

Curiosity-Driven Fundraising Toolkit

Plug-and-Play Questions to Spark Donor Connections



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Why Use This Toolkit?

Curiosity is the key to deeper donor relationships.

The right question can open a donor's heart, spark meaningful dialogue, and uncover the stories that drive giving. This toolkit gives you ready-to-use questions, subject lines, and conversation starters to engage your donors today.

Example: The Power of Curiosity in Action

Imagine meeting with a donor and starting with a simple yes/no question like, "Did you enjoy our last event?"

The donor might respond with a polite "Yes," and the conversation could fizzle out quickly.

But what if you asked, "What part of our last event resonated with you the most?" Suddenly, the donor is sharing personal stories, experiences, and insights—giving you valuable information about what they care about. This not only deepens your relationship but also helps you tailor future asks to their passions and motivations.

How to Use This Toolkit

1. **Pick a Question or Prompt:** Choose from the lists below to fit your email, direct mail, or in-person conversation.
2. **Personalize It:** Swap in your organization's name or a donor's specific interest when needed.
3. **Use It Immediately:** These are designed for quick, effective use—no extra rewriting needed.

Email Subject Lines That Get Opened

Copy, paste, and send!

- “This isn’t the ending you expected...”
- “The story inside isn’t over yet...”
- “You’re the hero in this story—here’s why”
- “A \$25 gift can do THIS?!”
- “You won’t believe what happened after your donation”

Formulas for Crafting Your Own Subject Lines:

- “What if [unexpected outcome] could happen today?”
- “[Number] surprising ways your gift is making an impact”
- “The truth about [impact of donation] that no one talks about”

Direct Mail Teasers That Get Opened

Use these on the outside of your envelope to spark curiosity!

- “The story inside isn’t over yet...”
- “You won’t believe what’s in this envelope”
- “We made a mistake—and you’re the first to know”
- “What if you could change a life today?”
- “The next chapter of Suzy’s story is in your hands”

Formulas for Crafting Your Own Mail Teasers:

- “Inside: The [emotional story] you need to hear today”
- “What we discovered about [problem your organization solves] will surprise you”
- “The envelope that could change a life—open to find out how”

Conversation Starters for Donor Meetings

Break the ice and uncover donor motivations with these questions.

- “When you think about giving, what’s the first story that comes to mind?”
- “What’s the most unexpected way you’ve seen a small gift make a big impact?”
- “If your life were a story, what chapter are you in right now?”
- “What motivated you to support [organization] in the first place?”
- “If you could solve one problem in the world today, what would it be?”

Formulas for Crafting Your Own Conversation Starters:

- “What’s the most memorable experience you’ve had with [related cause]?”
- “If you could write the next chapter in [organization’s mission], what would it look like?”
- “What personal experiences have shaped your passion for [cause]?”

Follow-Up Questions to Keep the Conversation Going

Once a donor opens up, use these to dive deeper.

- “That’s incredible—what happened next?”
- “How did that experience shape the way you give today?”
- “What impact do you hope your gift will make this year?”
- “What inspired you most about that experience?”

Formulas for Crafting Your Own Follow-Up Questions:

- “What surprised you most about [event/experience]?”
- “How did [specific moment] influence your decision to give?”
- “What lasting impact do you hope to see from your support of [organization]?”

Quick Tips for Using These Questions

- **Be Genuine:** Let your curiosity show—donors can tell when you’re really interested.
- **Listen Actively:** Their answers reveal stories and motivations you can build on.
- **Adapt on the Fly:** Use these questions as a guide but feel free to adjust based on the flow of conversation.

Ready to Take It Further?

Want more ways to use storytelling and curiosity in your fundraising?

Join us at the Nonprofit Storytelling Conference where you'll learn advanced techniques to make your stories even more engaging and impactful. Discover how to harness emotional tension, create donor-centric narratives, and inspire more donations through proven storytelling strategies.

Connect with experts and peers who are transforming the way nonprofits communicate and raise funds.

To learn more, go to <https://nonprofitstorytellingconference.com>

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