Gifts of Greater Significance

Oftentimes in our work of fundraising we engage with a donor with a high affinity for our organization. **Such a donor usually gives annual gifts.** Perhaps they have given major gifts in the past as well. Because of the nature of the relationship, we reach out to them and strive to continue to develop them as a donor for our organization. We seek to guide them to make a gift commitment that's not merely a transaction, although a transaction is ultimately embedded in a gift of greater significance. Donors want such special gifts to impact what they care about. They desire to help bring about change for good. For these donors it is an expression of leadership on their part. Through a gift of greater significance, they are telling the world about themselves, their values, and what they hope to accomplish for the betterment of a cause that matters greatly to them.

The size of a gift of greater significance is relative to the donor. Sometimes it might be more modest in size from one donor while the next donor may make a commitment that is unbelievably extraordinary in size. Nevertheless, we engage with each donor. We seek to understand what motivates them, and appreciating their current circumstances, we hope to facilitate a gift of great significance.

These gift commitments tend to be more complicated. There are various advisors that could be involved, including investment advisors, bankers, accountants and lawyers. There may be family members, a corporate or foundation board with whom the donor will consult. The expertise and guidance of others may be brought to bear by the donor to accomplish their gift of greater significance.

Time belongs to the donor and with a gift of greater significance it falls to us to guide the process to a successful conclusion. It is helpful to discuss with the donor a date to complete their deliberations and preparations for the gift commitment to be transacted. The end of the calendar year or the end of your organization's fiscal year matter to many donors. Campaign deadlines can motivate some to give. Talk about timing with the donor and set a goal for an end date to help the donor and ourselves to remain focused. This is a valuable way to help the donor to manage the gift complexities so that the gift is completed within an agreed upon timeframe. We want this timeframe to help our organization meet its goals, too.

Gifts of greater significance can inspire others to consider involvement with the organization or to make a significant gift themselves. This can be another motivator when asking someone to complete their gift commitment according to your time table because they are leveraging their gift to bring further support to the organization.

Ultimately, there needs to be written documentation, sometimes a gift agreement or gift agreements. The gift may require the creation of legal documents to close the gift on the part of the donor and/or our organization. It is our charge to provide effective leadership so that this gift of greater significance is consummated.

Such gift commitments can have a transformational impact on the world and in so doing, the donors themselves undergo a deeper transformation as human beings. They are changed through their commitment to make the world a better place and the lives of others better.

Such gifts can have a transformational impact upon us when we facilitate such substantial acts of philanthropy. Our competence and experience deepen through the process as does our satisfaction for the work that we are so privileged to do.