
Maximising Major Gifts: The Art & Science

Building a Major Gift Program

Ann Badger & Clare Pullar

creative
partnerships
australia

Some Terms

Major Gift: Organisation specific

Principal Gift: Organisation specific

Annual Gift:

Prospect: Person with capacity to make a gift

Prospect Management : Process of moving individual prospects through the process of cultivation, solicitation and stewardship.

Portfolio Management : Process of managing groups of prospects to ensure a robust pipeline for the organisation. Manages workflow.

Qualification : Capacity rating + engagement = Qualified donor

Major Gift Fundraising is...

- Personal
- Powered by relationships
- Linking vision + interest + awareness + aspirations
- Meaningful, customised
- Motivation focused
- Philanthropic brokerage
- High impact

Elements of a Major Gifts Program

- Disciplined sustainable program overseen by a CAO
- Requires enhanced engagement donors and prospective donors
- Uses evidence-based methodology – segmentation of data and analytics
- Engages everyone - key volunteers and key staff in research, engagement, community relations, fundraisers, communications, event staff, data analysts
- Need's CEO's commitment to a high-level consultation program

The Major Gift Program players/roles

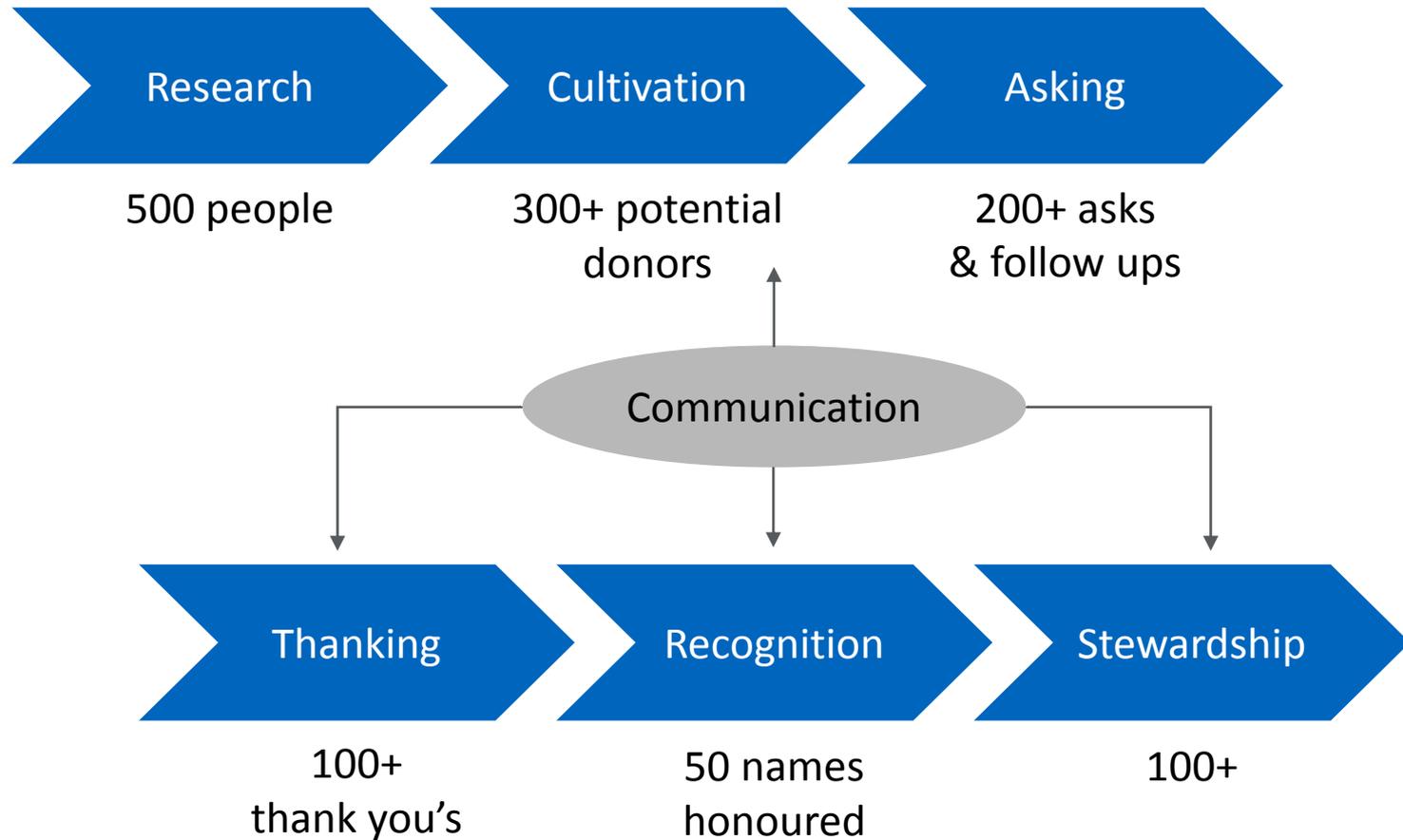
- The Major Gift Program strategist
- The Relationship Manager – a staff member
- The Solicitor/asker – a fundraiser, a leader, a volunteer
- The Natural Partner(s) – who is closest (often outside the Advancement/Development Office)
- The analyst
- The researcher
- The Case and Proposal writer
- The Prospect ... Of course!

