

Questions to ask donors – and prospects and often the predisposed

1. Why did you first give to our organization? (Richard Radcliffe, U.K. legacy consultant says this is the most important question to ask.)
2. What interests you most about organization? Why? What is less interesting to you? Why?
3. Why do you give to our organization? How would you describe our mission? What does it mean to you?
4. What are the most critical results you expect our organization to produce?
5. What do you tell others about us? How do you describe this organization to others?
6. Why does this cause matter to you? Why now in particular?
7. What do you believe would most transform [this particular situation]?
8. Which other organizations effectively address this cause?
9. How does our organization compare to other organizations working in this cause?
10. And from AFP Calgary colleagues: If you had 5 minutes with our CEO, what would you say? Why? OR... If you were our CEO for a day, what would you do? Why?

Find out their values and beliefs. Get in touch with their feelings. (Remember, emotions trigger all human decisions.)

11. Tell me about your life.
12. Share with me your life's enduring moments.
13. What are you most passionate about? Why?
14. If you had a family slogan, what would it be?
15. How would you describe your personal mission?
16. If you could change the world, what would you do?
17. What actions do you think would best cause the change you envision?
18. What changes do you believe would make the world a better place?
19. What would you like to pass on to future generations?
20. How do you feel when you make a gift?
21. What makes you angry and sad?
22. What makes you hopeful and happy?
23. From colleagues at PLAN MGO major gifts training, Waltham, fall 2009
 - a. What was your first gift to philanthropy and why?
 - b. What would you take with you if you were fleeing / evacuating?
 - c. What are your dreams for the community?

P.S. Decide which questions are appropriate to whom. Be sensitive to their boundaries as well as your own.

For more questions, see www.simonejoyaux.com. Click on Resources and visit the Free Library. For even more questions, see *Keep Your Donors: The Guide to Better Communications and Stronger Relationships* by Joyaux and Tom Ahern.