



Acquisition Hints and Suggestions for Auctions

1. **Give Something Yourself** - Get committed to the auction by deciding what it is that you will give to the auction. When you ask others for their donation, your prospective donor may ask you what you are giving to the auction. You will want to be prepared with an answer. Remember, the auction is not supposed to inflict a financial burden on you.
2. **Friends** - You have many friends who can contribute to your auction, all you have to do is ask. In addition, ask each friend for a suggestion of others you might ask for a donation.
3. **Family** - Your family members can make great contributions to your auction, and will always want to help you in your endeavors. Of course, you will ask your close family, but don't forget to ask your extended family too.
4. **Get Out Your Check Register** - You can ask for a donation for your auction from each merchant to whom you have recently written a check. You are an important economic factor to each merchant and almost all will respond to your request. If you have access to your business checking records, you may want to ask for a donation from the major suppliers to your business. In addition, you may want to review your credit card statement to locate potential donors. Holiday shopping is the best time!
5. **Those who Owe you a Favor** - In this age of such widespread fundraising, undoubtedly you have donated to your neighbor's walk-a-thon, or your niece's raffle. Now is the time to ask them to return the favor.
6. **Carry the Acquisition Form with You All the Time** - Be sure to have an Acquisition Form with you anytime you pay a bill or spend money. Showing the merchant that you are a valued customer may be the deciding factor between donating to your auction or to some other organization. There are some people who make all of their acquisitions in this manner, and it has proven to be a very effective method of securing donations.
7. **Meet the Deadlines** - The deadlines are set to maximize the auction, so organize your acquisition effort to complete a few calls each day in order to achieve your acquisition goal on time. Making a few telephone calls a day also makes the asking process a lot easier on you. Having to ask for all of your donations two days before the catalog deadline can make the process so stressful that you may not do it at all. **The deadline for auction items is February 11, 2010.**
8. **Remember to Stress the Purpose of the Auction** - Prospective donors like to know what will be done with the proceeds of the auction. Be clear on the purpose in your own mind so you can explain the auction purpose to prospective donors.
9. **A Telephone Call is Better than a Letter** - For many extremely busy people, a telephone call works better than a letter because you are assured that the person has responded (either positively or negatively) to your request for a donation. When you merely send a letter you may never know if they even opened their mail.
10. **Be specific** - Know exactly what you want each person to donate to your auction. If you ask a company or a friend to donate "something," you may end up with a very small donation or nothing at all. However, if you zero in on your friend's talent (quilt-making, cookie baking, car repair) or the specialty of the business (kayak trips, catered dinners) and ask for these items specifically, you are more likely to be rewarded with what you asked for, or something similar. Remember, you don't get that for which you haven't asked.