Major Gift Stewardship

DEFINITION:
- The office, duties, and obligations of a steward.
- The conducting, supervising, or managing of something – especially the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one’s care.

FOUR I’S OF RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT:
- Major gift stewardship is much like farming or growing a garden. Most major gifts have been preceded by a long history that began with the Four I’s of resource development:
  - Interest
  - Inform
  - Involve
  - Invest

MAJOR GIFT FUNDRAISING IS DIFFERENT BY THE:
- Size of the gift
- Length of cultivation
- Cost
- Accountability
- Involvement of others
- Purpose of the gift
- Preparation for the ask

TYPICALLY MAJOR GIFTS OCCUR:
- After 6-8 moves or personal contacts
- Over a period of 12-18 months

KEY INGREDIENTS OF A MAJOR GIFTS PROGRAM:
- Identify prospects
- Develop a list
- Assign a specific person to each donor
- A compelling mission
- A clear statement of need
- An agreed upon plan for the next ask

“Before any successful fundraising program, the organization must determine, define, and articulate its purpose and goals.” – Tom Broce
RULES OF THUMB:
• Have fun
• Develop relationships
• Passion for mission is the same passion for a donor
• People give to people
• People give because they are asked and shown how
• People give when they are involved
• Giving is a way of life
• Development is the ultimate team sport
• The best time to raise money is when you don't need it
• “No” is never forever
• 10% of donors give 90% of the budget
• Don’t forget to say “Thank you!”

BUDGET FOR MAJOR GIFT DEVELOPMENT:
• Personnel costs
• Research support
• Travel
• Cultivation activities
• Stewardship
WHAT REALLY MATTERS?

WHAT I’VE LEARNED:
• The best donor is the donor you already have
• Know your donor
• Always be on time
• Be prepared to ask for a specific amount
• You can never ask a donor for too large a gift

PHILOSOPHY OF DEVELOPMENT:
1. People give to people, not to good causes
   a. The key to success in development is in the development of relationships
   b. If you work hard to develop your network over a period of 15-20 years, then you can expect to be an overnight success
   c. The key is in discovering what your “passion” is and then helping connect that to your mission
2. Develop relationships face-to-face
   a. You will become the “embodiment” of your organization
   b. There is no substitute for the face-to-face encounter
3. You must believe in the mission of your organization
   a. If you have any hesitancy in this area, it will immediately show up and cancel out the gift
b. Do yourself a favor and find an organization you can believe in and give yourself to (it will be a favor to the organization, as well).

4. Don’t forget to say “Thank you!”
   a. Find vehicles for saying “thank you” at least seven times before you ask the donor for the next gift.