

Best Practices for Asking Donors for Money

Ultimately, you're going to be asking for a huge favor. People don't do favors for nothing. You must clearly articulate how the donor's support will impact the organization's growth and mission and explain in detail how the donation will be used and why it is needed. Building and maintaining strong relationships with donors is key. Donors give back to those who give to them.

1. **Make it personal:** Personalize your request by explaining how the donation will directly impact the lives of children with tumors. This will help the donor understand the impact their gift will have. (Tell your story, your patient stories, your caregiver stories, your testimonials. Be as authentic as you can be). NOTE: Research (O'Leary) says to keep your talking points at 4th-6th grade reading level.
1. **Be clear and concise:** Be specific about the amount of money you're asking for and why you need it/what it will go towards. Be transparent about the organization's expenses. (Numbers on website, a bar that shows how much more money is needed, an immediate email after the donation detailing where the money went and a thank you).
2. **Use an emotional appeal:** Donors all have their own stories and reasons for wanting to give to your specific cause. When you appeal to the donor's emotions, you awaken their heart-felt internal story and they are more generous. Add the drama!
3. **Motivate donors with "You" language:** Make your communication all about the donor and not your or your organization. (This is NOT intuitive)
4. **Add credibility:** One good way to add credibility is with peer endorsements. Can you get a local 'celebrity' or partners to sign on? Add awards, certificates, or links to reports to provide more comfort for donors.
5. **Give donation options:** It's important to remember that every potential donor is unique, so it's important to tailor your outreach approach to their interest and preferences. It's important to allow them to choose the level of support that works best for them. Offer donation through email, social media, personal meetings, direct mail, phone calls, events/parties, online fundraising.
NOTE: One of the reasons that people don't give is that they believe their gift won't really help or that the money won't be used wisely.
6. **Show appreciation:** Express gratitude for the donor's consideration and follow up with a thank-you note after they make a donation.
7. **Keep donors informed:** Keep donors informed about the progress and impact of the organization's work, which will help build trust and foster long-term relationships.

