Raising More Money By Asking (and Answering) Better Questions

Presented by Harvey McKinnon and Andy Robinson

In partnership with: North American Association for Environmental Education
Your hosts for today

AndyRobinsonOnline.com
HarveyMcKinnon.com
Outcomes for today’s webinar

You will learn how to:

• Anticipate donor questions, craft better answers
• Use questions to deepen donor relationships
• Learn how to engage your supporters more effectively
• Use these techniques to raise more money
• Build confidence, have fun!
Getting started...

What do you want to learn today?
Why is this topic important to you?
Renewal rates are declining

- Poor donor appreciation and engagement
- Virtual communication; less personal contact
- Economic inequality

How can you best respond?
Poll: How often do you meet with donors – in person or virtually – for any reason? (Relationship building, getting advice, asking for gifts, thanking...)

- Multiple times per month
- Monthly
- Quarterly
- A couple of times per year
- Almost never
- Don’t know
Cycle of fundraising

- Ask
- Thank & recognize
- Involve more deeply
- Identify prospects
- Educate & cultivate
Time allocation

- Identify
- Involve
- Ask
- Thank
- Retain

Courtesy of Tina Cincotti, Funding Change Consulting. Thanks!
What do your donors want?

What are they thinking?
Your mind is endlessly busy, processing questions.

Every donor does this, too.

*Tip:* By anticipating and answering these questions in advance, you can reduce barriers to giving.
1. Why me?

What’s your favourite subject? (Hint: “Me.”)

Your donor wants to know:

• How do you see me?
• Do I approve of the way you see me?
• Do you care about me? Why?

*Tip:* Are you only interested in their money? If so, that’s a problem...
You care...
You’ve met...
You’ll inspire...
You’ll solve...
2. Why are you asking me?

- What's in it for you?
- Have you given?
- Who else has given?

**Tip:** Reference others who have given.
3. Do I respect you?

Goal: Getting past the amygdala.

Tip: Trust is earned, not given.
did you become a fundraiser?

*Tip: Your story can motivate donors.*
4. How much do you want?

Be careful what you ask for!

Everyone asks: How much should I give?

*Tip*: Transformational gifts take time.
5. Why *your* organization?

You have a lot of competition. What makes your group stand out?
Storytelling deepens understanding. Listening helps you ask better questions.

**Tip:** The story must be told compellingly and reach the right people.
6. Is there an urgent reason to give?

Urgency prompts donor response.

**Tip:** Use deadlines, milestones, consequences.
7. Is it easy to give?

Make it easier with simple forms, big type, special asks.

**Tip:** Promote monthly giving!
8. How will I be treated?

Donors fear you’ll forget about them after they give.

*Tip:* Your attitude makes all the difference!
9. How will you measure results?

Some donors care about metrics and numbers; others gravitate to stories and examples.

**Tip:** A donor asking about how you measure results is a second gift...!
10. Will I have a say over how you use my gift?

People like control and earmarking.

*Tip:* Embrace designated gifts ... but first create a gift acceptance policy!
11. Will my gift make a difference?

Your prospect or donor has lots of options. Make it tangible, make it emotional.

**Tip:** Tell donors how you invested their gifts.
Question for the chat:

Which donor question or motivation requires more of your attention?
When you hear “Yes,” then what?

Be grateful. Be enthusiastic! And then...

Select from the following questions — and feel free to rearrange the sequence.
1. “How would you like to pay?”
Cheque, credit card, pledge, monthly gift?

Tip: Bring a pledge form to donor visits.
2. How do you want us to use this gift?

Special project or overall support?

*Tip*: You want those unrestricted gifts!
3. How would you like to be recognized?

Or maybe anonymous?

*Tip:* Sharing donor names inspires others.
4. Do you want your gift to honor someone you care about?

*Tip:* Include this option on pledge form.
5. Why do you support our work?

Explore your donor’s motivations.

*Tip*: Don’t assume you know – ask!
6. Will you give us a testimonial?
Because donors make the best advocates!

*Tip:* Based on the conversation, it’s OK to draft something for the donor to review.
7. Will you share with our board why you give?

It’s useful to hear from donors.

Tip: Consider a panel: 3-4 donors w/ Q&A.
8. How do you like to be kept informed?

It’s easy to customize your donor communications.

Tip: Ask about how often, too – then update your database!
9. When I update you in person, can we include your family?

*Tip:* If you’re cultivating planned gifts, this is essential.
10. Can you recommend other potential donors?

Instant credibility!

*Tip:* Ask for intros.
11. What other organizations or causes do you support?

*Tip*: Don’t assume that donors tightly target their giving; many do not.
12. Would you consider volunteering to help raise money?

*Tip:* Suggest something specific, like participating in a cultivation meeting.
13. What’s your giving calendar?

Once per year, monthly gifts, as needed...

*Tip:* Don’t begin with this question!
Question for the chat:

Which questions do you want to remember to ask donors?

Why?
Keeping track

We will send you a helpful tracking form you can use during these conversations.
Questions?
A sampling of our books

Available from:
www.hilborn-civilsectorpress.com/
Be well and stay in touch!

HarveyMcKinnon.com

AndyRobinsononline.com