

# Six Tips to Boost Year End Fundraising

John Burton Foundation  
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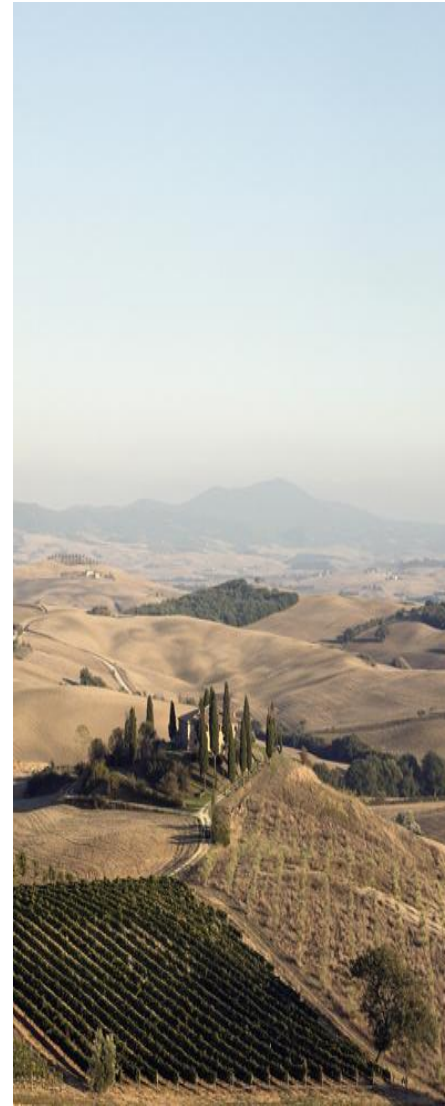
Kim Klein is a fundraiser and trainer who has provided training and consultation in all 50 United States and 21 countries. Her latest book, *Reliable Fundraising in Unreliable Times*, won the McAdam Book Award in 2010. Her classic, *Fundraising for Social Change*, is now in its 6<sup>th</sup> edition.

She is a member of the Building Movement Project where she works on a project called Nonprofits Talking Taxes.

# What are we dealing with?

## External Landscape: The New Normal

- Deep long term recession
- Global economic meltdown
- High unemployment
- Ongoing war in Afghanistan
- Poverty becoming more evident
- National, state and local budget crises



# Current Landscape: Nonprofit Sector



***Our problems have less to do with the economy than we might think***

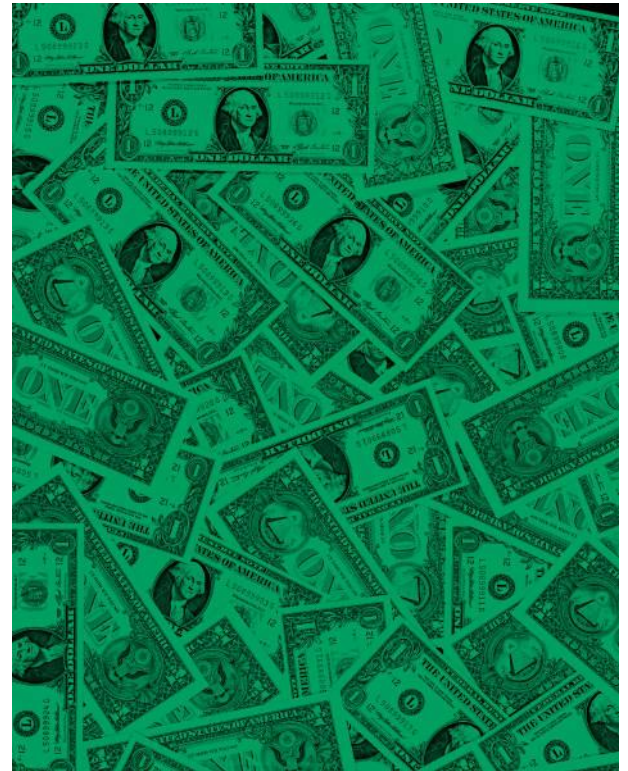
- Number of nonprofits
- Scale of Need
- No consensus on the role of public and private funding
- Government Cutbacks Far Exceed Private Giving\*

\* Lester Salomon at Urban Institute

# Sources of Funding for Nonprofits

Total Income: \$1.3 trillion+

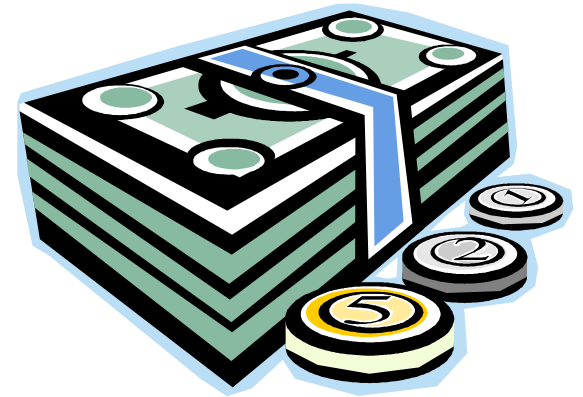
- **Government (30%)**
- **Earned Income (50%)**
- **Private Sector (20%)**



