

# From Interested to Invested: Cultivating Donors Through the Cycle of Giving



Individuals and organizations begin their relationship with your ministry in a variety of ways. Whether they serve as a volunteer, host a holiday drive or respond to direct mail, congratulations! You've acquired a new supporter. Take a moment to celebrate and then get ready to grow your one-time supporter into a loyal donor.

Your newly-acquired volunteer, in-kind donor and financial giver all have a tremendous amount to offer your organization. But how do you release that potential and transform their initial encounter into a rewarding relationship? By using intentional communication between your Development and Program staff to lead them on a journey through the Cycle of Giving.

## What is the Cycle of Giving?

The Cycle of Giving includes four areas of service: financial giving, material donations, volunteerism and prayer. The cycle offers individuals, churches and businesses opportunities to become full partners in ministry by allowing them to invest in every aspect of giving.



No matter where the donor enters the cycle, the goal of your development department is to move him or her around the circle to enhance their experience with your organization and solidify your relationship with them.

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## What is the Cycle of Giving? (cont.)

Take a look at the benefits of leveraging the Cycle of Giving to engage Betsy, a Rescue Mission supporter, deeper in the ministry:



Betsy collects canned food for the Mission at her monthly Book Club meetings. After dropping off items regularly for a few months, the donations staff tells the Development Team about Betsy's loyal contributions.



The Volunteer Director calls Betsy to thank her for her support and invites her for a personal tour of the Mission to show Betsy the impact of her giving. Inspired by the work at the Mission, Betsy is moved to do more and begins volunteering to serve lunch weekly.



One day, the kitchen staff observes Betsy praying with one of the guests during lunch and shares this touching moment with a member of the Development Team. Noticing Betsy's faith in action, a Development team member invites Betsy to join the Mission's prayer team. Betsy begins praying daily for the Mission and guests.



Betsy also begins receiving Mission direct mail, and because of conversations with Mission staff, Betsy knows that becoming an automatic monthly giver helps even more because the Mission can rely on her gift – so she decides to give monthly gifts.

Look at how each step draws Betsy into a closer relationship with the Mission. Notice that Betsy's journey didn't happen overnight – it took months of teamwork and intentional communication between Development and Program staff to help her find ways to express her passion for helping others and move her from one step to the next.

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## Listen, Learn and Lead to Build Loyal Donors

**B**y regularly listening to donors and staff, your Development Team will learn new ways to connect a donor's passion with opportunities to support your ministry and successfully lead them around the Cycle of Giving. Make the Cycle of Giving an integral part of your donor cultivation strategy and watch your newly acquired supporters become lasting, committed partners with you in ministry.

This strategy sheet is provided to you by BDI's Academy and can be located in the Library. If you'd like to discuss the ideas found here or want to know more about the Academy, contact Shellie Speer, Senior VP, Academy at [sspeer@bdiagency.com](mailto:sspeer@bdiagency.com) or (719) 210-6207.