\$10M Program Indicative Gift Table

GIFT LEVEL	NO. OF DONORS	PROSPECTS NEEDED	PROSPECTS IDENTIFIED	GAP?	TOTAL	%
\$1M	1	3	2	-1	\$1M	10%
\$750K	2	6	4	-2	\$1.5M	15%
\$500K	4	12	9	-3	\$2M	20%
\$250K	8	24	25	+1	\$2M	20%
\$100K	16	48	51		\$1.6M	16%
\$50K	20	60	55	-5	\$1M	10%
\$25K	24	72	80	+8	.6M	6%
\$10K /below	40/50 +	50	60	+10	.3M	3%
	125+	375			\$10M	100%

This institution will need around 375 gifts to raise \$10M with 65% coming from the top 15 gifts of \$250K and above

Some Numbers for \$5M in Gifts...



Building Your Prospect Pool

Align your resources:

- Consider your team – who could be involved in managing a prospect pool?
- Determine size of Portfolio for each person – be realistic.
- Set sufficient time to build the pool
- **Determine mix of pool of prospects:**
 - third engaged and close – High probability
 - third have some relationship but not so close – Medium probability
 - third remote but potential – Low probability
- **Set key indicators for Discovery visits and engagement points:**
 - Engagement program over a year
 - Discovery visits per month
 - CEOs capacity for small group consultations. Be realistic

Office Operations for the Major Gift Program

- Establish a monthly prospect management meeting as a group. Use the meeting to:
 - Monitor growth in pool
 - Rank prospects as High Medium and Low
 - Help one another with growing expertise in discovery
 - Share individual stories and workshop strategies for engagement
 - Hear about new suspects and allocate to portfolios
- Organise the prospect tracking tool in your database?
- Set key performance indicators (KPIs) for Discovery
- Monitor engagement calendar to use for engagement
- Arrange peer screening meetings

Using Probability Ratings to Shape Activity

- As probability ratings become more and more secure, this allows you to:
 - Present viable projections based on analytics to senior management.
 - Making more informed decisions about donors' interests and helps shape solicitation plans.



High Probability Donors – A list

- One-in-three likelihood to make a pledge at the requested amount.
- Characteristics
 - Existing donor – especially at \$1000+
 - Well known and well cultivated
 - Already have discussed possible donation
 - Volunteer
- **Q. How is this to be coded in your database?**

Medium Probability Prospects – B list

- One-in-five possibility of making a gift at the requested level
- Characteristics
 - Cultivated and known to the major gift officer and/or director.
 - Small donor with no history of large gifts.
 - Unclear about specific interests
 - Unsure about capacity
 - Not yet a volunteer
 - Possibility that further cultivation will lead to a larger donation (convert to high probability donor)

Low Probability Prospect – C List

- One-in-ten chance of making a gift at the anticipated level
- Characteristics
 - Not well known to organisation
 - Could be a friend of an existing donor
 - Little sense of interests
 - Little philanthropic history
- In a new program you will have lots of these prospects

Process of Qualification

- Major gift strategy flows from qualification plus cultivation.
- Initial ratings come from desktop research – Google, LinkedIn dedicated research engines, wealth screening.
- Peer Screening can add to the knowledge mix (and engage).
- Qualification is ongoing – as you know more and more.
- Consider attachment levels.
 - History of giving at any level.
 - Engagement with the organisation at any level.
 - Corporate connections.
 - Known associations and relationships. These individuals are your natural partners.

Process of Qualification – Peer Screening

- Sessions chaired by senior officer – 1:1 or in groups
- Establish trust with your invitees: explain process, confidentiality, respect. Consider using a MOA to build respect and trust.
- Use affinity groups: Board, Foundation Committee, long-term donors, etc
- Involve Natural Partners in cultivation process
- Make them fun – Free brekky, lunch, after-work drink and nibbles
- Activities include – brainstorming, reviewing lists, enriching information about wealth, background, engagement strategy.

Building Your Prospect Pool

Next 5 minutes

Jot down three or four things you could do over the next few months to begin to build your major donor prospect pool.

Let's Share



Ann – badger@martsandlundy.com
Clare – pullar@martsandlundy.com

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