



Depth Perception

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The current giving climate

We have been asked repeatedly if we notice any change in the overall climate of giving during these recessionary times.

The short answer is yes.

The middle-sized answer is that during this recession, giving from appreciated assets shrank considerably while sacrificial giving from income remained stable. Some organizations heavily dependent on monthly givers even experienced slight growth.

The long answer for those willing to sit still long enough to listen is that the long-time emphasis on cultivating major donors is shifting to emphasizing donor acquisition, a shift that in our opinion is long overdue.

In part, it is a natural shift. Appreciated assets took an enormous hit which makes for far fewer major donors (also affecting the business sector because there is significantly less venture capital available). The shift connects more deeply, however, to a realization that fewer people do the giving. Too little emphasis has been placed for too long in developing new donor relationships so that even well-established nonprofit and religious organizations now experience a perfect storm in this recessionary economy. Long-term givers reduce their giving, fewer people do the giving, and as many as five new donors are needed to replace the income previously donated by a long-time giver whose relationship with the organization ends.

Changes in the giving climate?

Yes, most certainly and significantly.

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