



Federation Benchmarking Project: Exploring the Mind of the Mid-Level Donor 2008 Stakeholder Survey

Background:

- Almost 7,000 donors responded to a December 2008 on-line survey of mid-level donors to 26 federations (overall 30% response rate).¹
- Jewish Federations of North America worked with Measuring Success to test hypotheses about factors associated with increased giving.²
- Results provide both management insights and benchmarks for performance.

Key Findings:

1. On average, mid-level donors contribute a larger percentage of their charitable dollars to Federation than any other cause, with higher percentages linked to larger gift increases.
2. Events, planned strategically, remain an effective tool for generating larger campaign increases, with significant impact from attendance at even one event and varying ROI with more frequency.
3. Jewish charitable values remain one of the most important motivators among mid-level donors, including perceived alignment between a donor's values and the Federation's mission and the extent to which Federation increases knowledge about charitable giving (tzedakah) and repairing the world (tikkun olam).
4. Personal contact – including invitations to get involved in Federation activities and how the donor is treated in solicitation, at events and throughout the year – is also highly correlated with larger campaign increases.

¹ Mid level donors defined as those who made an unrestricted campaign gift of between \$1,000 and \$10,000 in any year from 2005 to 2008.

² Giving data provided by federations.



5. Donors who more strongly admire and respect federation professional staff had larger campaign gift increases.
6. Similarly, donors who report stronger personal relationships with federation staff and volunteers increased their gifts by greater amounts.
7. Donors generally perceive federation's performance in both donor contact and personal relationships as weaker than other charities they are committed to
8. In-person solicitation was linked to a \$180 higher average gift increase than other forms of solicitation, yet was reported for only 21% of mid-level donors.
9. Donors who feel federation funds the most important needs in the local Jewish community made larger gift increases.
10. While donors who feel federation efficiency was poor did not make smaller increases than other donors, those who "did not know" made smaller increase than both groups.

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