

Answers to Questions Not Responded to During PG Calc's Fundraising Metrics are the Worst! (And How to Fix Them) Webinar (Presented by Prof. Russell James, 7/27/23)

Do you have a matrix to share with us modeling those metrics?

Since you've got the paper for this presentation you've got everything I have on these.

How do we best reorganize our work renewing mid-level annual gifts so that we can focus more on seeing the right people and asking for the big gifts?

Certainly any ability to identify capacity is going to help and there are services that provide that. However, one study found that most major donors gave their first gift at \$1,000 or more, so sometimes we can use other proxies for capacity like this one. If there is capacity, then we work through the process of asking questions that identify the donor's identity connections (their people, values, and life story connections) with the cause, the organization, or a particular project. Then we ask questions that help the donor to define a personally meaningful philanthropic victory. E.g., "If money were no object, if the sky was the limit, what kind of an impact would you like to make through our organization?" You can see all these questions in the book, The Socratic Fundraiser: Using Questions to Advance the Donor's Story. The book pdf is free at <https://www.encouragegenerosity.com>

What is the best way to educate board/advancement committee around this philosophy?

That will depend on the board, but if they like research showing that it works I've at least put that into the white paper.

Could you elaborate on what constitutes an "attractive experience?" I assume this means something more than an annual in-person gathering.

There is no limit to the forms that this can take. Gatherings with other donors can be part of it, but it often involves the donor being able to experience the impact of a gift when that impact is personally meaningful in the donor's life story. In some ways it can start with a broad mindset that shifts from, "Someday we'll get the \$X million gift," to "Someday, we'll offer a donor experience that is worth the \$X million gift." In other words, it's not, "What size of an ask can we get away with for this donor?" Instead, it's "What giving opportunity and set of lead up experiences would motivate this donor to give at their capacity and have a great experience doing it?"

Do you see a high turnover of fundraisers as being counterproductive to fund raising success?

It's number one on the list. For the research and my suggestions on this topic see the book, The Epic Fundraiser chapter 7 "Fundraiser turnover problems: The stigmatized story character" and chapter 8 "Fundraiser turnover solutions: Transforming the story character." The book pdf is free at <https://www.encouragegenerosity.com>

How do you uncover the donor's hero story to start the relationship?

That process is described in the book, The Socratic Fundraiser: Using Questions to Advance the Donor's Story. The book pdf is free at <https://www.encouragegenerosity.com>

What do you view as the "right" capacity indicator in research? May be too broad a question for this forum

I would defer to those who focus on this topic. There are certainly books, firms, and even conferences focused on such analytics and estimating wealth capacity.

Should charities require fundraising officers to take emotional intelligence testing?

Fascinating thought! It might at least be worth testing to see how well it predicts success.

Love to get your thoughts on acquiring new donors in their 70s, 80s & 90s

People's charitable interests do change with time and age. All the data that we have from the IRS, probate studies, and a national longitudinal study shows that the charitable component of an estate plan also changes as people age. So, I think it begins with something simple. If you have a person with a history of connection to your cause or organization, once they hit a magic age, say 75, you never stop communicating with them. Even if they aren't regularly making current gifts, such age stratified communications can really pay off in estate gifts. If there is no connection, then consider how you can provide attractive experiences, publications, and so forth that will tend to attract that audience. PG Calc has some really great resources on QCD giving which is an age restricted form of giving – maybe share some of those!

How can you measure capacity of legacy donors who may have low current capacity but high capacity at death?

This is simply anything that works as a wealth indicator. An estate gift is a share of wealth. It's not a gift of income. As wealth increases the estate gift to annual gift ratio increases dramatically (going from about 2x to over 100x). Consequently, as wealth increases, current giving magnitude is less of a useful indicator of estate giving magnitude.

Can you define (again) what is a hero story and why it works? Thanks, great presentation

I'm happy to do so. I wrote a whole book about this! It's called The Epic Fundraiser: Myth, Psychology, and the Universal Hero Story in Fundraising. The book pdf is free at <https://www.encouragegenerosity.com>