



# MULTIPLY 417

Passion: The Bridge between People and Purpose

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## Major Donors - Tips and Ideas Part 2

Dear Ministry Leader,

Continuing from last week's tip about ideas for growing your major donor segment.

### **#4 Follow A Path**

Prospecting takes a lot of time, which is why every second counts. To stay organized and on-task, send prospects on a set path, aka "moves management."

To begin, create a major donor prospect list, keep it updated, and do a thorough clean up and reevaluation at least twice a year. Don't just reference this document once in a while; live and breathe it.

Reference your list as you network with business leaders, mid-level donors, and long-time volunteers. As you note people who may be good prospects, put their names on the list. Then, mark off the boxes as you move them through each level of engagement.

Your major donor cultivation path may look something like this:

**1: Qualify Donor** – Ensure they meet prospect criteria.

**2: Research Donor Interests** – Research past and current philanthropic affinities, check donor notes in your CRM for any suggestions on passions.

**3: Direct Mail Outreach** – Acknowledge your donor's history with your organization, and tell them you'll be following up to schedule a meeting.

**4: Phone Call/Email** - Schedule the meeting and confirm the donor's interests.

**5: Send Targeted Marketing Materials** - Use the donor's preferred communication methods to send heartwarming stories of impact and any other inspirational donor materials.

**6: In-Person Meeting** - Meet at the donor's preferred time and location, such as over coffee, at your office, or in their home. Talk about key clients and

community impact.

**7: Ask** - Present major donor with an offer to support a specific program or initiative, either during step 6 or at a later date.

**8: Thanks** - Thank your new major donor well and in multiply ways. Maybe even create an actual integration from your CRM that is pre-set to generate a series of thank you's, set to go out at specific intervals.

**9: Follow-up Meeting** - A month or so after your major donor gives, follow up on their experience. Ask if there are any other ways they'd like to get involved and give them the name and contact information of a point person in your organization who they can reach.

### **Final Tips**

**Pray:** A bunch. It is good and honorable to do this work and put in this effort, but our work ethic or genius plan will never actually open up checkbooks...Only the Holy Spirit does. Please never forget this.

**Aim High:** Asking a prospective major donor for a small amount is never a good idea. In fact, some major donor prospects may even get offended if you don't ask them for exactly what you think they can/should give. Always aim high and you'll wind up meeting at a very reasonable middle ground.

**Keep Learning:** Continue learning about your donor's interests beyond that first major gift, and look for new ways to keep them engaged and inspired in your cause. Schedule biannual coffee meetups, invite them to a VIP event or ask if they're willing to volunteer on a steering committee. The more you know, the stronger the relationship will be.

**Don't Shoot Yourself In The Foot:** Fundraising techniques such as giving societies and affinity groups are common, but they have a tendency to keep donations stagnant. Instead of these, customize donation levels based on products your major donors may be interested in supporting.

**Stick To The Plan:** Major donor cultivation is often a point of stress for fundraisers. Instead of becoming overwhelmed, create a plan, stick to it, and track your data. Over time, you'll be able to fine-tune your strategy to reap the best results.

**Remember The Details:** Once you secure a major gift, that doesn't mean that donor is yours forever. Seemingly small issues like misspelled names and the wrong salutation, or large ones like poor customer service or failure to provide a tax receipt can quickly sever your relationship. Details matter for your organization and they matter to your donors.

Hope this helps you to discover, develop, and maximize the people God has placed around you and your ministry with passionate generosity.

Passionately,

Rick

P.S. Let's talk about Donor Commitment and Loyalty next week.