

# 1Minute with 1Vision

## Only Two Questions Unlock the Checkbook

We should never stop learning, right? “Life-long learning” is a mantra for several schools nearby, from elementary on up. But is learning confined to the classroom? (Another question!) It shouldn’t be if you plan to advance in your profession, marriage, and hobbies. *The best people to be around in the nursing home are the ones who ask questions.*

Asking too many questions, or asking questions that lead off topic, or asking redundant questions really can be an irritant. But, asking a good question, perfectly timed, can make a huge difference. So, I went on the search for a few results-producing questions and hit on a couple that really sum up what we want to know in fundraising when starting a relationship with a donor.

### What two questions can unlock a donor’s checkbook?

Of course it is absurd to think that anyone can be manipulated or duped into giving, let alone someone who has achieved much in life. Donors, as a group, have grown wary and even a bit jaded, especially when it comes to the obvious “ask” appointment. That said, there are still two questions above all others – if asked honestly and genuinely – which can bring deep connection. Be careful though, because donors can spot insincerity faster than a 5<sup>th</sup> grader.

Here are those two questions:

- ❑ **How did you get to where you are in life?** Be prepared because their answer could lead down many paths. Some may give a chronological account starting from the 1700s. Others may credit God’s good grace and little else. Probing the short answers and redirecting the lengthy should uncover a wealth of information about their triumphs, disappointments, associations and attitudes. Look for lines that connect some of them with your organization.
- ❑ **Why do you give to our organization?** Maybe more than any other, this one is key! Don’t expect a recitation of your mission statement from them, but look for a common purpose. Giving might be because of a personal connection now or in the past. Some will respond simply, “Because you asked.” Learning the reason(s) behind the gift will help you find a project or program that fits them well. Plus, it should provide incredible insight into why others donate.

Sincerely,



Blake Conover, President

P.S. If you are really daring, you can step up to the super charged question... “*What would we (our organization) need to do for you to feel great about doubling your gift?*”