# Private Sector Giving: 2009

Total: \$306 Billion

- Individuals: \$229 Billion (75%)
- Bequests: \$23 Billion (7.5%)
- Foundations: \$38.5 Billion (12.5%)
- Corporations: \$15.7 Billion (5%)



# Most Money is Still Available!

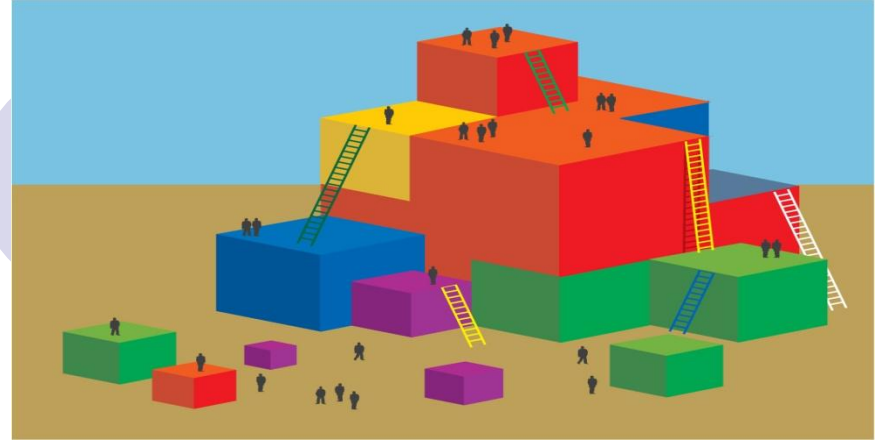
Seven out of ten adults give away money:  
more people give away money than vote,  
attend a house of worship or volunteer

Most gifts come from income and most people  
still have jobs.

The problem is that individual donors  
cannot replace gov't cutbacks.



# A Clear Message



- ✓ **What does your org most believe?**
- ✓ **What does your org do to act on its beliefs?**
- ✓ **What is your track record?**
- ✓ **How much money do you spend?**
- ✓ **Where do you get your money?**
- ✓ **Who is involved in your organization?**

# Sample Message Statements



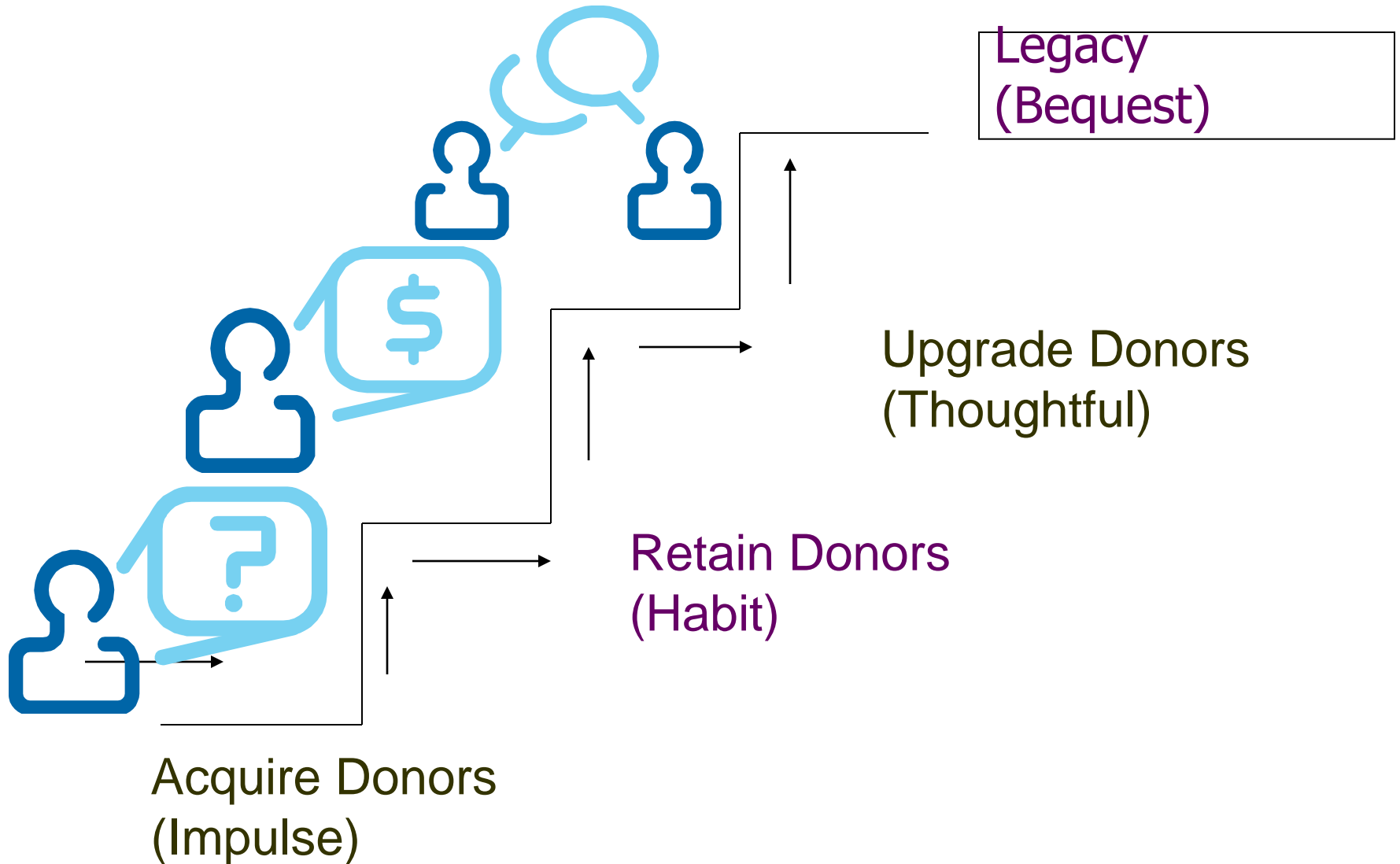
**We believe in the power of art to change the world**  
*(Theater company)*

