Research Report

Surveying the Major Gifts Literature: Observations and Reflections

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Abstract

This essay-review gives only cursory attention to the technical aspects of major gifts (i.e., process and controlling principles), and instead focuses more broadly and strategically on the critical importance of mission, quality, leadership, and prestige; the dichotomy which exists between annual and major gift fund raising; and the need for an empirically-derived and theoretically-driven model of fund raising and philanthropic behavior to inform the major gifts effort.

In recent years, journalists, practitioners, and scholars have focused increasing attention and written extensively on philanthropy, fund raising, and nonprofit leadership, and in the process, the topic of major gifts has been addressed in considerable detail. This growing literature includes a number of research studies, many of which have contributed significantly to an understanding of major gifts; however, much remains to be discovered--and applied--since what is already known about major gifts has yet to be put into practice by many nonprofit organizations.

For example, James Greenfield, author of several books on fund raising (1991, 1994) and senior vice president for development and community relations at a major West Coast hospital, reported (citing a 1992 study by the Association for Healthcare Philanthropy), "[T]he top two concerns of AHP members continue to be 'poor understanding of fund raising by administrators' and 'insufficient involvement in fund raising by administrators'" (personal correspondence, May 21, 1993).

In addition, author, teacher and researcher Kathleen S. Kelly reviewed four models of fund raising--press agentry, public information, two-way asymmetrical, and two-way symmetrical--which are practiced by nonprofit organizations and estimated that only 5% of all U.S. nonprofits practice the most enlightened model (two-way symmetrical). She explained this model as follows:

> The purpose of the two-way symmetrical model of fund raising is to reach mutual understanding. The nature of the communication is two-way between groups with balanced, or symmetrical, effects. Rather than source to receiver, the group-to-group distinction emphasizes this model's orientation to systems theory and the environmental interdependencies of donors and charitable organizations. Unlike the press agentry model of fund raising, which is dependent on the emotions of its publics, or the public information model, which is dependent on their enlightenment,

> the two-way symmetrical model is dependent on congruency with its donor publics.
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> This most recent model uses formative research to balance the needs of the charitable organization and its donor publics (i.e., research is used to identify opportunities for private funding and to identify issues that the charitable organization is not addressing through donor relationships). The effectiveness of this model is evaluated by its contribution to enhancing and protecting organizational autonomy through the fund-raising process (1993, pp. 5-6).

Kelly concluded that fund raisers practice the two-way symmetrical model more when raising major gifts than when raising annual gifts, and that most managerial tasks in fund raising are more highly correlated with the two-way symmetrical model than other models. She also concluded that most fund raisers practice a mixed-motive model which includes both symmetrical and asymmetrical elements (1993). This latter conclusion is not surprising, since most fund-raising programs include both annual and major gift components, and since mutual understanding, balanced effects, and congruency are goals held by a small minority of organizations, while organizational autonomy is a goal held by the vast majority of organizations.

But despite the widespread failure among nonprofits to maximize their fund raising and major gifts potential, what is even more striking from a review of the literature is the absence of and the critical need for an empirically-derived and theoretically-driven model of fund raising and philanthropic behavior. Despite claims to the contrary by many practitioners, fund raising is a science which can be observed, measured, and analyzed. And as Kelly so aptly stated, "Without theory, fund raising is relegated to an occupation without scientific explanation, predictable outcomes, or any claim to professionalism" (in press, p. 33).

Since 1975, the fund-raising model developed by G. T. (Buck) Smith has gained widespread acceptance among practitioners and has served unofficially as the standard model for the industry. Smith named his major gifts continuum the Cultivation Cycle (popularly known as the Five I's of Fund Raising), which includes the steps of identification, information, interest, involvement, and investment, in that order (1975, 1977, 1993). Others have used modified versions of Smith's continuum. Dunlop, for example, included the steps of identification, information, awareness, understanding, caring, involvement, and commitment in his schematic of the major gift process (1993).

Prather included the five steps of identification, cultivation, planning the approach, solicitation, and follow-up (1981). Dailey identified seven steps in the major gifts process: 1) prospect research, 2) research and qualification, 3) strategizing the approach, 4) involving the prospect, 5) making the ask, 6) closing the solicitation, and 7) after-solicitation follow-up. Dailey explained that every major gift solicitation is a separate mini-campaign and noted, "People make small annual gifts to projects in which they are 'interested' or 'involved.' But they make large major gifts only to projects to which they are 'committed'" (1986, p. 82).

