

# 1Minute with 1Vision

## Getting in the Door the First Time

You have heard this old saying more than once, probably from your grandparents, **'Well Begun is Half Done.'** As it applies to development, can you actually be halfway to a new donor relationship after your first sit-down? I believe so.

### But how do you get in the door initially when you have no connection?

We assume you have exhausted every personal-introduction angle. Board members, staff, friends, or acquaintances create the bridge most people use to cross the 'I-don't-know-you-from-Adam' chasm. Consider these other ideas.

- Advice Visit.** *'If you ask for money, you'll get advice.'* The reverse is also eventually true. "We are considering a new project. I'd love to hear what you think of it." Make it clear you want their opinions and feedback. Then, commit to pass their counsel and comments along to your organization. Money talk can come in subsequent visits.
- 20 Minutes – Guaranteed!** Time remains the most valuable asset your donor has to give. Some will meet if they know that it isn't going to drag out. Set your phone for 19 minutes and stand up when the alarm sounds! Don't go a minute more without their permission. State your guarantee when setting the appointment: How about a \$20 donation out of your own pocket to the nonprofit of their choice?
- Provide a Service.** Your reconnaissance told you *something* about them. From the LinkedIn, Facebook, or Classmates research you might know about a special project they love. Connect with it. One development officer brought theater tickets because the donor was listed as a major theater patron – even though she worked for a school foundation. Another friend sends laminated clippings when the prospect makes the news, and follows up with a call.
- Be Honest and Challenging.** "Tom, I want to be clear. We aren't looking for donors. We need champions. You have been described as a true advocate for causes you support. Would you let me share why I love \_\_\_\_\_ (**the cause, not your organization**) and see if there's a connection for you?"

Of course, the relationship may not bear fruit for a long time – if at all. However, you will never know unless you get that first meeting. Let me know what works for you!

Sincerely,



Blake Conover, President