

Donors can invest four different types of assets to create social capital. We usually think first of finances, but nonprofits can use other resources too.

**FINANCES**

Money may be in the form of cash, securities, or other liquid assets, probably held as “investable assets” that are available for giving. Generally, this gift is tax-advantaged and results in a charitable deduction for income tax purposes. Appreciated financial assets offer an even greater opportunity for tax savings through avoidance of capital gains taxes. Financial gifts always end up as cash, though they may be given as a stock or other transfer of assets.

**PERSONAL TIME**

Volunteered time can provide skilled or unskilled services. Generally, donors derive a greater degree of satisfaction from an investment of time in a field related on one’s expertise; however, contributing in new and different areas can be stimulating and educational. Time invested may be “on the job” or “after hours.” It may be concentrated as in a mission trip, or occasional such as periodic volunteering at a soup kitchen.

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE & INFLUENCE**

The offer of skills is akin to an investment of time, however, the focus here is on a specific skill or professional expertise that is made available for service to others. While the time spent may not be great, the value of the service rendered may be very significant, such as service on the governing board of an organization. This asset class includes provision of access to one’s network, use of one’s reputation and contacts to influence others, and talent contributed from the donor’s company or family. Influence is an asset that offers a high degree of leverage.

**FAMILY OR BUSINESS ASSETS**

This class includes tangible, non-monetary gifts that a donor may contribute, often called in-kind gifts. Included here are items such as art and collectibles, frequent flyer points, use of one’s home or vacation home, automobiles, furniture, computers, etc. Again, gifts in this category may be from one’s home or business. Contributions in this asset class, like finances, are usually tax-advantaged gifts.