Wood (1989) offered the four-step fund-raising process of research, cultivation, solicitation, and recognition, and described the major gifts process as 25% research, 60% cultivation, 5% solicitation, and 10% recognition. Tempel (1991) envisioned six steps: analysis, planning, cultivation, execution, control, and evaluation, while Steele and Elder (1992) presented a five-step development cycle: identification, cultivation, solicitation, stewardship, and resolicitation.

A central tenet of Smith's continuum is that major gift success is accomplished over a period of years and focuses on a series of well-planned and -coordinated 'moves' orchestrated by individuals designated as 'primes' and 'secondaries' who are close to the donor prospect and have some linkage with the institution. In this scheme, short-term gifts are less important than progress in moving the prospect closer to the institution.

Smith also enunciated the concept of foreground and background activities. According to Dunlop, "Background activities are those initiatives that, although they do have an impact on individual prospects, are conceived and carried out for groups" (1986, p. 326). Foreground activities, on the other hand, are initiatives that are conceived, planned, and carried out for specific individual major gift prospects. Dunlop added, "Major gift fund-raising derives benefits from initiatives directed toward individual prospects as well as initiatives directed toward groups; in other words, in major gift fund-raising, background activities are as important as foreground activities" (1986, p. 335).

In contrast, Kelly (1991, in press) has pioneered the development of a theoretical framework for fund raising, and, drawing upon systems theory, reconceptualized fund raising as donor relations. This is significant because it refutes the common misperception that fund raising is a marketing or sales function and instead places fund raising within the domain of public relations, adding donors as a seventh public in need of strategic two-way communication and donor relations as a seventh specialization, along with media, employee, community, government, consumer, and investor relations.

Within this conceptual framework, relationships between charitable organizations and donors are viewed as environmental interdependencies, fund raising is defined as the management of relationships between a charitable organization and its donor publics, and the major principles and tenets on which fund raising rests are linked to particular communication theories.

Kelly (in press) has also adapted the ROPES typology (Research, Objectives, Programming, Evaluation, Stewardship) used by Hendrix (1995) to describe the public relations process as a blueprint for fund raising as well. ROPES describes the process by which both annual and major gifts are raised. Specifically, the annual giving program involves a large number of people, which requires group analysis and the use of controlled and mass media techniques. The major gifts program, on the other hand, deals with a small number of people, which allows individual attention and interpersonal techniques.

This dichotomy or dual emphasis can be observed in the fund-raising programs of many nonprofit organizations, and is one indication of organizational and programmatic maturity and viability, since annual and major gift programs are potentially complementary and synergistic.

However, major gifts account for a high (i.e., majority) percentage of private gift totals each year for most nonprofits, and this pattern reflects the fundamental reality underlying major gifts, which is economic inequality. The same forces which govern institutional wealth apply to individuals as well, with the net result that in terms of the society as a whole, the rich tend to get richer and the poor poorer (Allen 1987, Blau 1993, Braun 1991, Goss 1991, Kelly 1991, Packard 1989, Phillips 1990). Dove explained this phenomenon as follows:

> Wealth is not distributed democratically in this society. If everyone is asked to make a gift that is 'generous within their own means,' each donor will not be expected to give the same amount; much will be expected of a few, and many more will be expected to do as much as they can. Not only will everyone not give the same amount to any given campaign, many will choose to give nothing at all. In addition, this approach limits the amount asked from those who could give more, and seldom do donors give more than they are asked to give (1988, p. 75).

A nationally-prominent fund-raising consultant said that as a result of the shrinking middle class, nonprofit organizations which desire anything more than incremental growth must focus their time, attention, and effort on the top 2 to 5% of donor prospects:

> There's the concept of a donor pyramid where people start out at the bottom--large numbers of people make these smaller gifts--and there's essentially a trickle-up kind of theory that people will move through the ranks as they become more wealthy and eventually they'll become major donors to the institution. The studies that I have done, basically looking at the results of capital campaigns, suggest that that old way of thinking is not going to work in the future primarily because the middle class--the American white-collar middle class--is not varied in the way it used to be...If

> you will look at statistics--I think it's the last 12 to 15 years--8% of the American middle class has left the middle class; 6%'s gone down, 2%'s gone up. And the bottom line is, if you start with the Arab oil embargo, you find that the group of people who were in that middle class, not only are they disappearing, but they have less disposable discretionary income.
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> ...My bottom line is this: The demographics and the economics and the sociology have shifted but I don't think fund-raising methodology has. And I think that many people are simply using the methods of the past without understanding the trends of the future. The whole premise I'm moving to is if you want to be cost effective, cost efficient, if you want to be successful with a fund-raising program, if you want to get quantum growth, or anything more than incremental growth which basically keeps pace with inflation, you're going to turn more and more time, attention, and focus to the top 2 to 5% of your donor population, where you will probably get as much as 80 to 90% of the total dollars you're going to get in your program on an annual basis...Again, the old annual giving-based, donor pyramid-driven philosophy of fund raising is going to give way to a major gifts-focused, tiered concept of fund raising (quoted in Cook, 1994a, p. 129).

