

Individual Giving Workshop – January 15, 2019  
David Levy, instructor

Compilation of Ideas of Ways to Thank a Donor  
(With notes from David)

1. Acknowledge gift anniversary. This can be especially important for the first gift – to help build a strong relationship between the donor and the organization.
2. Ad, logo inclusion on a banner, slide show etc.
3. Artwork from program participants – a great way to educate and thank. Make sure that the recipient is aware that the artwork is from one of the agency's clients/participants. (and of course always get permission)
4. Birthday/Anniversary/Milestone cards – it is very nice to be part of the special moments in a donor's life.
5. Celebrity supporter meet and greet.
6. Connect donor with someone who was helped. If appropriate, a donor meeting a recipient of service can be a very powerful and emotional. Make sure that you prepare the recipient for the experience.
7. Custom event/activity that you know your donor loves
8. Email (or text) from staff/board member or volunteer.
9. Happy Hour Event/Coffee – this is a good way to engage and provide an opportunity for low key education.
10. Historic giving recognition. It is nice to acknowledge lifetime giving of a donor and the family.
11. Holiday cards -another opportunity to thank donors.
12. Host salons - small group gatherings (usually in someone's home) to educate donors and connect them to the agency and to each other.
13. Invite donor to dinner.
14. Jumbo Tron – (i.e. at Dodger Night for Agency) – not only does public announcements show appreciation to the donor, it also can inspire others to contribute. (if done properly)
15. Listed on website.
16. Lunch with the Leadership (Executive Director/Board Chair) - always nice to say thank you in person and important to have meetings that are not focused on asking for money. It is ALWAYS good to meet with donors.
17. Naming opportunity – wall space or a building. You can also name programs and events. Be creative with these types of public recognition. For some people (and their families) the idea of leaving a legacy in this way is appealing.
18. Naming program or opportunity – be creative on what can be names/sponsored.
19. Newsletter/annual report – both receiving and being acknowledge in.
20. Personal invite to an upcoming event – with the offer for them to bring a guest.
21. Personalize video – from staff or people impacted. The more personal you can make a thank you, the better.

22. Postcards – this can be a general thank you postcard. I also suggest that you use the opportunity to provide some information – maybe a little-known fact about the agency or a recent accomplishment. You can use this communication to educate and bring people closer to you (increase linkage and interest). Postcards can be useful, because people don't need to open an envelope and read a letter to get your message.
23. Press release to local media
24. Sharing results/impact – all donors want to know the impact that they make. Sharing the results informally or formally is appreciated.
25. Singing telegram – Be creative, thank your donors in ways that are meaningful to them, make them feel appreciated and bring them closer to your organization.
26. Site visit; exclusive (behind the scenes) opportunity. This is a very nice way to make a donor feel special and demonstrate the impact that they make.
27. Social Media – using social media (especially for donors that are social media savvy) is a great way to take advantage of this communications tool.
28. Social media shout outs – can be effective – of course remember to get permission before publicly acknowledging a donor.
29. SWAG – something modest, inexpensive, useful and in some way connected to your mission – something that a donor will keep and will give them a good feeling about the organization. You might even get a donation to pay for the SWAG and you can let the donor know that this was sponsored and was not at the agency's expense.
30. Tax Letter – this is a requirement – and you can make the most of the tax letter by using it as another opportunity to educate and thank.
31. Text – another method of communication. Also a great way to send a quick, information message about the impact of a donation. A photo can also make a big impact.
32. Thank you call from staff, volunteer, Board member – always a good idea! As part of the call (or message) mention a recent accomplishment or story about someone who was helped – that was made possible by the donors generosity.
33. Thank you note – a nice handwritten thank you note is always an important part of any stewardship program.
34. Thank you note from agency clients
35. Thank you VIP event. A nice way to recognize certain donors and prospects.
36. Thanksgiving Day – utilize existing events as an opportunity to show appreciation – and/or have an Agency Day of Thanksgiving – where everyone (board, staff, volunteers) participate in an activity to thank supporters.
37. Video from kids – (clients or service recipients) – telling their stories; saying thank you; telling donor how their donations make a difference. Make sure that you get permission (signed release) before sending out any client videos, using photos or telling a person's story.
38. Wall/Plaque for Engraved Names – a donor wall can be a nice way to thank and encourage giving. Any public acknowledgement needs to be done in a way that honors the culture of the agency.