

Welcome to The Prospero Group e-Newsletter

Inaugural Edition

We are delighted to present the first edition of The Prospero Group e-newsletter, our way of staying in touch with our community of friends and passing along useful information and tips for working more effectively. In this issue, you'll find suggestions for more successful face-to-face solicitations that help to strengthen relationships with donors. Look for more information like this in future editions and please, let us know what you think and what you would like to see us address. Contact us with your suggestions.

All of us here at The Prospero Group wish you a pleasant and prosperous summer.

The Art of the “Ask”

Effective Solicitation

As fundraisers (or better yet, donor relationship builders), we know that our most successful solicitations are those in which we sit down face-to-face with a prospective donor and ask for his or her support. Yet, before we reach the solicitation table, much preparation and strategy are needed.

Understand the Prospect’s Connection to Your Organization. What is the reason for the prospect’s interest in your organization? Gratitude, appreciation for the mission, family history, and/or a tradition of giving, are some possible links.

Understand How to Set the Stage for the Ask. Do not ask for a gift when calling to set up the face-to-face meeting. Just limit the phone call to securing the appointment. Give limited and affirming options:

“I would love the chance to tell you about this project as I think you would be very interested. How about lunch either next Tuesday or Thursday?”

Understand How to Engage the Prospect in the Solicitation Meeting. Thank the prospect for past support (if appropriate). Find a common bond by building personal rapport. Listen to the prospect’s story.

“What about xxx organization is particularly meaningful to you and your family?”

Understand When and How to Make the Ask. Connect the story to project elements and present the case for support. Ask for a specific amount. Wait quietly after the “ask.”

“I hope that you will consider joining with other leadership donors in demonstrating your commitment to this project by pledging \$...”

Understand How to Handle Objections. Fight the objections, not the person. Use objections as an opportunity to further engage and educate the prospect. Convert objections into questions. Use the “Feel - Felt - Found” technique.

“I understand how you feel. I felt that way myself. Then, I found out...”

Solicitation Rules of Thumb

Always be thanking.

Always be closing.

Don't ask anyone to do anything you haven't done yourself. Make your own gift first.

Don't ask people to give until it hurts; ask them to give until it feels good.

People are not insulted by being asked for too much.

Talk about the organization's excellence – people want to give to success and be associated with winners.

Looking for more help with solicitation technique? The Prospero Group offers solicitation training workshops for boards and other lay leaders that will make your solicitors more confident and your solicitation meetings more productive.

About The Prospero Group

The Prospero Group, LLC, provides fundraising counsel that ensures lasting growth and change for non-profit organizations. We promote effective governance models and principled leadership to empower professionals and boards as the driving forces of philanthropy.

Services:

- Capital Campaign Planning and Oversight
- Solicitation Training
- Strategic Development Program Planning
- Board Development
- Grants Management
- Development Communications
- Coaching and Mentoring

Learn more at www.prosperogroup.com



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