

Sample Communications for Corporate Donor Conversations

The following pages provide an overview of the communications flow for initial corporate prospect communication, along with sample text and ideas for positioning a corporate partnership opportunity. Any actual text used should be made natural to the communicator and, most importantly, customized and adapted for the company and opportunity at hand.

E-mail Outreach

Goal: Schedule call or meeting

Sample text	<p><i>(Warm intro, e.g., I hope you're having a good week - I saw the recent write-up about [the new product launch, your new location, your great new hires, etc.]; how is it going so far?)</i></p> <p>With several events coming up and some great programming ongoing, I'd like to schedule a brief call with you to talk about whether we could be a good [employee engagement, community affairs, cause marketing, etc.] platform to support your business in the coming year. Can we find 30-45 minutes in the next week or two to discuss?</p>
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Initial Phone Conversation or Meeting - this may take more than one meeting

Goals: Determine partnership fit and build interest, gain information to refine contents of a forthcoming proposal

Open	<p><i>small talk, thank you for talking with me, mention of something going on with them, depending on the contact, could be:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Something going on directly within your network or follow up to earlier conversation</i> • <i>Something going on for the company - serious or fun news that shows you're tracking what's going on with them</i>
Introduce purpose of conversation	<p>We have had quite a year and we appreciate your support and collaboration throughout the year.</p> <p>We continue to have terrific events and invite corporate partners to join us in those, and we have very recently made some changes to how we think about corporate partnerships more broadly.</p> <p>I'd like to share some of that information, but first I would like to talk about what you're trying to do from [marketing, employee</p>

	<p>engagement, community affairs, cause marketing, etc.] perspective so we can see whether we might fit in to support some of your goals.</p>
<p>Establish objectives</p>	<p>Can you share any key objectives you have right now?</p> <p><i>Alternative ideas:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is driving your area of the business? • What are the main initiatives you are focused on right now? • What are the key things you look to have partnerships accomplish and what do you wish they did? • What are your key measures of success? • How do you measure results for partnerships? <p><i>If contact clams up or needs further prompting,</i> I ask because we're not looking to come to you with a request for funding only for [an event], as we have in the past. It seems to me that there is more we can do and could possibly help you accomplish some business goals. Some of the main things we could help with are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging your employees in a meaningful cause that they can get behind - we're creating custom volunteer platforms for a select group of partners who are looking for something their employees can own and get behind. These can focus on skill- building, team development, bringing corporate values to life, or other goals you might have. • Showcasing your [product, service, expertise, thought leadership] to our audiences, through events as well as also our online channels. Certainly we can recognize corporate citizenship, but beyond that we can help you create and distribute content that audiences - yours and ours - will find engaging and can help tell your story in a different, meaningful way. • (Other items based on company, brand, prior relationships)
<p>Follow up with questions (use as needed)*</p> <p><small>*some questions adapted from Sandler Systems, Inc.</small></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are those valid, or are there other things that are more important for you to be working on right now? • What's coming up that you might need help with? • Tell me more about that... • Can you be a bit more specific? Give me an example. • How long has that been happening? • What have you tried to do about that? • What has worked? What hasn't? • Who else should we involve in this conversation?

<p>Play back objectives</p>	<p>So, it looks like if we can help with....</p> <p><i>(name 2-3 objectives)</i></p> <p>That would be worthwhile to you. Great. I think we can share some ideas.</p>
<p>Share some specific partnership ideas... such as:</p>	<p>To help engage your employees, we would provide a customized volunteer platform that makes sense for your objectives and to engage your people. We will only be doing these custom programs for our top partners so we can be sure it's a valuable experience for all involved. This could involve something that leverages what your employees do, specific areas of leadership development, or relates to the most tangible impact they can make in our community.</p> <p>To clearly position you as an earnest corporate citizen investing in our community, we have formalized our year-round corporate partnership opportunities to building up the recognition and affiliation benefits, such as highlighting our top supporters throughout our communications - digital, print, events, and so on. Rather than being associated with us around an event, you will have that in addition to highlights throughout the year.</p> <p>In order to further showcase your community investment and thought leadership, both to your employees and your customers, we are upping our promotional support, so if you'd like to work with us to produce content, run a cause marketing promotion, co-host an event, or the like, we are ready and able to support that by providing access to custom and tailored content. We have ready access to powerful imagery, stories, and deep expertise about the communities we serve, as well as a wide variety of critical topics including <i>(insert appropriate subjects)</i>. Our expertise and our content is relatable and valuable to [target audience], and we have both the emotion and the data to make it meaningful.</p> <p>To further engage your employees or customers, while also facilitating great networking, we will include sponsorship of our [event], where we can feature you through recognition through digital and print channels, during and before and after the event. We can make your product or service part of the event <i>(customize for those who it is appropriate)</i>, as well as give you an opportunity to share a little bit about your support from the event stage. Of course we will also include a table for your guests.</p>

	<p>There are additional items that I'd be happy to flesh out in a proposal - the one additional one I would mention that is new is that we'll be inviting all of our partners to a new annual partner summit starting in 2017, where all of our corporate partners will come together for networking and educational opportunities.</p> <p>We are also going to limit the number of top level partners. While we don't want to get ahead of ourselves, interest in partnerships has been growing so we are setting limits for year-round relationships so it doesn't get overly crowded. We want you to have elbow room and room for your company to stand out.</p> <p><i>(see how that lands, give more detail in areas of interest)</i></p>
<p>Solicit response to those ideas (use as needed)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think of those ideas? • Anything you definitely want to see that I didn't mention?
<p>Discuss budget</p>	<p>The annual (Company) investment for this would be around <i>(indicate fee range)</i>, depending on customizations that could raise or lower it a bit.</p> <p>The fee includes the year-round partnership including all of the customized support, the employee engagement platform, the event sponsorship, digital integration, promotional rights, and so on. So it's all taken care of for the next 12 months.</p> <p><i>(wait for response)</i></p>
<p>Mitigate objections, adjust opportunity as needed</p>	<p><i>In response to questions about budget, or about how the levels are different (i.e., why they should partner at a higher level and/or what comes out of the offer if they cannot partner at that higher level)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This year-round opportunity is the only one where we will be providing [customized volunteerism platforms, full promotional rights, customized content, etc.] • We have grown. . . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In reach of impact - (articulate and quantify relevant successes) ○ In reach of audience - (articulate and quantify relevant successes) • Our partnership levels are comparable to other organizations who are offering year-round and event benefits and especially with those couple of organizations that are doing more than offering logo placement to serve as a meaningful platform for you to communicate and engage

Establish next steps	Is putting these details in writing an appropriate next step? We can send you a short proposal if you'd like. <i>(give timeline, ideally within a week maximum)</i>
Close conversation	<i>Reiterate next steps, thank you for talking today</i>

Proposal Follow-up

Sample e-mail text	Thank you for talking with me about working together in the coming year. I've attached a proposal for your review based on our discussion. Should we schedule another brief call to discuss it? Let me know what works best for you and thank you for your support.
Recommended proposal contents	The purpose of the proposal is not to inform the prospect about your organization or your work, but rather inform the prospect about how you can help them accomplish their objectives. Thus, the key elements of the proposal include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulation of the key company objectives you will answer through a partnership • Description of the most valuable benefits (3-5) you can provide that answer to the company's objectives • Customized ideas (3-5) about how the company can promote the partnership • Call to action • Addendum with additional details if needed, e.g., additional partnership packaging details, organizational facts and data



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