



## *When Status Quo is not Enough, Shifting the Paradigm from Donor Satisfaction to Donor Loyalty* by Sarah C. Meaker, Ph.D.

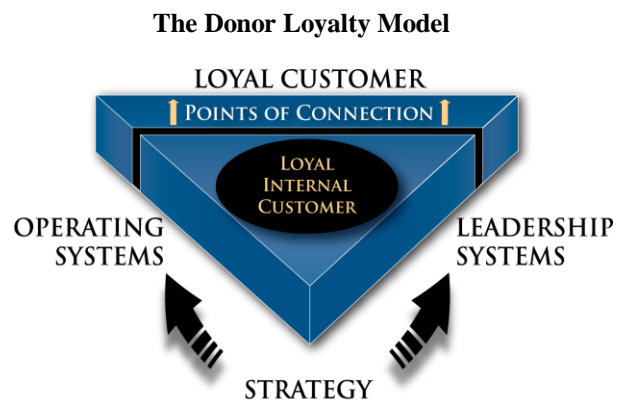
---

In these uncertain times it is critical for non-profit organizations to rely more on their donor base. With budget cuts at all three levels of government and possible uncertainty about the availability of grants, non-profits need to strategically pursue donors. A donor is defined as a person that gives time, treasure or talent to the organization and many times a combination of all three. When referring to the strategic pursuit of a donor a non-profit has to set expectations and goals and put into place measurements for successful outcomes. The question for non-profits is twofold: (1) how does the non-profit organization acquire new donors? (2) How does a non-profit organization convert donors from satisfied donors to loyal donors?

Organizations measure their donor base in terms of donor *satisfaction*. Donors make their contributions, non-profits report back how the contribution was used and the donor is satisfied, because they received the expected outcome from their contribution.

In today's market place donor *loyalty* is the standard to be measured. In order to create a loyal donor the organization must create a positive point of connection with the donor. In other words the organization must create and maintain an emotional connection with the donor. The organization needs to create value for the donor every time the donor encounters the organization. Creating a loyal donor can be accomplished by using customer loyalty and consultative selling competencies. By retaining loyal donors a non-profit organization is able to increase the level of giving on a consistent basis. Imagine the impact on annual giving, if 5% of the donors increased their level of giving.

One of the goals of creating positive points of connection with the donor organization is to create relationships at multiple levels within the donor organization. Multiple contacts ensure the non-profit is not reliant on one person within that organization.



The outcome of the paradigm shift for the non-profit between donor satisfaction and donor loyalty allows the non-profit to plan, implement, and measure more strategically for longer term goals. From the donor prospective, value for their contributions and an emotional attachment through the points of connection has been created. The donor is more likely to continue to give of their time, treasure and talent to that organization. Remember a loyal donor is one that gives time, treasure and talent on a *consistent* basis.

Sarah C. Meaker, Ph.D. President of Meaker & Associates works with organizations and individuals to achieve measurable results. Call 941-792-6926 for a consultation on how your organization can increase long term donor loyalty by positioning your value and creating powerful connections.