



Changing Culture from Transactional to Philanthropic  
Elevating Your Individual Fundraising Efforts

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# Why This Matters

- Council growth requires a shift in culture.
- Relationship-based philanthropy sustains revenue.
- Focus: major gifts, pipeline, engagement.

# Transactional Giving Characteristics

- One-time, single gift focus
- Little or no personalization
- Reactive giving
- Short-term revenue focus
- Donor seen as source of funds

# Philanthropic Fundraising Culture (Relationship-Based Fundraising)

- Multi-year, transformational giving
- Shared vision and mission alignment
- Proactive, intentional cultivation
- Personalized engagement
- Partnership mentality: co-creating impact

# Why Major Gifts Matter

- 80% of revenue often comes from 20% of donors
- Bridge mission and margin
- Enable transformational impact
- Support endowment, membership, program growth

# Strategic Role of Major Gifts

- Aligns with council strategic plan
- Drives sustainable growth
- Catalyzes transformational change
- Engages board leadership in visioning

# Why You Need a Major Gifts Committee

- Builds a culture of philanthropy within your council
- Provides peer validation and access to networks
- Enhances accountability and momentum for major gifts
- Strategic input and donor insight from community leaders

# Keys to an Effective Major Gifts Committee

- Recruit high-capacity, well-connected volunteers
- Set clear goals and expectations
- Engage members in prospect identification & cultivation
- Regularly update the committee on progress and impact
- Celebrate wins and recognize committee contributions

# Grow the Pipeline & Secure the Gift

- Identify, Qualify, Cultivate, Solicit, Steward
- Board connections and peer intros
- Use wealth screenings where possible
  - Other indicators of wealth- home value, country club membership, company ownership, job title, etc.
- Prioritize donor-centered conversations
- Make the case for multi-year, blended, or legacy gifts

# Building Your Council's Top 20 Prospect List

- Board members & long-time donors
- Former board presidents or Board Members
- Existing planned givers
- Consistent or Long-time Donors with no children
- Event sponsors & attendees
- Private foundations and wealthy individuals

# How to Move the Needle With Prospect List

- Each Prospect needs their own individual engagement strategy
- Each relationship will require the engagement of BSA volunteer leadership
  - You will need a specific volunteer and staff person assigned to support each relationship/prospect.
  - Determine the Scouting connection or overlapping philanthropic interest area.

# Cultivation Strategies That Work

- Invite donors to council events
- Host small mission-focused gatherings
- Use impact stories to inspire giving
- Provide volunteer opportunities tied to giving

# Crafting the Ask

- Focus on shared values and outcomes
- Tailor the ask to donor capacity
- Offer multi-year or blended gift options
- Be clear, specific, and confident in the ask

# Role Play Exercise

- “Your donor is a longtime Eagle Scout and former camp volunteer.”
- You are meeting to discuss a \$25,000–\$50,000 multi-year gift
- Gift to support camp scholarships and leadership development.”

## Pair with a neighbor: practice a 2-minute donor ask

- Connection to values- Why this donor would care
- Clear purpose- What the gift enables
- Specific ask- Within the \$25K–\$50K range
- Next step- Follow-up meeting, tour, proposal, etc

# Role Play Debrief

- How did that feel?
- What worked?
- What felt challenging?

# Board Engagement in Major Gifts

- Educate board members about their role
- Provide talking points and donor lists
- Pair staff and volunteers on key visits
- Celebrate when board members participate

# Your Challenge

- Implement 1–2 strategies this fall
- Schedule donor touchpoints weekly
- Engage board members in cultivation
- Raise the bar together!

# Wrap-Up & Commitment

- Reflect on what you learned today
- Commit to one action step before you leave
- Culture shift starts with YOU!