**Because great minds don't all think alike**  
*(School for autistic children)*

**Access to clean water is a human right.**  
*(World water council)*

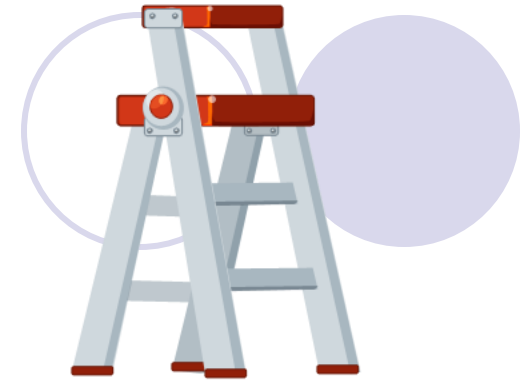
**The parent did the crime, the kids do the time**  
*(org working with children of prisoners)*

# The Purpose of Fundraising is to Build Relationships



# Strategies and Results

(Time In → Money Out)



## Strategy

## Response Rate

In person asking

50%

Personal Phone Call

25%

Personal Letter

10-15%

Phone-a-Thon

5%

Direct Mail (Acquisition)

.5-1%

On-line

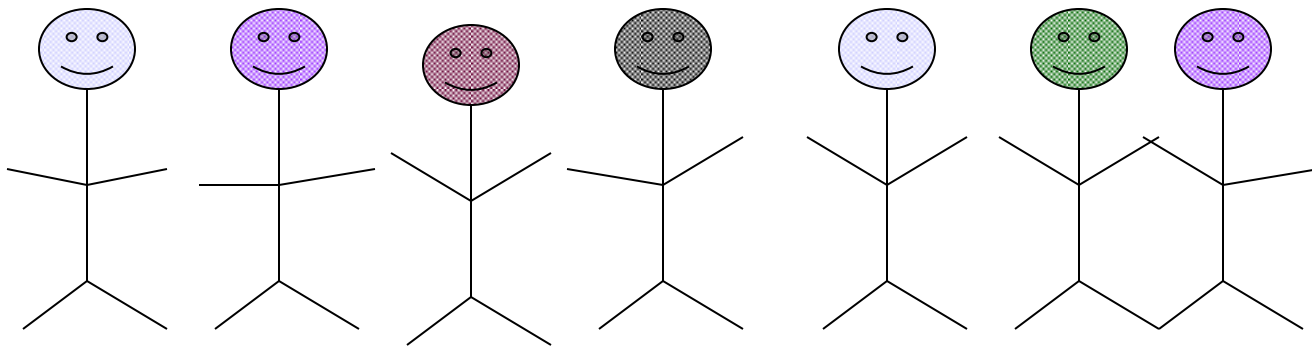
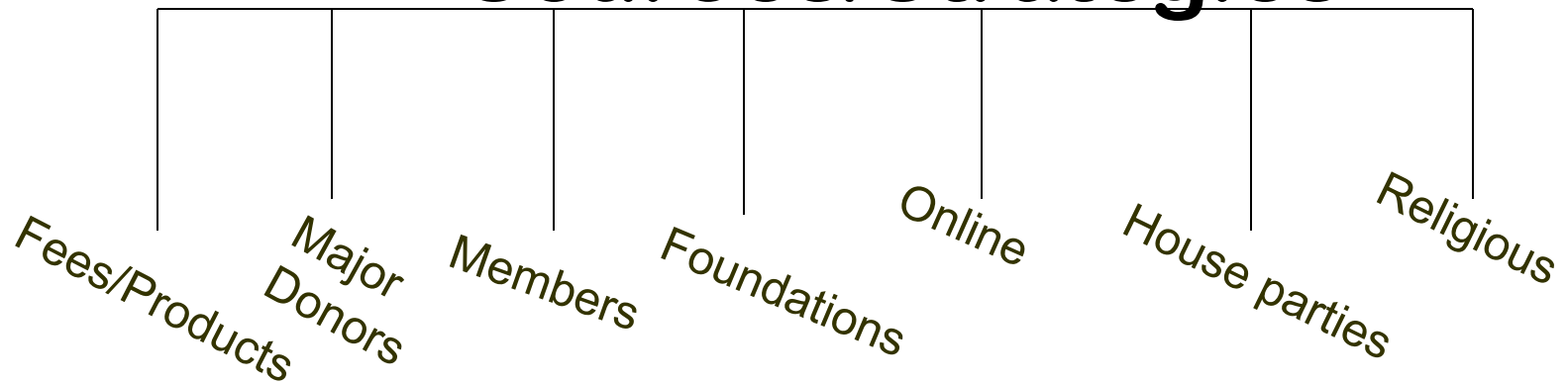
Varies

