



DISCOVERY VISITS: GETTING YOUR DONOR TO OPEN UP

The following is provided to help you develop more personal relationships with your donors.

Discovery visits can be formal appointments set up by staff, or through chance encounters at Girl Scout events. Here are questions to help generate conversations with your donors which will give you the information you need to fulfill your donors' philanthropic interests. Be sure to share the data and stories with your CEO and Chief Development Officer. Where appropriate, this will become part of the donor's record.

1. **"Tell me a little about how you came to be involved with the organization. How has Girl Scouting affected your life? Your family? What is your favorite Girl Scout memory?"** People love to tell their stories, especially to a newcomer like you. Listen closely and enjoy—this may be treasured organizational "lore." It will also give you rich clues about this person's deeper motivation for being connected to your work.

2. **"What concerns you most about youth today? Any thoughts on possible solutions? How should Girl Scouts address these concerns?"** Provide the opportunity for the donor to discuss their concerns. Generally they have told these to others before you, but they haven't given up. They are still determined to change or improve the organization in this arena. Even if you can do nothing to fix it, it will be helpful to you as you move forward to know where they stand. This is also your opportunity to introduce them to some newer, cutting edge programs which address their concerns.

3. **"What is it about Girl Scouts that you most value?"** This will get them talking about the "good stuff," and remind them of the deeper mission. They will often share a very personal connection here. Let them talk. Follow up questions to this may be
 - **"What inspired your most recent gift to Girl Scouts?"**
 - **"What would motivate you to make a major investment in Girl Scouts?"**

4. **“How can you see yourself becoming involved?”** Maybe they have been on the Strategic Planning Committee for the last two years. Are there any other parts of your work that interest them? Follow ups:
 - **“Would you be interested in seeing one of our programs firsthand?”**
 - **“Is there anything Girl Scouts can do for you?”**

5. **“How do you think we could be doing a better job of telling our story?”**
Constructive criticism is desirable. Ask the donor to give concrete examples on how we can better convey our messages. "I wish we would stop spending so much money on that fancy gala and just bring people to the office to talk with the director and tour the place."

6. **“What could we do to involve more people?”** Be sure to save this question for last. By this point, the donor will most likely offer to connect you with other individuals or groups they think will make a good partner with Girl Scouts. Take good notes here and be sure to set up how you are to contact these people.

More questions:

- What do you know or feel about the work of the council? What do you know about Girl Scouts today?
- Have you had any opportunity to see Girl Scouts in action recently? What were the circumstances and what was your reaction?
- How have you maintained your interest in Girl Scouts? How do you get information or hear about Girl Scouts?
- What other organization are you impressed by or involved with? What attracts your commitment to them?
- How does Girl Scouts rank among your philanthropic interests? What would Girl Scouts need to be doing to inspire your greater philanthropic investment?