

# Development for Conservation

## Building a Fundraising Program from Scratch

Prepared for

**Oregon Conservation Partnership**

March 2021

**David Allen, Development for Conservation**



**DEVELOPMENT  
FOR  
CONSERVATION**



## David Allen



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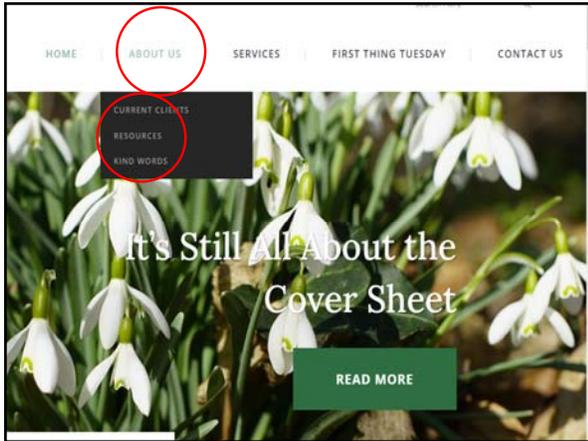
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## It's Still All About the Cover Sheet

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## Agenda

- I. Essential Definitions
- II. Essential Concepts in Fundraising
- III. ACTION Steps
- IV. Discussion



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## Essential Definitions

A **GIFT** is something that is given freely, without expectations of receiving something of value (gifts and services) in return



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## Essential Definitions

News and information, and small tokens of logo identification (decals) do not change the gift status.

Discounts and larger goods and services change the fundamental nature of the exchange from gift to transaction.

Transactions are NOT gifts.



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## NOT Gifts

- Dinner tickets
- Auction items purchased
- Sponsorships
- Golf tournaments
- Field trip fees
- Raffle tickets
- Agency grants
  
- Special Case: Memorials and Honoraria



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## Essential Definitions



A **DONOR** is someone (or group of someones) who gives something they have to an organization or effort they wish to support.

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## Essential Definitions

A **Restricted Gift** is given in support of a specific program, project, or outcome.

It is thus differentiated from an “Unrestricted” gift.



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## Essential Definitions

An **Unrestricted Gift** is given in support of a mission, ideal, or vision.

Unrestricted gifts are more often renewable, and are solicited that way.



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## Essential Definitions

A **Major Gift** is “major” in that it is a major decision for the donor.



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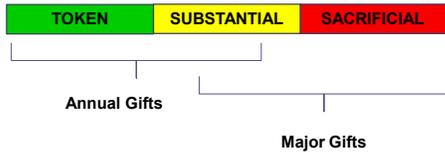
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\$100 = small fortune?



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\$1,000 =



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\$20,000 =



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### Frank Talk About Money

- Time is NOT the same as money
- “I don’t have enough” time/money really means “I choose to spend my time/money elsewhere”

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## Frank Talk About Money

- Many people take \$100 at a time from ATMs
- For most people, \$20/month would be a “token” gift = \$250/year
- For most people, \$84/month is NOT an unfair request = \$1,000/year



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## So....

- If our belief that a donor cannot *afford* a \$1,000 prevents us from asking, that says more about us than about them.
- Don't say NO for people by not asking.



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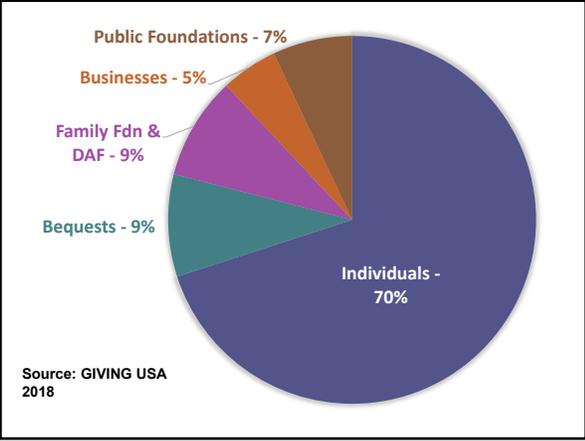
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## Essential Concepts

Donors give for their own reasons

And often for reasons that are **irrational, emotional, and hard to influence**

We do not help our fundraising when we focus our communication on the rational and intellectual



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TED Talk: How great leaders inspire action  
Simon Sinek

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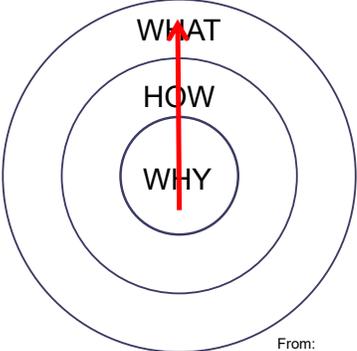
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From:  
TED Talk - Simon Sinek

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## What Donors Need to Know

- What you are doing  
**Outcomes, Results**
- How you will do it  
**Programs, Opportunities**
- Why you are doing it  
**Belief**
- That you are capable  
**Bona fides, Trustworthiness**



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## Essential Concepts

We raise money from people who already give money.