An example of this was provided by Martin Grenzebach, a fund-raising consultant and chairman of Grenzebach Glier & Associates, who assisted the University of Illinois with a campaign during the late 1980s. According to him, securing each gift of $100,000 or more for the campaign required an average of seven to nine visits with the donor over a two-year period. Since 300 major donors were involved, approximately 2,400 visits were required. "That took time," said Grenzebach. Ultimately, 129 donors gave 99.6% of the $132.4 million raised in the campaign (Bailey, 1987, p. A76).

A second example was provided by the chief development officer of a private university:

> In our campaign that just finished, 91% of the money came from 507 out of 32,000 donors. So we're trying to get the president focused on those 507, not on the 32,000. He deals with the larger groups through mass communications, but his personal commitment is to the 1,200 to 1,500 prospects whose derivative becomes the 507 who are worth 90% of the money. So it's the focus on the critical few that has been heightened in the last several years (quoted in Cook, 1994a, p. 351).

Basically, these examples illustrate the difference between the lower level and major gift approaches to fund raising. One researcher has referred to this dichotomy as *paying your dues* versus *giving away your surplus* (Jencks, 1987). Annual giving refers to the less personalized strategy and methodology employed by fund raisers to obtain gifts ranging from $1 to $100, or in some cases $1,000 or $10,000, depending on individual donor capacity. Major gifts, on the other hand, typically refers to the more personalized strategy and methodology employed by fund raisers seeking six- or seven-figure gifts.

Moreover, major gifts are more likely to favor museums, hospitals and medical centers, arts organizations, research institutes, and colleges and universities rather than other types of nonprofits (Brittingham & Pezzullo 1990; Caton 1991; Cook 1994a, in submission; Kelly 1991, in press; Panas 1984; Silberg 1990; Ostrower 1991).

This is because prestige is a critical factor in major gift considerations. Kelly, for example, commented, "[P]rivate gifts are not distributed equally (e.g., major gifts are rarely given to small, unknown organizations even if their need is great--such as feeding starving children--but are instead generally made to the most prestigious organizations, such as doctoral universities, museums, and hospitals)" (1991, p. 189).

In 1995, the most recent year for which figures are available, Americans gave an estimated $143.9 billion to charity, with the largest totals by categories as follows: religion, $63.45 billion, or 44.1%; education, $17.94 billion, or 12.5%; health, $12.59 billion, or 8.8%; human services, $11.70 billion, or 8.1%; and the arts, $9.96 billion, or 6.9% (Murawski 1996).

However, despite its relatively modest share of the philanthropic pie, higher education attracts the majority of gifts of $1 million or more each year (Sterne 1990, Ostrower 1991). According to Kelly, one explanation for this is that "colleges and universities are of particular interest to groups and organizations in their environment because of the resources they hold (e.g., knowledge, trained manpower, scientific innovation, prestige, and even athletics)" (1991, p. 180).

Caton also noted that, in common with alumni, the prestige of a given nonprofit organization is a public good for its major donors. "Major donors are drawn to institutions with a reputation for quality and seek to associate themselves with the achievement of higher quality in ways that can be appreciated by their peers," she reported (1991, p. 228). Caton explained that in addition to pride of association and making a difference, major donors also feel that projects with which they are associated are a personal reflection on them and their concept of quality. In other words, major donors must have a high level of respect for and trust in an organization and its leadership because such donors invest a portion of their identity and values in the organization along with actual gifts of money and/or property. She explained:

> [D]onors look for ways to enhance institutional quality even as they also consider the ways a project might reflect their own appreciation of quality to others. Obviously, nonprofit organizations seeking big gifts must devote some attention to identifying projects associated with higher institutional quality and to considering

> what a project might convey about the donor to others who appreciate quality. In other words, institutional and personal prestige are often intimately intertwined in the case of major gifts (1991, p. 197).