Special Events

Varies

# Financial Health Requires Diversity

## Sources/Strategies



## Board and Volunteers

# The Seasons of Fundraising



“I will be more charitable” (Jan 16-March 1)



“Will this winter ever end?” (March 2-April 30)

“Nothing happens in summer (June 1-August 15)

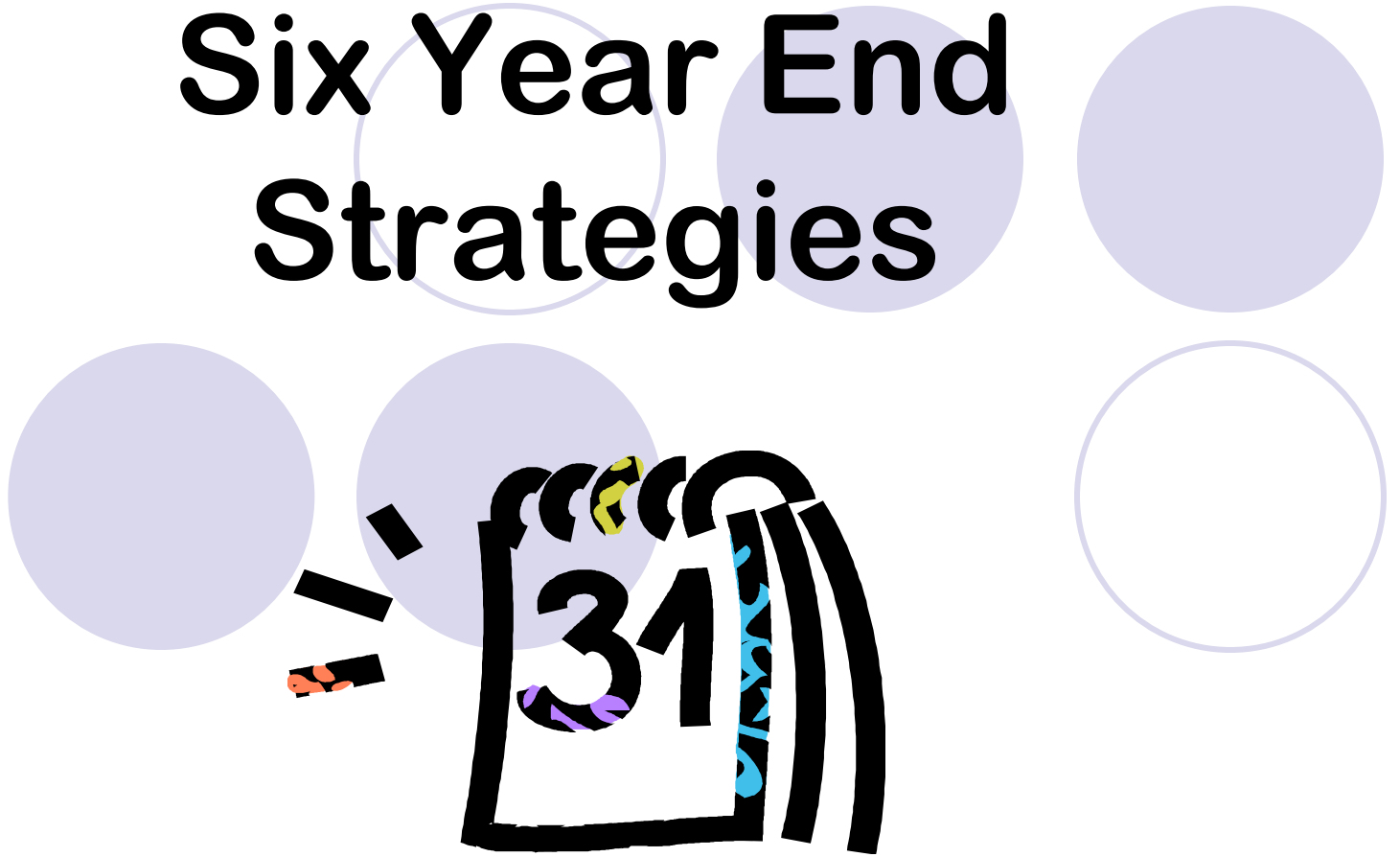
“School has started” Aug 15—Sept 30



“Get ready for the holidays”: (Oct 1-Jan 15)



