



STRATEGIC CONVERSATIONS WITH YOUR DONORS AND VOLUNTEERS

DURING A TIME OF CRISIS

Tailoring your conversations with your donors and volunteers is absolutely critical to your organization's success in weathering a crisis. Listen to their responses – it will help you hear how to solve problems and see new opportunities. Listen for their concerns and needs – it will tell you what's important to them. Listen for their connection to your mission, those you serve and the impact of the work you do. Ask for their input on what else you can do to keep your organization strong in the community. Listen to what is going on in their lives. Your relationship with each will be strengthened and as they make charitable decisions, they will remember your concern and it will show in their generosity to your organization.

Here are some questions to help you plan your conversation before you reach out to donors and volunteers:

1. We are concerned about you? How are you coping during this crisis?
2. How is/are your family (your business partners) (your workers) coping?
3. During this crisis, it reminds me how grateful we are for all those who invest in (Name of Organization) with their time, ideas, wisdom, and treasure. I wanted to reach out today, to say thank you again for all you do. How are you managing?
4. What are you doing to pass the time each day?
4. What worries you the most during this challenging time?
5. How are you addressing those issues? Is this working for you?
6. Is there any way we can be of assistance?
7. With so many events cancelled, we are still trying to stay in touch with our (alumni) (volunteers) (philanthropic investors) (board members). I've always found you strategic and creative. What suggestions do you have for us?
8. To stay in touch and keep our stakeholders informed, we are hosting several online events over the next few months. May I run some of them by you and hear your thoughts?
9. We just emailed you a message from (name of sender – CEO, board leader, program person, well known donor). Once you've read it, may I check in and get your impressions (thoughts) (suggestions)?