Caton's findings are consistent in many respects with other studies of major donors such as Panas 1984, Odendahl 1990, Silberg 1990, Ostrower 1991, and Gibbons 1992. Ostrower, for example, addressed the importance of institutional prestige in fund raising in her study of elite philanthropy in New York City. According to her:

> [T]he prestige of nonprofits in the eyes of a particular group affects who gets donations...Donors are very much aware of the power of prestige to attract donations, and indeed regularly use this to elicit contributions from one another...
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> ...[A]mong donors as a whole, the bulk of largest gifts are directed towards prestigious educational and cultural organizations that are a part of elite life. Regardless of their public significance, these institutions have a special place among elites. Identification with them is a symbol of social standing. Involvement with them brings the individual into contact with his or her social peers (1991, pp. 337, 340-341).

As mentioned previously, studies of major donors by Panas (1984) and Gibbons (1992) indicated that belief in mission is at or near the top of donor motives. In the Panas study, for example, belief in the mission of the organization rated first among both major donors and development professionals on a list of 22 possible motives. In the Gibbons study, which used the Panas list to compare the motives of major donors at the University of Utah and Brigham Young University, belief in the mission of the institution was rated third by the University of Utah donors and second by the Brigham Young University donors.

Interestingly, the University of Utah donors chose two separate measures of prestige--institutional respect/wide circle and institutional respect/local as their first and second choices, respectively, with interest in a specific program ranked fourth. The Brigham Young donors predictably ranked religious affiliation first on their list of motives, but institutional respect/local was ranked third and institutional respect/wide circle fourth. In other words, belief in mission and two separate measures of institutional prestige were ranked as three of the top four motives for giving by the major donors at the two largest universities--a Doctorate I private and a Research I public--in Utah.

Similarly, Hunter found in an earlier study that "conviction as to the merits of the project" was ranked first among possible motives by a national sample of 30 donors who gave gifts of $1 million or more. Hunter summarized his findings by stating that donors tend to give generously "to causes which they believe to be worthwhile" (1968, pp. 41, 45).

And in a study of 13 donors who gave $1 million or more to institutions of higher education, Silberg found that one of nine primary themes (mentioned by all 13 donors) was that major donors give according to the issues and/or causes in which they are interested. According to her, such donors "seek organizations whose missions support the same causes and issues that interest them" (1990, p. 137).

These findings support the fund-raising maxim that belief in mission is the strongest reason for giving. As Kelly noted, "If real estate is dependent on the three factors of location, location, and location, then fund raising is dependent on mission, mission, and mission" (in press, p. 32).

Other studies of major donors--Boris and Odendahl (1987), Odendahl (1990), Ostrower (1991), and Schervish and Herman--have used more of a sociological approach and found that philanthropy is an important part of elite life, that wealthy donors tend to give to high-prestige organizations which play a major role in maintaining elite culture, and that wealthy donors are creators or producers rather than mere supporters of philanthropic outcomes. In summary, they found that elite philanthropy is a form of identity and group membership and that social setting and culture profoundly influence donor motive.

Taken together, these studies reveal that belief in mission, organizational prestige, and interest in a particular program or project are factors given considerable weight by major donors in their gift decisions. On the other hand, low-prestige institutions occasionally receive major gifts--even unrestricted ones--from someone giving out of community pride or loyalty to alma mater or gratitude or desire to make a difference or because of the influence a doctor or nurse or social worker or professor had on his or her life (e.g., the $100 million Mr. and Mrs. Henry Rowan gave to Glassboro State College [now Rowan College] in New Jersey).

Obviously, there are many commodities other than prestige which donors may purchase with their gifts, such as pride of association, social status, recognition, gratitude, immortality, and a sense of satisfaction or joy from giving something back or doing good. Equally obvious is the fact that other factors are often involved in major gift decisions, including donor capacity, timing, momentum, executive leadership, a relationship between the donor and someone associated with the institution, effort, planning, an adequate fund-raising infrastructure, competent staff, donor recognition program, tax considerations, state of the economy and nation, etc.

