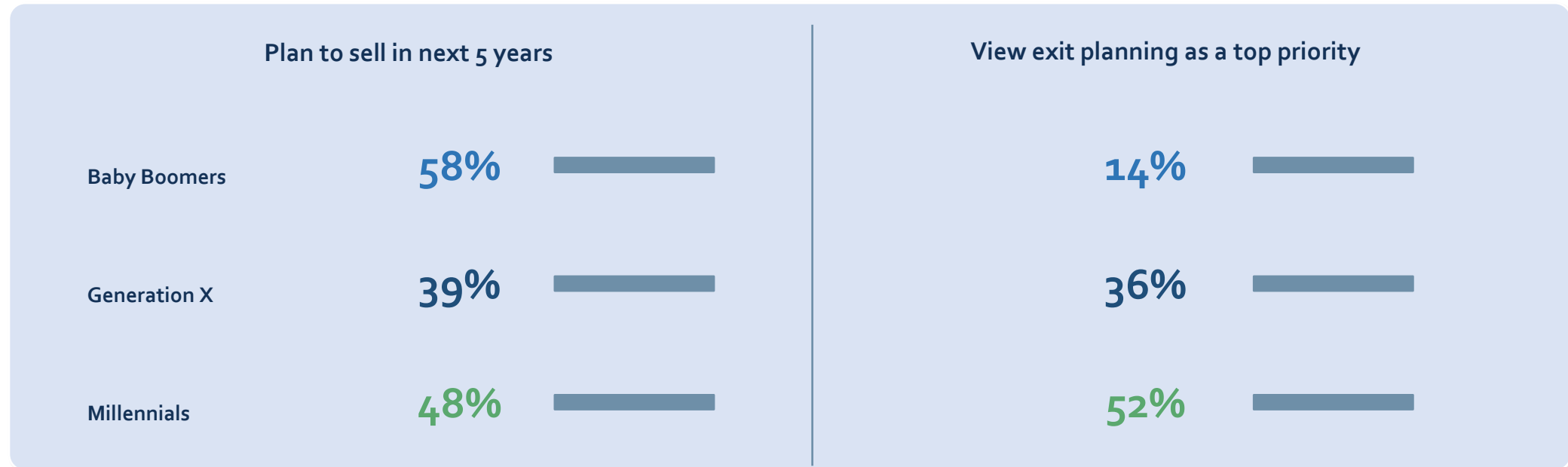
Across generations, business owners overwhelmingly agree that having an exit strategy is important for their future and the future of their business.



Fundraiser Takeaway: Frame charitable legacy as part of preparedness — not merely tax planning.

Planning Urgency Differs by Generation

The exit conversation can sound different depending on generation: some owners are closer to a sale, while others are more likely to treat planning as a priority.



Fundraiser Takeaway: Urgency may be transaction-driven, but receptivity may be planning-driven.

The 5 D's: When Owners Don't Control the Timing

The five most common events that can force an owner to leave unexpectedly, rather than on their own timetable.

1

DEATH

Leadership, ownership, and liquidity challenges

2

DISABILITY

Operational disruption and financial strain

3

DIVORCE

Ownership, control, cash flow, and valuation issues

4

DISTRESS

Financial pressure, lawsuits, or industry disruption

5

DISAGREEMENT

Conflict among owners, family, or key management

Fundraiser Takeaway: Build trusted relationships before a crisis so charitable intent and community commitments can be protected.

Business owner philanthropy is rarely just a tax strategy.

It is often a bridge from *identity* to *legacy*.

Fundraisers can help owners build that bridge.

Three Legs of the Stool for Business Owners

All three of these areas must be aligned for a successful transition from identity to legacy.

Personal Readiness



Identity, next act,
spouse/family involvement,
values

Business Readiness



Management team,
valuation, financial
cleanup, customer
concentration

Financial Readiness



Wealth gap, taxes, income
needs, estate plan

Readiness Signals Fundraisers Can Spot

- Owner has no documented post-exit passion or “next act”
- Family has not discussed transition or charitable intent
- Business valuation is old, informal, or missing
- Owner is close to a transaction but has not assembled advisors
- Personal expenses, real estate, or giving are intertwined with the business

Discussion prompt

“If the business transitioned tomorrow, what charitable commitments or community relationships would you want to protect?”



Translate the Business Owner Mindset



Business

"Is the company ready for the next owner?"



Financial

"Will the sale or transition support the life I want?"



Personal

"Who am I — and what matters — after the business?"



Legacy

"What impact should this wealth have beyond my family?"

Fundraiser Takeaway: Listen for the owner's "why" before suggesting the vehicle.

What Motivates Business Owner Giving?



Purpose & identity

Owners often see the business as an extension of who they are. Philanthropy can help preserve identity as they step away from day-to-day leadership.



