

21 Tips to Cultivate Major Donors

1. Make sure any gift of \$100 (\$250, \$500) receives a thank you note—and phone call, if possible—the day it comes in.
2. Establish a memorial gifts program and make it easy for major donors to use it.
3. Send your newsletter via first class mail, and attach personal notes whenever possible.
4. Include brief personalized notes ("Thought you'd want to see what we're sending others.") with your mass mail and house appeals.
5. Invite major donors to serve on your organization's board of directors (if their interest extends beyond just investing).
6. Set up honorary and advisory boards (if their interest does not).
7. Send copies of all your official press releases.
8. Invite major donors to media events—and make sure they are sent copies of any media coverage your organization receives.
9. Communicate immediately any bad news ("Because you're a special friend, I wanted to let you know right away about circumstances surrounding. . .").
10. Send birthday cards and anniversary greetings.
11. Send notes to congratulate major donors for publication of books, promotions, accomplishments, appointments.
12. Send flowers to the hospital.
13. Send autographed copies of any newly published books written by your organization's staff members.
14. Visit major donors at their homes or offices.
15. Have other staff members or volunteers visit major donors.
16. Invite major donors to visit your offices or program sites.
17. Invite major donors to accompany you on delegations and other trips.
18. Request that major donors host a dinner or reception.
19. Invite major donors to meetings involving other major donors.
20. Call or write major donors to ask their advice.
21. Provide a special phone line or number so major donors can reach you quickly and directly.