

Tips on How to Ask for a Donation

Always remember, it's about **them**, not about you. If a business does not give you a donation it could be because they are not doing well this year, there is a corporate policy about donating to churches, they have used up this year's budget for donations, they just had a fight with their significant other, etc., etc., and so forth.

- Before approaching any business, do a little research and decide what might be appropriate to ask for.
- In person or on the phone, introduce yourself, say where you are from and why you are there. For instance: "Hi, I'm Judith Kaufman from the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Asheville. Each year we hold an auction to support our programs." (Tempting as it is, **do not** lead with a filler like "How are you?" They know you didn't call or come in to inquire about their health. The **red flag** of suspicion immediately goes up when you use these kinds of phrases.)
- Request to speak with the decision-maker, often the highest level person in the business - Owner, manager, supervisor, etc.
- When you reach the decision-maker, tell them who you are, why you are there, what you would like and the benefit to their business. For instance "Hi, I'm Judith Kaufman from the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Asheville. Each year we have an Auction to raise funds to support our programs. Would you be willing to contribute _____ to the auction? If you choose to donate ..." talk about the benefits. Don't forget to mention sponsorships if appropriate

- Ask them to complete the "Donation to Auction 2017" form while you stand there (easier than chasing around after forms later).
- Leave them with:
 1. "Business Owner Request" form
 2. "What's in it for You?" form
 3. "Business Ads and Sponsorship" form, if appropriate

Pointers

- Go after the low-hanging fruit first, (those business that you think are most likely to say yes)
- The rule of thumb for success is to touch the business 3-5 times.
- If it is a business that you frequent, seeing you lends more power to your request, so make the first approach in person, if possible.
- Ask clearly for what you want. Based on your research, suggest a possible donation. Many donations are lost because they are not asked for.

If you don't ask, there is no possibility of getting what you want.

- If you send an email, always follow up with a call to assure its receipt and to answer any questions the recipient may have.

Remember: A rejection is not your fault. Don't take it personally.

Thank you for trying!!