# Six Year End Strategies



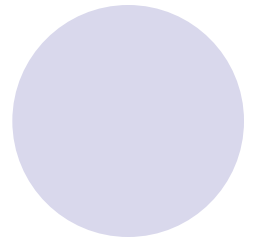
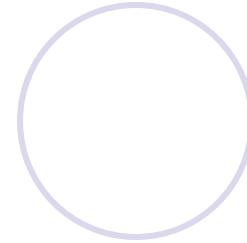
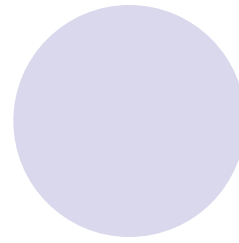
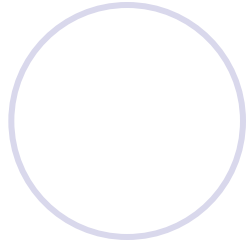
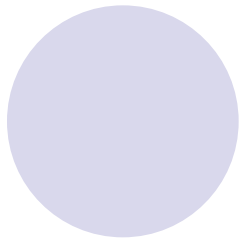
# 1. Donations in place of presents

Dear Friend,

It's December again, and if you're like me, you are wishing you had started your holiday shopping earlier. Buying presents for friends at this time of year can be fun, but if you're short on time or ideas, it can be nerve-wracking. Some friends are particularly hard to give gifts to because they don't seem to need or want anything. Should I get them a book? Another piece of pottery?

This year I have decided to give many people on my holiday list a glimpse into Oceans Forever. I serve on the board and donate money and time to this group because I am convinced that the work we are doing is making a difference. I know my friends want to make a difference also, so I am giving Oceans Forever a gift in their name.

Do you want to join me? Simply send us a donation in the name of a friend, family member, or co-worker. We will send them a lovely card telling them about your gift.



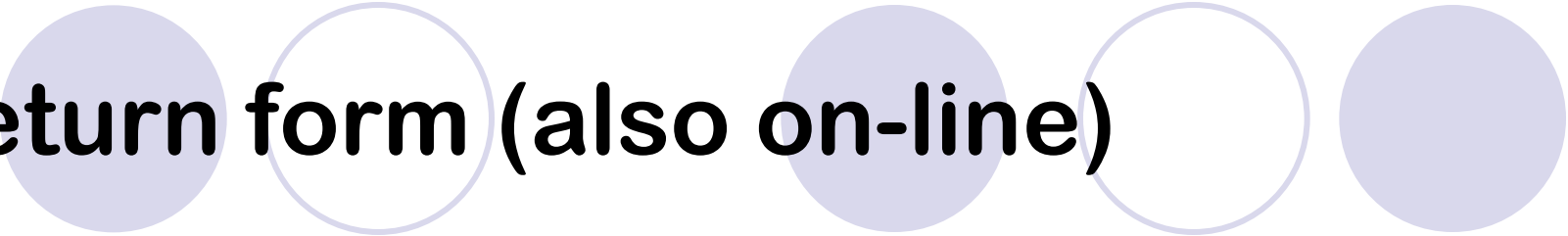
The minimum gift is \$15, but you can give any amount above that. I have given what I would have spent on a present for each of my friends. You can give as many or as few gifts as you wish.

A donation to Oceans Forever in the name of a friend is perfect for someone who:

- knows how important oceans are;
- appreciates an effective organization;
- is interested in what you are up to these days.

I hope you will join me in giving your friends a healthy ocean. Just fill out the enclosed form and return it by December 15 so that we can let your friends know of your gift.

Best wishes for the holiday season,  
Mary Goodboardmember



# Return form (also on-line)

This is a great idea! Save time and oceans too! I'd like to give \$\_\_\_\_  
(minimum \$15) for each of the following people:

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Message: (up to 20 words) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Message: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Message: \_\_\_\_\_

Total enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Use additional sheets as needed.

Name, Address, etc. Payment options

Save time! Give on-line at: [oceansforever.org](http://oceansforever.org)

# Timing and Results

- Send this letter sometime between now and the end of November to people on your mailing list who have given at least twice.
- Expect a 5% return, with some people doing multiple gifts, *if you have been keeping good records, sending newsletters and generally keeping up with your donors.*
- Put this offer on your website and include a paragraph about it in your newsletter to increase response.

