

10 TIPS TO SUCCESSFUL ASKS: *Donation Procurement*

Here are some sure-fire hints and suggestions to help you as you begin soliciting donations for the annual auction. Thank you for your efforts to help bless Cedar Park! – *The Auction Team*

1. **ORGANIZE** – Make a call list of all your prospects, friends, family and business contacts that can help your donation efforts. Arrange them so that you contact all of the “EASY” ones first. Start with success – there is nothing like winning to keep you moving and enthusiastic!
2. **GOALS** – Set a goal for yourself, Be realistic. Work at your own speed, but make at least two contacts every day. This avoids last minute crush.
3. **REACH** –The secret is to *reach* as many people as you can in the shortest possible amount of time. **Procurement is a numbers business... the more people you talk to... the more items you will obtain.** Another hint is to ask everybody you talk to for a recommendation of somebody else who might donate to this year’s auction. Never stop once you get started. Momentum is critical to success.
4. **TELL ‘em AND TELL ‘em AGAIN** – a Donation can come from anywhere. For that reason, talk about possible auction items wherever you go: parties, meetings, social gatherings, sporting events, etc. You will be amazed at how many people have never been asked to donate. Everybody can give something! How much? How exciting? That depends on your ideas and enthusiasm!
5. **THE FORM** – The most important sales tool you have is the *donation form*. Nothing happens until the form is in the prospect’s hands, is signed and delivered to your auction director. Put at least two in your purse, pocket or car so that when the opportunity pops up, you’re ready! Be prepared. It’s your key to success.
6. **ASK FOR HELP** – You are not alone. If you have done all you can to get an item from the prospect but need just a little extra muscle to finish your pitch, call for help.
7. **FOLLOW-UP...FOLLOW-UP...FOLLOW-UP** – It usually takes more than one call to get an item. Be certain that you call back often until you have completed the form.
8. **MEET THE DEADLINES** – There can be no exceptions. It is important to put the date on your calendar and in all correspondence to your prospects.
9. **HANG IN THERE, BABY!** – You will have a moment when you get turned down. Smile. Take a deep breath and try again. The champions will all tell you that persistence, determination and a sense of humor are your most important support systems. REMEMBER, you are part of a team of volunteer and a significant fund-raising event and because of what you do we will continue to have a thriving Cedar Park community.
10. **THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!** – Finally, you can never thank the donors enough for the unselfish and generous contributions they make. Successful volunteers and teams always show their appreciation to donors through personal phone calls, notes and letters. Too often in fund-raising, the art of saying thank-you is overlooked – when it is, in fact, the most important aspect of solicitation. Take a minute to say THANK YOU!