

Basic tips on how to cultivate and nurture your donor

This is undeniably such a long 1 day topic as offered by FIND Partners. Below are just tips that are ideally meant to benefit starters (*who are yet to attend this course or specialize in resource mobilization and fundraising*)

1. **Know always and put in place the basic requirements donors want or would ask for.** Do this before starting to contact them. It has happened that people get funding even without an office, constitution, Bank account, or any registration. This frankly borders on fraud
2. **Always identify and target donors whose interests match your mission and objectives.**
3. **Based on how particular donors (individuals, corporate and others) want to be dealt with, follow the tips and develop a relevant donor cultivation and maintenance plan.**
4. **Let all staff know who your donor is, the policies, procedures and systems desired. Successful organizations involve all their staff in resource mobilization and fundraising**
5. **Make the donor feel loved. Personalize them. This could be done by following all their requirements to the dot.** "It helps for you to note that ALL DONORS ARE HUMAN BEINGS. There is nothing like a funding institution, its people and individuals there that make decisions"
6. **Identify a board member or a well known personality** in your area of interest to patronize your cause. Its also true that DONORS DON'T GIVE TO INSTITUTIONS, THEY GIVE TO PEOPLE – who they know are credible and will utilize their dollar well. Having a Bishop, Member of Parliament, former Minister, or a well known activist can help well
7. **Always document each contact with prospective donors.** And have a plan to follow it through. Any contact with a donor is priceless even without any promise for funding. It can result into valuable reference.
8. **Solicit the first gift.** Be sure to make it easy for potential donors to give that first gift. When you share with past grantees, you will know how that particular donor deals with first contact potential grantees
9. **Establish a file of your donors and maintain a good tracking system.** This is crucial. These people support you, and you want to be able to keep in touch with them and to ask them for more support over time.
10. **Turn first-time donors into regular donors.** Promptly thank donors for their gifts—in writing. Offer donors an opportunity, if appropriate, to become involved

in the organization's work. It may be dangerous to have them as close as board members but may be on the annual report list-serve

11. **Always respond promptly when a donor indicates that he/she wants to be more involved or asks for any information.** It tests your efficiency, interest and respect
12. **Keep your donors informed.** Regularly send out a newsletter, e-newsletter, or other form of communication. Do this at least quarterly but not so often as to overwhelm your donors. ALL donors are busy people but also can easily mistaken your "regular unnecessarily communications to coercion.
13. **Ask your donors to give more than they gave last time.** Give the donors many opportunities to give more or to give more often. But be careful not to make the donor feel bothered.
14. **Respect donors' requests regarding cultivation and cultivation events.** Carefully observe and respect anonymity if that is what the donor wants. Give credit if the donor desires it.
15. **Report and promptly.** All donors regardless of their nature want reports. If they have no designed report format, tell them about the situation before they funded, what their funding has achieved – impact, challenges that are remaining and what you are planning to do in future.