The exercise of securing “first” gifts is marketing and often costs more than it raises.



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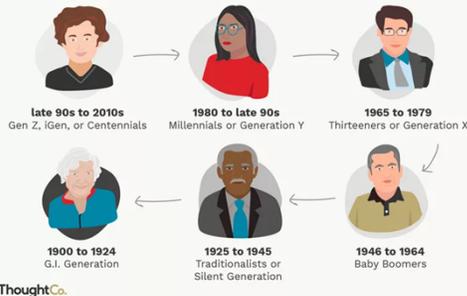
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## Essential Concepts

### Common Generational Names in the U.S.



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## Essential Concepts

One way to think about raising money is to consider how much money a donor will give over the next 6-12 weeks.

Perpetual, resilient organizations need to think about how much money a donor will give over the next 6-12 years.



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## Essential Concepts

- Boomers / Gen-Xers
- Paper
- Engagement with the land
- Personal relationships (especially with Board members)
- Major Gift Fundraising
- Planned Giving



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## Essential Concepts

Successful fundraising is less about “selling” than about “finding”

Instead of asking people to help “us,” ask how we can help them

And talk about what we believe



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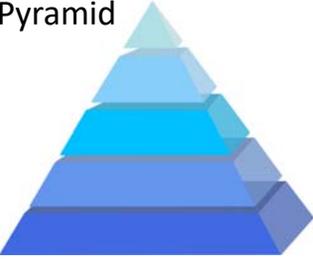
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## Essential Concepts

Think Like a Pyramid



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## Essential Concepts

Fundraising letters are NOT letters

Few people will read them at all, and those who do won't read them from start to finish

Longer letters are better;  
letters that build around a story are better



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## Essential Concepts

- Jeff Brooks, The Fundraiser's Guide to Irresistible Communications



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## Getting Started

- 100% Board Giving
- Clarity of Purpose
- 1,000 Friends – Tell everyone you know that you need their help
- Strong Website with clear Landing Pages for giving – Tiny Gift Strategies



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## Getting Started

- *53 Ways for Board Members to Raise \$1,000*, by Kim Klein
- Small events – field trips, home parties
- Flyers and other delivered materials



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## Getting Started

- Build a mailing list
  - Beg, Buy, Borrow, or Steal one from others
  - Collect names from events
  - Tiny Gift campaigns
  - Collect annual reports



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## You are going to Need:

- Simple software to track donors and giving
- Basic paper newsletter
- Thank you protocols (call them!)
- Stories



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## Discussion / Questions

1. Something that reinforces what you are already doing
2. Something that surprised you
3. Something you can put to immediate use



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# DAVID ALLEN

I am a non-profit organizational development consultant. I work with nonprofit organization boards to help their members learn how to be better leaders and advocates.

My background includes 30 years working in membership fundraising, major gift development, communications, and marketing. I worked for about half that time for Nature Conservancy (TNC) chapters in Oregon, Texas, and Wisconsin. In addition to my duties for the individual chapters, I served TNC as an internal fundraising consultant and major gift development trainer.

In 2000, I served as the vice-president of operations for the Wisconsin-based, international conservation organization Sand County Foundation, a position I held through mid-2009.



Gathering Waters Conservancy, a land trust service agency based in Wisconsin, called me in 2004 to ask whether I would be interested in teaching a seminar for Wisconsin land trusts on major donor development. From 2004, then, through 2009, I consulted on a nights and weekends basis with just a few clients each year.

In March of 2009, I launched my consulting business full-time using the name **Development for Conservation**.

Also in 2009, I partnered with Nancy Moore to form **Conservation Consulting Group**. Together we help land trusts prepare for accreditation by providing assessment, strategic planning, and leadership coaching services.

I consider myself a strategic thinker, problem solver, facilitator, educator, and program developer who brings a particular passion for conservation and the environment.

## **Practice Competencies**

### *Fundraising*

- Development Audit
- Strategic Fund Development Planning
- Staff/Board Training and Development
- Major Gift Coaching
- Capital Campaigns: Feasibility, Planning, Management

### *Organizational Development*

- Strategy Development
- Practice & Process Assessment
- Problem Solving Facilitation
- Marketing

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