Apparently, however, what is not as obvious is the fact that *it is the interaction or intersection of donor motives and organizational prerequisites which produces major gifts.* Much has been written about both topics (for information on donor motives see Baade & Sundberg 1993; Bailey 1990, Boris & Odendahl 1987, Brakeley 1980, Bakal 1979, Edwards & Outhouse 1993, Gibbons 1992, Goss 1994, Gurin 1982, Hunter 1968, Jencks 1987, Joseph 1989, Lawson 1991, Leslie & Ramey 1988, Marts 1953, Morris 1970, Odendahl 1990; Ostrower 1991, Panas 1984, Prince & File 1994, Reilly 1992, Ryan 1993, Schervish 1993, Schneiter 1985, Silberg 1990, White 1986; for information on organizational prerequisites see Adams 1993; Altizer 1992; Bailey 1988; Boardman 1993; Brecher 1984; Broce 1986; Brown 1988; Carver 1990; Cook 1994a, 1994b, 1993, in press, in submission; Dailey 1986, 1990; Donovan 1993;

Dove 1988; Dunlop 1987, 1989, 1993a, 1993b; Duronio & Loessin 1991; Edwards & Wood 1992; File, Prince & Cermak 1994; Fisher 1989, 1991; Fisher & Quehl 1989; Grieff 1986; Hall 1989; Handlan 1981; Heetland 1992; Henderson 1986; Herman 1994; Herman & Block 1990; Herman & Heimovics 1990, 1991; Hohn 1980; Houle 1989; Howe 1983, 1991; Kelly 1991, in press; Knauft, Berger & Gray 1991; Lawson 1995; Lindahl 1992, 1995; Lord 1983; Luck & Evans 1992, 1993; Mai 1987; Martin 1982; Matheny 1994; Millar & Williams 1993; Mixer 1993; Muir & May 1993; O'Connell 1985; Panas 1988, 1991; Pocock 1991; Pond 1993; Quigg 1986; Rosso 1991; Seaman 1986; Sharpe 1986; Seymour 1966; Smith 1975, 1977, 1981, 1993; Soroker 1974; Stehle 1989; Strand & Hunt 1986; Struck 1993; Teltsch 1988; Wagner 1992; Williams 1982, 1988; Winfree 1989; Winship 1984; Withers 1986).

Greenfield summarized the rationale for research on donor motivation as follows: "The lists of motives for giving only confirm that there is no single reason why people or institutions make gifts, but motives are important to study because they trigger the gift response" (1991, p. 12). However, Schervish and Herman (1988) and Kelly (1991) downplayed the importance or usefulness of research on motivation. The former stated, "Such research is of questionable insight and utility" (p. 56), while the latter added, "[P]revious fund-raising studies, which focus on characteristics, attitudes, and motivations of donors, are limited in their explanation of the fund-raising process" (p. 197). While disagreeing on the relative importance of research on donor motives, most practitioners and scholars agree that multiple motives are involved and somehow converge or coalesce in the case of a major gift.

In regard to organizational prerequisites for fund raising, Cook and Lasher (in press) developed a list of the top dozen prerequisites for a program of sustained fund raising in higher education as well as a social exchange model of academic fund raising based on the ROPES typology described earlier. This model incorporates both donor motives and organizational prerequisites as well as donor responses to ROPES initiatives, and both the model and prerequisites appear to have relevance and application to other types of nonprofit organizations. Further, social exchange theory (see Cook 1994a, Kelly 1991 for an extended discussion) provides the legal rationale and justification for the tax exempt status of nonprofit organizations as well as the charitable deduction donors are allowed for gifts to 501(c)(3) organizations.

The 12 prerequisites include: 1) Leadership, 2) Financial capacity/capability of constituency, 3) Clarity and strength of organizational mission, 4) Personal relationship between donors and someone associated with the organization, 5) Involvement of donors in the life of the organization, 6) Prestige/reputation/image of the organization and/or individual programs or operating units, 7) History/age/maturity/consistency/ tradition of both the organization and its development program, 8) Informed and committed constituency, 9) Donor predisposition to give (philanthropic impulse in society as a whole as well as established patterns of generosity in particular regions and/or cities), 10) Continued public confidence in the nonprofit sector, 11) State of the economy/nation, and 12) Tax policy (adapted from Cook and Lasher, in press).

These prerequisites were derived from an extensive review of the literature and from numerous interviews with knowledgable individuals; therefore, individual elements are not weighted or ranked. Moreover, the prerequisites create a syngergistic effect since each element is important for sustained fund-raising effectiveness and the absence or dilution of an element or elements reduces the overall impact of the others.

However, few if any programs enjoy the luxury of being strong in all twelve prerequisites at any one time (especially since items nine through twelve are beyond the control of individual organizations). Fortunately, as Duronio and Loessin (1991) indicated, institutions can experience a measure or degree of fund-raising "success" under less than ideal or perfect conditions. (In fact, of the sixteen variables they measured which contribute to fund-raising effectiveness, the 'successful' institutions in their study averaged being strong in only eight).

