

FIELD NOTES



A QUICK-READ STRATEGIC RESOURCE
OF DONOR BY DESIGN GROUP

BEYOND THANK YOU

In fundraising, the easiest yet most impactful part of the relationship is too often minimized or neglected all together: stewardship. For some, the art of saying "thank you" has been lost or treated as an afterthought rather than part of the overall donor strategy. But donors, especially if you want to keep them, need to hear more than just "thank you."

DOLLARS AND CHANGE

Research on donor loyalty tells us that after they give a gift a donor wants:

- Prompt and personalized acknowledgment
- Reassurance that their gift was used as promised
- Measurable results before asking them for another contribution

Sure, donors enjoy and expect appreciation for their support...but it's not enough. **Discerning donors want to know how their donation made a difference.** They want to know how their dollars brought about change!



When someone makes an investment in your organization, you are required to report back to them regarding the

return on that investment. Here's a great rule to remember:

"Donors enjoy recognition but require information."

NUMBERS AND NAMES

When reporting program outcomes and impacts, strike a balance between statistics (% change, # served, etc...) and stories. Tell about real people who have been positively affected by your programs and services. **Although the numbers provide scope and scale, the names and faces get to the heart of your mission and purpose.** Remind your donor that behind every statistic is someone that has been personally helped thanks to their generous support of your organization.



INTENTIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION

The truth is that we all intend to thank our donors multiple times each year (7 being the magic number), yet it often falls close to the bottom of the priority list. "Thank yous" get overshadowed by ongoing efforts to raise more money. So, although it may feel counterintuitive to the touchy feely art

of gratitude, we do need to formalize and operationalize saying "thank you."

The most successful "thankers" are those who develop and stay committed to an annual volunteer/donor stewardship plan. For many of our clients, this comes to life through the development of a 12-month Stewardship Matrix. Through this planning tool, donors are categorized by affiliation and commitment level. Then plans are developed to not only thank them, but also to share how their support has made a difference throughout the year. A key to the matrix approach is that donor stewardship varies in relation to gift amount and involves multiple touches by multiple people.

TIME WELL SPENT

Donor research indicates that the **number one reason donors gave a second gift was because they were thanked and shown how their contribution made a difference!**

So not only is it the right thing to do, but it's well worth your time!

To learn more about the Donor By Design Stewardship Matrix and other resources to strengthen your fund development program, email info@donorbydesign.com.



Visit donorbydesign.com
for additional resources and tools



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