

Top 10 Ways to Keep (And Encourage) Donors Important Ways for Small and Medium Nonprofits to Leverage Donor Relationships

1. **Personal Contact** – Develop a personal relationship with as many donors as possible - learn their names, learn why they are interested in your organization. This is the top way to not only keep current donors, but engage current donors to tell prospective donors how much they like your organization.
2. **Pay Attention to Detail** – Mailings should use the correct name, the correct honorific, and address the correct persons in the household. Even if you run 500 “Ask” letters, make sure that your database is accurate - spend time during each mailing cycle to correct and update names (including changes in relationships)
3. **Show Good Stewardship In Published Material** – Don’t waste paper, time, expense, and effort in large, glossy, obviously-expensive mailings with “premiums” of pens, etc., included in the envelope. Your donor will think that you can afford to waste money on non-mission items, so you don’t need his or her donation.
4. **Show Transparency in Organizational Activities** (Including how the money is spent) – provide timely, accurate and informative information about the organization’s activities and how funds are used. Prove to the Donor that he or she made a good investment in YOU.
5. **Be Considerate of the Donor’s Time.** Every contact should be meaningful, and should show that the Nonprofit knows the Donor, cares for the Donor, and appreciates any gift from the Donor. Telephone calls should be ONLY from people the Donor has met (or will soon meet), be brief and at a convenient time to the Donor. Telephone call requests for money should be used rarely - only to Donors with a previous personal relationship to the caller, and only for specific or special needs.
6. **Say Thank You.** A Donor will place his or her generosity where it is appreciated. Thank You notes must be sent immediately and be personal. Never - EVER - use photocopied or obviously-generic thank you notes.
7. **Find Ways to Engage Each Donor.** Why is the Donor interested in your organization? Find out! Is the Donor interested in a more personal involvement - today or in the future? The more the Donor knows about your organization, and know the organization cares about the Donor, the more engaged the Donor will be. Most Donors significantly increase their donations to organizations that capture their personal involvement.
8. **Develop Donor Relationships.** The best way to get a Donor to increase his or her financial commitment to your organization is if they know you, personally, and if you know the, personally. Always, be warm and genuine to all Donors, no matter the size of the gift. Every donation counts!
9. **Know Your Mission!** Be able to give informed answers to Donor question about the Nonprofit mission, programs and activities.
10. **Respect the Donor.** Listen to, and abide by the Donor’s stated level of giving, involvement, and number of contacts. Seek, and respectfully respond to, Donor feedback on both the financial and the program aspects of the organization.

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