



117 N. First Street, Suite 70
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104
www.RichnerRichner.com

Strategies for Stalled Solicitations

1. Introduce New Deadlines

Freshen up stalled solicitations with new deadlines put in the context of the campaign and/or the need for the gift. The deadline could be, for example, a campaign kickoff, a campaign midpoint or milestone, a volunteer meeting, a special event, a recognition dinner, or a board planning retreat.

2. Review Prospect Decision Makers

Review whether the key decision makers have been involved in the solicitation or in hearing about the need for a gift. If a husband or wife, or parent and grown children are financial partners, plan to directly involve them in the gift discussion.

3. Reassess the Request Amount and Timing

- Discuss the amount of the request with the prospective donor and assess if it is still appropriate. If data suggest that the request is too high, suggest another figure.
- Give attention to gift timing. Is the donor facing financial difficulties? Check when opportunities are best for making a gift such as a company buy-out, selling a company, or stock price at an all-time high.

4. Review the Solicitors and Influences

If the prospective donor is not responsive to the solicitor(s), consider selecting another person to do the follow-up. Look for the opportunity to have a close friend, advisor, or peer endorse a solicitation

personally or ask for clarification about the amount, timing, or focus of the gift under discussion.

5. Maintain contact

Regular ongoing contact and involvement of the prospective donor is important while he or she is considering a gift. Continue to ask the prospective donor to attend and host events. Send notes, articles or press releases reflecting progress, achievements, and challenges. Keep the person involved socially as a volunteer. Avoidance or protection of the prospective donor or minimal attention is a missed opportunity.

6. Review Prospect Motivation

- When a solicitation appears stalled, review the motivations of the prospective donor and refocus the request on the highest motivators.
- If not known, learn how and where the prospective donor wants to make a difference at the organization.
- Get specific feedback about the needs of the organization. Involve the prospective donor in identifying specifically what he or she wants to support. Be prepared to change the focus of the original proposal or case for support if necessary.

7. Review Donor Benefits

- Develop an inventory of the ways in which the prospective donor would benefit from making a gift – not tangibles like parking passes or tickets, but intangibles like recognition, association, long-term involvement, his or her role as an investor or as innovator of a new idea.
- Does the prospective donor have a vision of the difference he or she will make? Of the impact of his or her gift on ideas, knowledge, or the lives of other people benefiting from the organization's mission?

8. Appeal to Competitiveness

Introduce competitiveness as an additional motivating factor. Show a comparison of the organization to others with similar missions. If making the case for increasing an endowment, compare the size of the endowment with those of peer organizations.

9. Feature Leadership Gift Examples

Stimulate the desire to give by periodically announcing gifts in your publications or in letters, and feature contributions from friends, opinion leaders, or even competitors.

10. Rekindle Pride

Be sure the prospective donor is reminded of the quality and excellence of the programs and successes of the organization. Bring out the prospective donor's association and history with the organization, and the difference he or she has already made or can make in the future.