## **2. Open House Friend Raiser**

- Invite as many people as possible to your office for a holiday party. Include all board, staff, volunteers and donors who live locally. Invite vendors, neighbors, politicians, anyone who has helped you in any way.**
- This is not a fundraiser, but you can place envelopes all over and if you have products, you should have a table to sell them.**
- Decorate the walls with posters of your accomplishments for the year. Make a thank you poster that includes names of everyone who has helped you in any way.**
- Create a “wish list” poster and hang in a prominent place**

# Tips for a Successful Open House

- \*Hold the Open House before Dec. 14**
- \*Invite at least three times as many people as you would like to have at the Open House, and make follow up calls to people who you would especially want to see.**
- \*Have one board or staff member for every ten guests and make them circulate and meet people. Take turns standing near the food table, the door, the drink table, and any other “cluster area.”**
- \*Have name tags, and have the board and staff wear easily identifiable badges of some kind.**
- \*Ask board and staff to write down the names of people they meet and anything they said about their interests in your organization. Later, compare these notes to your donor list.**

### **3. Using Mail and E-Mail**



**Sort your donors into five categories:**

- given in the last two months**
- given in 2011, but not in the last two months**
- gave in 2010, but not again**
- those who have given, but not since 2009**
- have never given, but are on your mailing list for some reason**

# **Create Letters for Each Category**

**Those who have given in the last two months:**

**Get a “happy holidays” card, thanking them again for their wonderful support. (Enclose a return envelope)**

**Those who have given this year, but not in the last two months:**

**Get an end-of-year appeal. Thank them again for their previous gift and tell them why you need with another gift this year**

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**Those who gave in 2010, but not  
2011:**

**Ask them to renew their giving to your before  
the end of the year. List some  
accomplishments and some future plans.**

**Ideally, send this letter right after  
Thanksgiving, wait two weeks, then follow  
up with phone calls.**

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# Those Who Gave Last in 2009

Get a “come home for the holidays” letter, “we’d love to welcome you back as we enter 2012 stronger than ever. Our plans include ....., but they can only be implemented with the help of people like you. Please give today.”

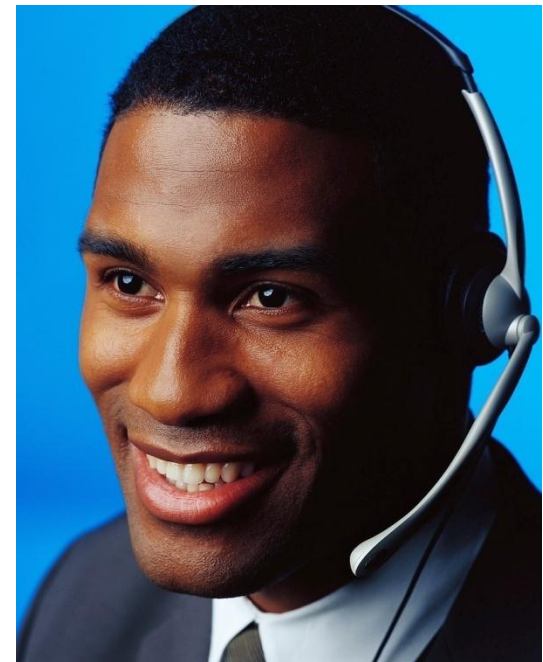
Ideally, these letters should be followed up with phone calls.

# Phone Follow-up

## MESSAGE

**“Hello, this is Daryl Dogood. I’m a volunteer with Friends of the Friendless. I’m calling to follow up on a letter we sent recently asking you to renew your support for our work. You have helped us in the past and we could use your help again.**

**Please take a moment to review the letter or go to our website: [www.Friendsof.org](http://www.Friendsof.org) for a description of what we have done and what we are planning. Thanks for your part in all of it—we look forward to hearing from you.”**



# Follow-up calls (cont'd):

When you reach a live person:

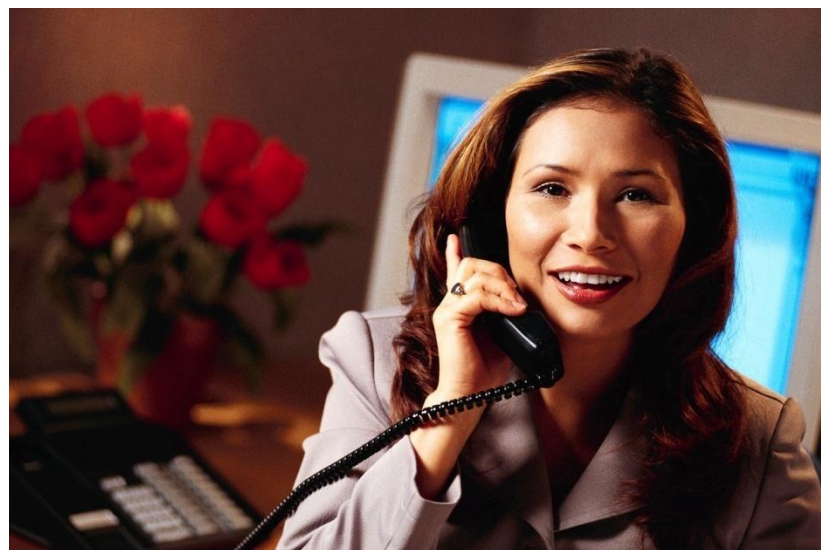
**“This is Wanda Volunteer from People for Good. Do you have a moment to talk right now?”**

**(If yes), “I’m following up on a letter we sent recently. I know everyone is swamped with appeals, but I wonder if you remember it?”**

**(If yes,) “Do you have any questions or comments about our work—including criticisms or suggestions?”**

**(If yes, then discuss. If no,) “Can you help us again this year with a gift of \$\_\_\_?”**

**Use this as a chance to verify address and phone number. If the person says they would rather not be phoned in the future, make a note of that in your record, and in their thank you note.**



# Keep Good Records of these calls

If you talk to a person, send a thank you note:

“thanks for taking the time to talk with me this evening. Thank you for your pledge of \$50. I’ve enclose an envelope in case you can’t find the one we sent.”

