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# Establishing a Planned Giving Program

Top Five (Invalid) Reasons Why
You Don't Have a Planned Giving Program

1. It will compete with annual giving
2. Your organization is too small
3. Planned giving is too complicated
4. You don't have enough staff
5. Your donor base is too young

You Should Have a Planned Giving Program When:

- ❒ Your organization has been in existence for at least five years
- ❒ You have a record of increasing annual support
- ❒ Your leadership is committed to securing long-range support
- ❒ You have an endowment or would like to establish one
- ❒ You can identify a board member(s) who understands planned giving an would advocate for a planned giving program
- ❒ Your organization has been the recipient of a planned gift
- ❒ Your board is committed to the implementation of a planned giving program

## Phase I

Track in the Database

- Demographic information
- Gift history
- Ability to sort by age, sex, and relationship to organization
- Ability to identify consistent annual givers over the last five years
- Older donors, single or married with no heirs
- Individuals most directly involved with your mission

Develop Forms of Communication

- Case statement
- Newsletters and brochures
- Direct mail pieces
- Website
- Gift acknowledgements
- A message or theme that connotes legacy giving

Compose the Development Team

- Select the person who will be given primary responsibility for planned giving
- Select staff and/or volunteers who will support the planned giving program
- Recruit individuals who have expertise in estate and financial planning, for example attorneys, CPAs, financial planners, insurance agents, etc.
- Provide staff training

Create the Planned Gifts Committee

- Select board members
- Allied professionals
- Current donors
- Volunteers capable of and willing to solicit planned gifts

Define the Purpose of the Planned Gifts Committee

- Visibility and credibility
- Guidance
- Design, implementation, and management of the program
- Identification and solicitation of prospects
- Developing gift acceptance standards

Begin with Bequests

- Draft bequest language
- Create legacy society
- Publicize realized bequests and their impact on your organization
- Use donor testimonials of new bequest intentions in your publications
- Develop counting and tracking guidelines
- Develop a stewardship plan, e.g., a yearly recognition dinner

Develop Solicitation and Marketing Strategies

- Educate your constituency about gifts of bequests
- Create targeted mailings using planned giving direct mail materials
- Respond to inquiries promptly
- Identify your top 20 prospects
- Develop a personal visit strategy for each prospect
- Stewardship is essential!

## Phase II

Expanding into Life Income Gifts

- Charitable Gift Annuities
- Charitable Remainder Trusts

Set Program Structure and Gift Acceptance Standards

- Minimum gift amount
- Age criteria
- Type of assets
- Registration of your gift annuity (may be required)
- Internal or external management
- Draft of legal documents

Tune Up the Program

- Communicate your case for planned giving at every opportunity
- Develop a donor profile and identify new prospects based on said profile
- Upgrade existing planned giving donors
- Expand outreach to professional advisors