

What's an Appropriate Donor Conversation?

Over the past few months, it seems we are all continuously changing our playbook, especially when it comes to talking to your donors. In conversations with many nonprofit CEOs and development professionals, we have heard a great deal of concern about reaching out to your greatest supporters and ensuring that the timing, message and tone are all appropriate. We know that building relationships are central to your work, and it is vital to continue these relationships during times of disruption or change. Now is the time to advance your mission.

1 Have Authentic Conversations

Having an authentic conversation during this time builds trust with your donors. Ask them the following questions: **How are you? How is your family? Is there anything I / the organization can help you with right now?** Remember that you are building a long-term relationship.

2 Acknowledge the Uncertainty

Don't pretend like nothing is happening. Everyone is experiencing and feeling a sense of uncertainty, so don't be afraid to acknowledge it. During the conversation, **remain calm**, and if needed help ease their anxiety.

3 Highlight the Positives

Every nonprofit has stories to showcase how they are modifying mission fulfillment. Highlight the **big and small mission moments** your organization is making, but also share how you are moving forward with solutions.

4 Share the Plan

Share your reimaged organization-wide plan, program and service changes or how your event is moving online. **If you don't have a plan, take the first step and sign up for one of the [Pivot Plan trainings](#).**

5 Listen

We know the **best outcomes are formulated when we listen to donors** and make them trusted advisors and partners to help solve problems and create impact. They may have expertise, ideas or concerns that you may not be considering.

Cramer & Associates is a strategic fundraising and communications consulting firm, serving nonprofits, foundations & corporations for 30 years.