

We've noted that donors with a larger giving responsibility often find themselves facing obstacles. Based on a survey of professional advisors to major donors, listed below are issues some donors face, arranged in order of frequency.

**CHALLENGES TO GENEROUS GIVING**

1. Past giving suffers from poor habits, poor planning, a focus mostly on year-end giving; difficult to realign giving to be more thoughtful and strategic.
2. Too many requests—confusion as to which ones to accept. A little to each? Bigger gifts to a few? Which ones?
3. With little time and many distractions, giving suffers from neglect; other personal challenges don't allow for the time needed.
4. One's personal mission, purpose, and passion are not clear. The donor doesn't feel clearly led to give in a particular direction.
5. Understanding God's heart in giving decisions; taking time to ascertain God's plan for giving and his will for one's own giving.
6. What's compelling is not clear, one's heart is not "stolen" by any encompassing passion.
7. Lack of confidence/trust in nonprofits; doubts or concerns about management, overhead, planning and resource allocation, strategy, or execution.
8. Possibly ineffective program, lack of accountability or transparency—it simply isn't clear that there will be good results.
9. The magnitude of the task of giving away a lot after previously giving at a lower level.
10. Lack of ability or skill to do ministry analysis; no standard way to assess an organization, research and quality information is largely inaccessible.
11. Desire to avoid "more of same old," need for variety, innovation, fresh ideas to support.
12. Priorities differ between family members—there is conflict when it comes to decision making.
13. Not enough good options, a shortage of attractive/quality giving opportunities that seem to be truly effective and "high quality."
14. Fear of fraud or embezzlement when giving overseas.

**TAKE ACTION**

Donors may find themselves portrayed in some of the points above. Breaking through the roadblocks first requires knowing what they are. Identify precisely what your fear, concern, or hesitation is—then take action. Here are some steps that you might consider—though situations will vary widely.

- ✓ Discuss concerns with a giving colleague in a similar situation
- ✓ Pray it through
- ✓ Talk it over with your spouse
- ✓ Do some research on one or more organizations, possibly including meeting on-site
- ✓ Engage a professional analyst or advisor
- ✓ Develop a written plan including giving guidelines (what's in and what's out)

Giving will be more effective and satisfying than ever when the barriers to whole-hearted engagement are broken down.

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