This is encouraging news for nonprofit fund raisers and executives, because fund raising is one area where leadership can have a significant, and at times transforming, effect on an organization. And although change is more often evolutionary, or incremental, rather than revolutionary, leaders can still make a difference--and exert a considerable influence--on their organizations. Donor confidence in leadership, of course, is a prerequisite for major gifts, and is based on personality, style, ethics, vision, personal and fiscal integrity, communication skills, and managerial ability, among other things. This applies to the governing board as well as the chief executive, and quite naturally, board members of effective organizations will contribute a significant percentage of total giving each year.

In terms of fund raising, nonprofit chief executives should focus their efforts on two areas: major gifts (Kelly defines these as gifts of $10,000 or more, but this varies depending on organizational type and other factors) and administrative leadership (e.g., policy and strategy decisions, budget and staffing concerns, selection and/or evaluation of the Chief Development Officer, strategic planning, selling a campaign to the board, being involved in the selection of a consultant, helping to decide on the timing and goal for a campaign, recruiting volunteer leaders, articulating the institutional vision, etc.) (Cook, 1994a).

Leaders can also help to set the tone, style, and focus of their fund-raising programs through their attitudes, values, and decisions, as well as their personal involvement and time. For example, major gifts veteran David Dunlop of Cornell University described the need for long-term thinking in fund raising as follows:

> Many contend that fund raising, like selling, is primarily a matter of getting the order to commitment. This focuses a great deal of reliance on asking for the gift and it suggests that a campaign prospect's decision is largely conditioned by the 'ask.' This view may serve in the short run and for the objectives of a single campaign, but our institutions function in the long run and that perspective must also be taken into account. In the long run the campaign fund raiser who focuses only on the 'task,' caring nothing for the institution's on-going relationship with the donor, does a disservice to the school [or other type of nonprofit organization] and its benefactors [not to mention the fund-raising profession] (1980, p. 31).

An example of the short-term thinking criticized by Dunlop was offered by Tripp Carter, former director of development research at Rice University. According to him, "The secret to making the pieces fit is finding who holds the power. I can make anybody a donor if I can find someone with social, economic or political influence over them" (Leslie et al., 1988, p. 66).

While Carter may or may not be correct in his assumption that anyone can be led to give when exposed to the right influences, his statement ignores social exchange theory and implies that donors are puppets to be manipulated by hidden fund raisers who pull invisible strings. Such an approach may produce donors, but it will not produce philanthropists. Likewise, fund-raising programs which emphasize short-term goals and asymmetrical communication with donors rather than long-term relationships and balanced, two-way communication will fall short of their potential, no matter what particular giving totals or campaign results might indicate, and over time may cost an organization more than they earn in lost goodwill and other, more tangible benefits.

In conclusion, social exchange theory, and social exchange models of fund raising, appear to offer a promising alternative to nonprofits in need of philanthropic resources. As Ostrander and Schervish have stated, "Donors have needs to be fulfilled as well as resources to grant, and recipients have resources to give as well as needs to be met. In other words, donors and recipients both give and get in the social relation that is philanthropy" (1990, p. 93). Similarly, Lord commented, "The fact is that people give in order to *get*. They don't want to feel that they are 'giving away' their money. They want to feel they are investing it, and getting something in return" (1983, p. 5). Dove also noted that major donors "view giving as an investment, and through their investments they desire to solve a problem or issue, seek ways to express themselves (self-actualization), and expect to see and understand the 'return on the investment'" (1988, p.91).

Nonprofits must rise to the challenge of making major donors partners in the true sense of the word. A university president said of major donors to his institution, "They're supposed to be family members, having some stock in its success, and so when they contribute, we point out that they're really part of a community, and as part of a community, we know they're interested in what happens, so we keep them well-informed as to how their dollars are being used" (quoted in Cook, 1994a, p. 419).

Finally, another academic chief executive provided the following summary statement:

> How do you motivate donors? You bring them into the dream. You make them a part of the vision. You make them a part of something bigger than themselves, which is what these wonderful places [nonprofits] are. And you not only help them understand it, but you allow them a way to identify with it. If you don't bring them into the center and they don't feel a part of it, then you will not have a very large donor (quoted in Cook, 1994a, p. 420).

Ultimately major donors invest not only their time and money, but of even greater worth to them, their identity, prestige, and reputation, in the nonprofits whom they so ably serve.

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