



The Prospero Group e-Newsletter

September 2009

We hope you enjoyed our inaugural e-newsletter. Since we sent it out last June, we've received some wonderful feedback from our network of clients, friends and colleagues. In our last issue we featured tips for more effective solicitations. This time, we look at the flip side: how to handle objections during the solicitation. We hope you find it helpful.

As always, we welcome your questions, comments and suggestions. Please feel free to contact us.

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Managing Objections

When volunteers plan face-to-face solicitations, anticipating objections to the "ask" is often a cause for anxiety or hesitation. But if we think of objections as questions, not rejections, they can be seen as opportunities for further conversation and donor education. Handled well, an objection can be converted into an argument for supporting your organization by using the opportunity to explore a donor's knowledge and concerns.

Stick to the facts when you hear an objection to your case for support. Avoid who is right and stress what is right. Listen carefully to what the donor is saying; don't interrupt or argue. Validate the donor's viewpoint by offering examples of when others felt the same way. If objections are minor, go ahead and compromise if you feel it will help you make a major solicitation goal. If you can't respond immediately to questions or concerns, promise to get the required information, and then make sure to follow through.

Below are some typical objections with responses we've found effective. We hope they will help your volunteer solicitors feel more prepared and confident as they seek those important gifts for your organization.

"I'LL THINK ABOUT IT..."

- Thank the donor enthusiastically
- "I'm glad you will consider this as a serious request."
- "What other information might you need to make a decision?"
- Secure a date to follow up

"I NEED MORE TIME..."

- "If important people like you wait, what about all the others we have to reach?"
- Your leadership will help set the tone for others."
- "What information are you missing that would inspire you to make a decision now?"

“I DON’T LIKE BEING TOLD HOW MUCH TO GIVE...”

- “We have to start somewhere. Now, let’s talk.”
- “My gift is in a similar range and I am hoping that you will join with me.”
- “I’m asking you to join me in raising the bar of philanthropy for xxx organization.”
- “We would never tell someone how much to give - this level is a request we hope you will consider.”

“YOU’RE ASKING FOR TOO MUCH...”

- “There are very few in our community in the fortunate position to be able to consider such a major gift.”
- “If, indeed, this gift will impact your lifestyle, please do not agree to this gift level. But, if it will not significantly do so, it will certainly impact the future success of the lives of the people we help every day.”
- “This gift can be paid out over a three-to-five year period, or in whatever installments are comfortable for you.”

IF THEY JUST SAY “NO...”

- “Thank you for considering our request and for your time.”
- (If you’re not clear about the reason) “It would help us if we had a better understanding of your concerns.”
- For the “asset-strapped” and “tapped out” prospect, leave the door open for future asks
- Offer to keep them informed about the organization and hope that they will consider the importance of giving at another time

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



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