OR: “Thanks for taking the time to talk with me this evening and your willingness to think about making a year end gift. And, once again, thanks for your past support.”

# **People on your list who have never given:**



- **Volunteers, funders, sympathetic press people, kind and generous vendors, etc: should be sent a holiday card and thank you;**
- **Anyone not in any category should be put into list for a final appeal in the New Year, then with no response, removed from the list.**

# Tips About E-Mail



**Send two-three e-mail appeals to the same list in a short period of time, suppressing names who have responded already**

**Don't go completely virtual**

**Create an e-list of people who respond only to e-mail.**

# 4. Major Donors

Create a list of your most important donors and make a plan for each one of them.

Some need:

- a holiday card.
- a personal invitation to your Open House
- to be called and thanked or asked
- to be visited and thanked or asked

*Form a committee of three-four people (at least two board members) and assign yourselves the task of taking care of three major donors a week from now through Dec. 30*

## **5. Year End Thank-a-thon**

**Form a committee of volunteers. Have them call all your current donors and thank them.**

**Write a brief message to leave on voice mail**

**Prepare a few FAQs and talking points for talking to a live person**

**These calls are short. Most are messages, and even when you talk to someone, they don't have much time. People are very pleased with these calls, and it will show up in increased renewal rates next year.**

***TIP: Perfect strategy for the shy board member***

# The Message For the Thank-a-thon

“Hello, this is Vincent Volunteer calling from the Affordable Housing Coalition. I’m calling to thank you for your support over this past year and wish you happy holidays. We had many accomplishments this year, but two stand out:

- Passing a rent control ordinance that was supported by both renters and progressive landlords
- Creating a loan fund with zero interest and 12 months to pay to enable poor families to put down deposits on apartments and homes. We’ve made 200 loans since April.

Your donations helped make all this possible. Thank you again.”

*Volunteers need to practice saying this slowly and clearly.*



# The Wish List

**Post a wish list on your website, in your office window, in your newsletter, on Facebook and ask board members to post where they can.**

**You Can Help with these Most Needed Items:**

**Cash donations**

**Coffee Urn for Community Meetings**

**Sturdy Bookshelves, any size**

**New fax machine**

**Please contact Meryl at 433-221-1112 or write: [info@goodgroup.org](mailto:info@goodgroup.org)**

# Complete this sentence



**As to asking for money in person, I ...**

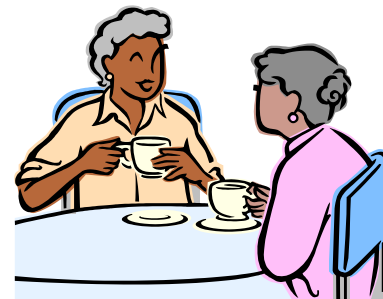
- 1. Have no experience at all**
- 2. Am not comfortable at all**
- 3. Can do it, but don't love it**
- 4. Like some aspects of it, and do it regularly**
- 5. Find this is the most enjoyable part of my work**

# Approaching Donors Personally

For donors already giving \$250 or more, consider a more personal approach.

Ask them to double their gift or possibly, ask for a more substantial increase

Use a combination of letter/e-mail, phone call and face to face meeting



# Letter or e-mail to donor you know

Dear Terry and Chris,

I hope you saw the news story about expanding our job training to three more sites! Now everyone in our city lives within two miles of a center. Your ongoing and very generous support is definitely a big part of our ability to open these new centers.

The challenge now is to keep the centers fully staffed: we are overwhelmed with people coming in and needing to talk with someone. We have 200 volunteers, but they need coordination and training.

We need to raise an extra \$50,000 this year to keep up with the demand.

As a member of the board, I have given an extra \$1,000 to the organization, and have committed myself to raise \$5,000.

Would you two be open to talking about increasing your gift this year? I'd like to talk with you about the program, and get some feedback on the strategy we are using as well as more personally ask you to become a bigger part of our organization.

I will call you in a few days to see when we can get together.

Best wishes,

Susanna

# Letter or e-mail to prospect you don't know

Dear Ms. Peters,

You have been a generous donor to for the past several years. We so appreciate your commitment and your generous financial support.

As you may know from reading our newsletter, we are expanding our work into four more counties. We will start with our town hall meetings .

We find that these meetings are a chance to clear up a lot of misconceptions, but more important, to explore how to provide quality public education to a diverse population.

From these meetings, we hope to form at least three more chapters of Quality Education for Everyone, which will allow us to work in at least 20 more public schools.

