



BEST PRACTICES

2025



Kinetic Best Practices 2024

Identification

- Ensure volunteers, staff and board members are trained to recognize prospective donors and know how to start the right conversations.
- Use giving history, such as how often or consistently donors give, when they give and how much to identify patterns and uncover potential gifts.
- Maintain a balanced mix of individual donations, grants, corporate sponsorships, and fundraising events for a sustainable revenue model.
- Encourage board members to share names of potential supporters annually and develop customized plans to develop relationships with them.
- Track event attendees and motivate donors to bring guests as a strategy to help identify new prospects.
- Attract prospective donors through intentional peer-to-peer fundraising strategies.
- Evaluate local corporations as well as their executives for potential interest in supporting your mission.
- Connect with a younger generation of donors, especially as wealth shifts to them, recognizing they are more inclined to support causes that demonstrate results.
- Assess whether any of your existing donors could potentially increase their giving after a season of strategic cultivation.
- Ask your family, partner, children or neighbors to help identify prospective donors. Engage them in identifying next steps. Often, those closest to us can be overlooked.
- Do some research about your prospective donors, and invite them to an appropriate event to gauge their interest in giving.

Cultivation

- Connect with donors frequently through personalized updates, messages and opportunities to participate in the organization's activities and operations.
- Recognize donors promptly through handwritten notes, public acknowledgments, and appreciation events to build loyalty.
- Provide meaningful reports on the impact of donors' gifts, without necessarily asking for more money.
- Underscore the value of non-financial support, such as advocacy or introductions, to reinforce a donor's significance.
- Share recent, relevant success stories to create emotional connections between donors and your cause.
- Arrange meetings to be held in unique settings, such as art galleries and gardens to foster more personalized, impactful conversations.
- Give personalized, private tours of your building or program space to deepen the donor's connection to the mission.
- Invite long-standing donors to host events for new supporters to strengthen the donor relationship and expand the donor network.
- Illustrate the impact of giving through transparent and engaging charts and graphics that can be understood at a glance.



Solicitation

- During the solicitation conversation, highlight recent, heartfelt stories that convey the impact of giving.
- Highly customize the solicitation to reflect the donor's interests and past interactions with the organization.
- If donors prefer, allow them to contribute to specific outcomes or projects, rather than the organization's general mission.
- Prepare to answer tough questions with clear, honest and detailed responses.
- Respect donors' time by keeping meetings short and focused. This is easy when cultivation has been strong.
- Ensure the right individuals—board or campaign cabinet members, executive director or peers—are present for the solicitation.
- Invite donors and their families to volunteer.
- Let the donor know when you will follow up immediately following the solicitation.
- When appropriate, welcome and train a board member to join the solicitation process to increase credibility and provide fundraising experience.
- Optimize your donation page for mobile use and consider adding an option for cryptocurrency.
- Video solicitations have become more common since the pandemic, but seek in-person solicitations, if the donor is willing, whenever possible.
- Solicit board members during pre-arranged, individual meetings to elicit candid feedback about their giving.

Appreciation

- Keep your events engaging, exciting and fresh. Signature events should honor tradition while introducing new elements each year.
- Understand that transparency fosters trust, and donors prefer give to trusted nonprofits. Communicate, communicate, communicate.
- Utilize Artificial Intelligence for efficiency while reviewing AI-generated text, and infusing it with the organization's unique culture and voice.
- Show genuine appreciation for donors' contributions of time, talent, ties and treasure.
- Thank donors publicly on social media or in the local news whenever it is appropriate.
- Appreciate corporate and foundation donors as you would individuals. Send handwritten notes, make a call, invite to your donor appreciation event. Corporations and foundations are people, too.
- Ask board members or volunteers to make personal thank-you calls. A personal phone call can stand out in today's digital age.
- Make acts of gratitude as personal as possible by delivering meaningful expressions of appreciation.
- Send handwritten notes from individuals who have directly benefited from the donor's support. A note crafted and held by those who were impacted speaks volumes.
- Demonstrate that you value donors' opinions—not just their money—by asking for their input on organizational decisions or future direction.
- Host an annual event where the sole purpose is to thank donors and share the impact of their gifts, without any solicitations.
- Offer donors exclusive access to events, creating a sense of appreciation and deepening their commitment to the mission





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