Five Steps Towards a Successful Gifts in Kind Development Program

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Tim Pyatt, Huck Chair and Head, Eberly Special Collections Library
Penn State University

The following is a summary of my workshop presentation with relevant examples included.

So my five steps are:

1. Understand the campus development environment.
2. Communicate with development proactively what you will accept as GIKs
3. Agree with development on the workflow/process for establishing gift value/donor credit
4. Actively solicit your development officer’s advice and support
5. Create a process for reporting donor contacts

1. Understand the campus development environment.

Questions to consider:

- How are you organized?
- Does the Library have its own development officer or do you work with a central office?
- Are there any campus policies on gifts and do they reflect the Library’s interests?
- What are the expectations of the development office for gift processing?

2. Communicate proactively what you will accept as GIKs

One of the next things to do once you understand the organizational structure is to clearly communicate what the Library does and does not accept as GIKs.

Questions to consider when evaluating GIKs:
• How would the gift support the mission of the university and support the research needs of faculty and students?
• Would the gift enhance the stature of the university?
• Is it a good use of resources and does the Library have the resources to support the gift?
• What is the stewardship commitment?

3. Agree on workflow/process for establishing gift value/donor credit

Workflow example (based on Penn State’s practice):

**Deed of Gift (DOG) and Value Reporting Workflow for Gifts of archival materials and related collections**

Curator negotiates with Donor

Donor agrees to terms, signs DOG

Curator receives materials, SCL Head signs DOG

Donor has materials appraised

Appraiser gives Form 8283 to Donor

Curator does internal value memo

DOG plus related form/appraisal/memo sent to Library Development for review and to the Dean for signature (Library Development routes DOG)

DOG and related form/appraisal/memo sent to Univ. Development for review and signature

Signed DOG returned to Library Development with copy to donor

SCL receives file copy from Library Development

**Notes and Guidelines**

1. In nearly all cases, the DOG should be completed and signed at the curator/donor level prior to receipt of materials. The DOG sets up terms for how we manage the collection.
2. For installment and/or recurring gifts of personal and organizational papers, complete only one DOG unless the terms are re-negotiated. Additions can be receipted and then follow the standard gift value recording procedure.

3. DOGs are not required for every gift, especially not for book materials. A letter of transmittal from the donor along with an internal value memo can suffice for gifts less than $5,000. No memo is needed for gifts less $100.

Things to consider when assigning internal values:

Not every donor wants tax credit for their donation and in those cases there is no appraisal to establish value. Establishing internal values can be challenging but are important for fund-raising credit, and insurance value. Tools like *American Books Prices Current* are useful for certain types of collections and establishing value formulas such as 19th century records will be valued at $xx/box; 20th c…, etc.

Even with reference tools and formulas, many archivists and librarians are still uncomfortable assigning value as they feel it skates close to an ethical conflict of interest. For most librarians and archivists, as long the value internally assigned isn’t something that is supplied to the donor, it isn’t a conflict. At my own institution we had added the following statement to our reporting form to clarify what the data supplied can and cannot be used for:

**NOTE:** This valuation is provided by the Penn State employee who received this gift, and it represents the employee’s best judgment regarding the value of this GIK. It should be further noted that the employee signing this valuation is not regarded by the Internal Revenue Service [IRS] as a “qualified appraiser,” and that this valuation must not be used as an appraisal of the value of this GIK.

4. **Actively solicit advice and support**

Just as you cultivate other working relationships in the Library and on campus, you should do the same with your development officer. Much like you are trained in the management of your collections, they are trained in soliciting gifts. Seek their advice when dealing with a difficult donor; ask their opinion about how to solicit a donation; and definitely involve them when declining (or even accepting) a GIK.
from an existing donor. I’ve also found it helpful to consult with my development officer when considering how to ask for financial support to accompany a GIK. Other times to leverage the expertise of development staff are when you need help creating a bargain sale agreement or when a donor wants to make a bequest of their collection. Just as we know are experts with our gift agreements, they know what is needed to document a bequest and for it to be tracked by the university.

5. Create a process for reporting contacts

One of the best ways to gain the support and trust of your development staff is by sharing information. Work with your development officer to create a method for reporting potential donor contacts. So why is this work worth your time? For one thing your development officer can usually research your potential donor’s giving history to campus. Facts that you may unaware of such as your potential donor is also a major underwriter of the Music Department’s performance series are helpful to know. Your donor will expect that will know that. Your development officer can help make sure you are well-prepared with the potential donor’s campus history prior to visiting them.

Conclusion

To quote from my namesake, Timothy Dwight the elder, cleric and president of Yale:

Necessity can sharpen the wits even of children

If we work for an institution, such libraries and archives, that rely on GIKs and outside funding, development is a necessity. And while we may no longer be children, in truth I think of us all as development officers. For those of us who manage collections, this shouldn’t be a fundamental change. We have always been committed to being good stewards of our collections – is it really such a stretch for us to also be a good steward of those who created or gave us the collection?