I'd like to make a time to talk with you to discuss whether you could consider increasing your donation this year to help us with that expansion. Although we don't know each other, I think we have in common a deep commitment to making our public schools the best they can be for ALL the students. I would very much enjoy meeting you, if you have time. I'll call you in the next few days to see if we can find a mutually convenient time to get together.

Becky Morrison, Board member

[becky@email.org](mailto:becky@email.org)

# Follow up calls are key

Donors have a lot going on in their lives,  
and they put down your letter or they  
delete your e-mail.

Not responding is  
does not mean “no.”



# Preparing for the Phone Call

Have ready:

- Opening sentence*
- Message for VM*
- Most exciting thing about the project*
- Where are you toward the goal?*
- How much do you want?*



- **Stop and THINK:**
- **Who is this donor?**
- **What are you interrupting?**
- **Are you prepared to hear yes? No?**
- **Questions?**

# Prepare for the Meeting



## Have ready:

- ✓ *Stories*
- ✓ *Statistics, including comparisons*
- ✓ *Philosophical reasons why this is important*
- ✓ *Responses to common objections and questions*
- ✓ *Budget and fundraising success so far*

## Keep in mind:

- *The donor/s agreed to see you*
- *They already like your organization*
- *Appreciate what they have done already, and reassure them it is enough*
- *Invite them to stretch and do more*

# The CLOSE: Ask, wait for answer, be thankful



## 6. Keep Big Picture in Mind



**Our tax policies are leaving the  
common good behind**



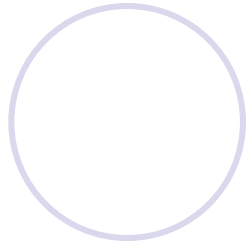
**In California,  
this is what we see:**



- **31% high school drop-out rate**
- **6.7 million people with NO health insurance\***
- **5 of the most polluted cities in the United States**

\* Source: Employee Benefit Research Institute analysis of the U.S. Census, Current Population Survey, March 2009 Supplement. American Lung Association

**AND**



**We become:**

**48<sup>th</sup> in education, but**

**4<sup>th</sup> in the size of our prison system**

**(in the world)**

**In fact, in 23 years we built 23 prisons and one  
University of California extension.**

***Does this reflect our values?***



“Power concedes nothing without a struggle.”

-Frederick Douglass -

# What Can Nonprofits Do?



SIERRA CLUB  
CALIFORNIA



Habitat  
for Humanity®



# 1. Understand our influence

**California has 2<sup>nd</sup> largest nonprofit workforce in the USA**

**112,000 nonprofits generate:**

- **\$160 billion per year**
- **Employ 10% of workforce, or about 1.3 million people**



# The Nonprofit Sector Nationally

- 1.6 million nonprofit organizations generate:

\$1.4 trillion per year in income from:

- Government : 30%
- Earned Income: 50%
- Private Sector: 20%



*The private sector includes gifts from living individuals, gifts from bequests and gifts and grants from foundations and corporations*

*Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics and Foundation Center*

# The Common Good Must be a Common Conversation



**“We need each other... Each of us is the swing vote in the bitter election battle now being waged between our best and our worst possibilities.”**

**Leonard Peltier**

**Ask open ended questions**  
**Take time to listen to all opinions**  
**Be willing to ask more questions!**

What do you often use that is paid for by taxes?

Do you see any solutions to our state budget crisis?

When have you thought, "That was a good use of tax money?" and when, "that was a waste?"

# Keep in Mind:

- You don't have to know all the answers or address all the objections
- You have the right to form an opinion and to encourage others to form their own opinions about taxes and tax policy
- The state budget reflects a set of values: how can we do more to make it reflect our values?



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# **What can I do?**

- 1. Talk with co-workers about ways the tax structure could be changed**
- 2. Help each other form opinions about budget and policy proposals**
- 3. Resolve not to be intimidated by those who say “this is too complicated” or those who cannot see anything positive in government**

# Where do I start?



1. Set up a free workshop at your workplace-  
[www.nonprofitstalkingtaxes.org](http://www.nonprofitstalkingtaxes.org)
2. Join the Conversation Online:  
[www.facebook.com/npstalkingtaxesCA](http://www.facebook.com/npstalkingtaxesCA)
3. Follow us on Twitter: NPsTalkingTaxes
4. Recommend places we can give this workshop:  
[npstalkingtaxes@compasspoint.org](mailto:npstalkingtaxes@compasspoint.org)

Remember, it's free and it can be tailored to the time available!

# Helpful Resources from Kim Klein

## Magazine and e-newsletter

*Grassroots Fundraising Journal*

[www.grassrootsfundraising.org](http://www.grassrootsfundraising.org)

## Books by Kim Klein

*Reliable Fundraising in Unreliable Times*

*Fundraising for Social Change*

## **Other recommended books:**

*Working Across Generations* by Robby Rodriquez, Frances Kunreuther and Helen Kim

*Accidental Fundraiser* by Stephanie Roth and Mimi Ho

Order from [www.josseybass.com](http://www.josseybass.com) or your local bookstore