Family engagement

A charitable plan can create a shared purpose and bring family members together around values, governance, and community impact.



Strategic opportunity

The right strategy can align taxes, timing, liquidity, estate planning, and donor intent — especially before a sale process is too far along.

Fundraiser Takeaway: Your role is not to “sell a gift.” It is to help the owner connect capacity with meaning.

More Business Owner Philanthropic Motivations



Honor the origin story

"This community, school, client base, or mentor gave me my start."



Care for employees

Support scholarships, emergency assistance, workforce development, or causes meaningful to employees.



Unite the family

Use philanthropy as a neutral table where engaged and non-engaged family members can participate.



Protect local legacy

Sustain the town, industry, faith community, or civic institutions tied to the business story.



Preserve the company values

Keep the founder's values visible after new ownership or next-generation leadership.



Redeem transition anxiety

Turn the emotional loss of control, identity, or routine into renewed purpose.



Model stewardship

Teach children or grandchildren that wealth carries responsibility, not just opportunity.



Create a durable name

Fund an endowment, building, program, or foundation that outlives the owner's operating role.

Fundraiser Takeaway: Match the conversation to the motivation before matching the motivation to a vehicle

The Conversation Map: Better Questions

**START
WITH
THE WHY**

1. Purpose

What causes, communities, or institutions helped shape your success?

2. Family

Who should be part of the charitable conversation now?

3. Timing

Is there a likely sale, recapitalization, ESOP, or family transfer on the horizon?

4. Asset

Could the gift be made with business interests or other appreciated assets?

Timing Matters: The “Before LOI” Window



Fundraiser Takeaway: Ask early, involve advisors early, and avoid forcing technical advice into a late-stage gift conversation.

Strategic Giving Opportunities to Recognize



Gift before sale

Potentially contribute an interest in the business before a binding sale agreement.



Bunching & DAF

Use a donor-advised fund or similar vehicle to separate the timing of deduction from timing of grants.



Private foundation

For families wanting engagement, governance, and long-term legacy.



Charitable trust

Potential fit when income, diversification, and charity all matter.



Post-sale liquidity

Use proceeds to fund an endowment, scholarship, naming opportunity, or planned gift.



Operating philanthropy

Clarify whether dollars through the business are marketing/community relations or personal charitable intent.

After the Sale: Steward the Legacy, Not Just the Gift



Liquidity

Sale proceeds create investable assets and new planning choices.



Legacy vehicle

Endowment, field-of-interest fund, scholarship, foundation, or DAF.



Governance

Family roles, grant criteria, investment policy, reporting cadence.

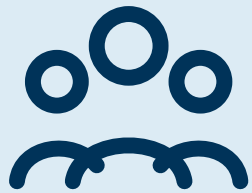


Impact story

Translate the owner's origin story into donor purpose and durable mission alignment.

Development professionals can help donors avoid a “transaction first, meaning later” outcome.

Family Philanthropy: A Practical Bridge



Gather

Bring family into purpose, values, and impact choices.



Align

Clarify roles, guardrails, and causes that carry the story forward.



Give

Turn the owner's transition into durable community impact.

Language Fundraisers Can Use

“What would make this transition feel successful beyond the sale price?”

Moves from transaction to significance.

“Are there charitable commitments you would want to preserve if the business changes hands?”

Connects community relationships to continuity.

“Who in your family should understand the charitable plan before the transaction?”

Creates room for spouse and next-gen engagement.

“Would it be helpful to coordinate with your advisors before decisions become final?”

Keeps the fundraiser in role while inviting technical expertise.

Development Professional Checklist

- Identify owners approaching a sale, recapitalization, ESOP, family transfer, or succession event.
- Ask values-based questions before discussing gift vehicles or recognition opportunities.
- Listen for assets: closely held stock, real estate, large cash-flow years, or concentrated gain.
- Invite family participation when appropriate; legacy often becomes durable through shared purpose.
- Coordinate with the owner's CPA, attorney, wealth advisor, when strategy or asset complexity rises.
- Connect post-sale liquidity to mission-aligned endowment, foundation, or long-term stewardship options.

Fundraiser Takeaway : Your best charitable legacy conversations may begin with business transition questions.

Where Bartlett Fits

Bartlett can support the owner side and the nonprofit side of the same legacy conversation.



Business owner planning

Personal financial plan, tax-sensitive transition modeling, advisor coordination, and pre-sale giving opportunities.



Charitable legacy strategy

Help families connect values, governance, vehicles, and long-term giving goals before and after a transition.



Nonprofit Investment management

Investment management for foundation and endowment accounts, including disciplined stewardship for mission-driven assets.

Fundraiser Takeaway : Invite Bartlett into complex donor situations early — especially when business assets, family goals, or endowment stewardship

Questions?

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