



ENGAGING YOUR DONORS THROUGH POWERFUL QUESTIONS

The construction of a question can either open up a donor to consider possibilities, or narrow their thinking. Your goal in conversation is to encourage expansive and creative thinking that connects the donor's cares, concerns, and values with opportunities within your organization.

What to Ask

- A. Why have you been so good to us?
- B. What has been your life's work?
- C. What do you think about our mission? Our leadership?
- D. Where did you grow up?
- E. What do you like most about our community?
- F. How do you make financial decisions?
- G. If resources were not limited, what would you like to see happen?

What to Listen For

- A. Motivations, passions, specific connections within organization
- B. What donor did/does for a living, a sense of annual income and relative wealth
- C. Perceptions of organizational value, perspectives on leadership and strength of connection with donor
- D. Values, points of view, biases
- E. Gratitude, concerns, things donor would like to change/fund
- F. Advisors, capacity, sophistication, financial concerns and opportunities
- G. Gratitude, concerns, interest in volunteer leadership, things donor would like to change/fund

Sources: Scott Nelson, Director of Gift Planning at Benedictine Health Systems; Appreciative Inquiry, Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence.

