

15 DO'S AND DON'TS OF TELEPHONE CALLS FOR MAJOR AND LEGACY GIFT FUNDRAISERS

15 DO'S

- ✓ 1. Be straightforward. Identify the reason(s) for your call.
- ✓ 2. Ask great open-ended questions that encourage dialogue and show that you are sincerely interested and care about that particular person.
- ✓ 3. Listen. Your supporters want to be heard. If you do it right, they'll talk at least twice as much as you. Hopefully more.
- ✓ 4. Your mission is worthy so smile and be confident. It radiates through the phone line. I'm not kidding. People can sense how you feel right through the phone line.
- ✓ 5. Be honest always! You WILL get found out if you lie or tell half-truths.
- ✓ 6. Test everything. For instance, what opening lines work better than others.
- ✓ 7. Keep a pen and paper nearby so you can take notes. You simply won't remember each call.
- ✓ 8. Match your energy level and tone with that of your supporter's. Be a chameleon.
- ✓ 9. If you made any kind of promise during the call, be sure you do what you said you were 'gonna do.
- ✓ 10. Send personalized, relevant follow-up emails to those who want more information or appointment confirmations to those who agreed to meet.
- ✓ 11. Be loose. Shmooze a bit. You can't read a script if you really want to engage your supporters. Instead, tell stories.
- ✓ 12. Be a team player. Let others in your organization know what you are doing (especially if you are outsourcing the calls to a vendor).

- ✓ 13. Treat people how THEY would like to be treated as you develop your calling strategy.
- ✓ 14. Use technology to be more efficient (such as CRM, auto-dialing click widgets, etc.).
- ✓ 15. Most of all, employ telemarketing as part of an integrated approach that complements other marketing activities— not as a solo, one-shot effort.

15 DON'TS

- ✓ 1. Be disingenuous. For instance, don't apologize for calling. You're not sorry and your prospect knows it. Similarly, don't lie about anything. You will be found out. If you don't know the answer to a question, be honest about it and then promise to find out and call them back with an answer.
- ✓ 2. Be afraid to change your approach and message if it isn't working.
- ✓ 3. Interrupt your supporter when they are talking. It is a clear indication that you don't care about what they have to say.
- ✓ 4. Forget the specific, strategic reason for your call (unless you failed to devise a strategy in the first place). Stay on track. Aim to achieve the goal you originally set.
- ✓ 5. Read a script word for word.
- ✓ 6. Forget to address the person by name (but only after asking for permission to do so first). Then don't overuse their name. That will sound tacky.
- ✓ 7. Prejudge. You never know which call might turn into a fantastic opportunity for you and your supporter.

- ✓ 8. Type while you are they are talking. In fact, don't type at all. Use a pen. They can hear you!
- ✓ 9. Stuff pauses with "like", "um" and "er".
- ✓ 10. Use jargon your supporter won't understand. They are not involved in your organization's mission day in and day out the way you are and they'll feel stupid.
- ✓ 11. Worry too much about failure. Most people will become more engaged with your mission thanks to your outreach. But some might actually become less engaged. You can't worry about the possibility of failure. The positives gained will surely outweigh any negatives. And, besides, if you do nothing, you'll fail for sure.
- ✓ 12. Talk over your prospect – it shows you aren't listening.
- ✓ 13. Allow any background noise when you are calling. It's disrespectful. If you are nearby other callers make sure it doesn't sound like you are in a call center on the other end of the line. Your supporter will feel like a piece of meat.
- ✓ 14. Argue or debate with your supporter. Look for ways to agree not disagree.
- ✓ 15. Underestimate the power of telemarketing to build better relationships with your supporters.