

Donor Thank You Call Sample Script

HOW TO USE YOUR SCRIPT:

It's just a guideline. Don't read it. You want to be yourself. Every thank you call will be different. Yet there are some common elements of a great thank you call that you'll find in the suggested sample script (the highlighted words are the ones to be sure to include).

SAMPLE SCRIPT:

Begin

Introduce yourself:

Hi _____ (donor's name). This is _____. I'm a _____ (staff, volunteer, alumnus, board member, etc) of _____ (org name). I'm NOT calling to ask you for money. I'm just calling to thank you for the donation you made to _____ (specific project, fundraising appeal, etc.). It really means a lot and I wanted to tell you personally how grateful we are.

Pause for a second or two. One of these things will likely happen:

1. The donor will be silent, caught off guard, or confused about what to say.
2. The donor will say something but won't be particularly effusive or seem interested in chatting.
3. The donor will say something appreciative about your organization or how nice it was of you to call.

If it's option #1 or #2, simply:

Say something particular about this gift and thank again:

Okay, I don't want to take up any more of your time. I just wanted to thank you again for (making this first gift/increasing your giving this year/your longtime support. Have a wonderful day/evening/week-end!

If it's #3 and the donor seems open to being engaged, you can have a brief conversation about their connection to your organization, why they give, etc. But gauge their interest level and don't overstay your welcome.

If they do want to talk, then:

Get to know the donor:

I want to respect your time but if you have a moment, I would love to know more about what inspired you to give and the programs that interest you the most.

Listen. Converse. And please take notes (see **A Call is a Terrible Thing to Waste**, below). You may hear about other organizations they work with, about their family background, etc. Everything you learn becomes an opportunity for further bonding.

You can also ask open-ended questions to elicit greater response. Ask what feels natural to you. The key is to find the delicate balance between appearing genuinely interested in the donor as a person (not just a wallet) and making them feel they're undergoing the third degree. Be brief. But don't leave a donor who wants to chat high and dry. Here are suggestions:

- *How did you first become interested in our organization?*
- *Tell me a little bit about why this cause matters to you.*
- *If you had to pick the program that most interest you, what would it be?*
- *Is there anything I haven't asked that you'd like to share with me?*

Invite the donor to get to know you better:

Would you like to be involved with us in other ways beyond being a donor?

If the donor is receptive to becoming more involved, and you feel that you've made a real connection, you can also ask if they'd like to join you for coffee at their convenience. Be careful with this, because you don't want them to feel that you're trying to ask them for another gift at this point.

Wind up the call with a final thank you.

This is also an opportunity to verify their contact information (you may have a correct phone number, but their mailing or email address may have changed).

Don't get discouraged if most donors don't want to chat a lot, or if you mostly end up leaving messages. The thank you calls still count!

This Sample Call Script is an excerpt from the eBook *Donor Thank You Calls, A Key to Donor Retention* by Claire Axelrad, J.D., CFRE. Download the full eBook on: <http://clairification.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Donor-Thank-You-Calls-E-Book-and-Script-3.pdf>