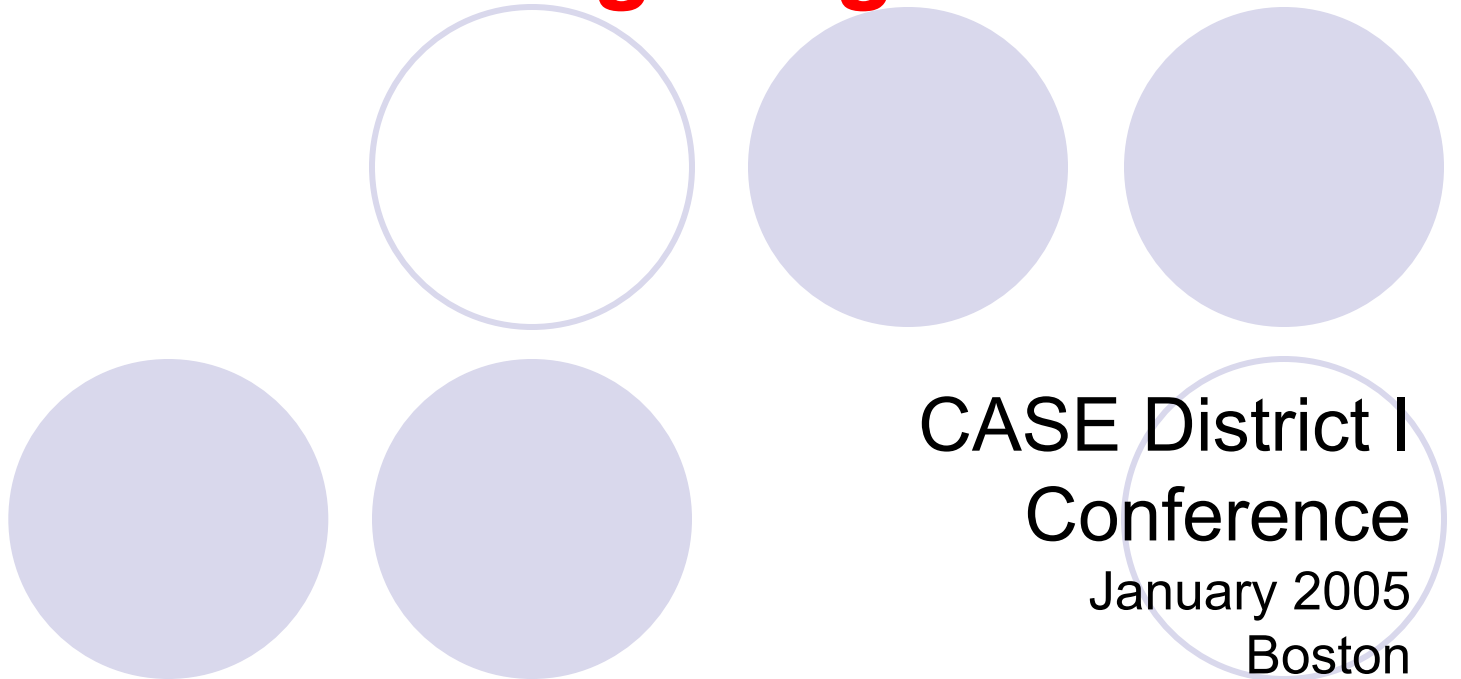


# ***Re-imagining Gift Clubs***



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**Re-imagining Gift Clubs**

Now for Something  
Completely Different!



## *Re-imagining Gift Clubs*

- We don't know what to name our gift clubs; what levels to assign.
- We don't know what benefits to assign to each level of gift club.
- Can you help us establish a lifetime recognition club?
- We have eleven schools and programs, each with its own set of gift clubs, but some of our donors give to more than one school, and to the university annual fund—we're so confused.
- Our gift clubs are so complicated that we need to hire a manager for them—can you write a job description for it?



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Five circles are arranged horizontally at the top of the slide. From left to right: a solid light purple circle, a white circle with a light purple outline, a solid light purple circle, a white circle with a light purple outline, and a solid light purple circle.

*Re-imagining Gift Clubs*

**Kill all the Gift Clubs!!**



## *Re-imagining Gift Clubs*

- Why do we have Gift Clubs?
  - To recognize donors for their philanthropy
  - To create affinity groups to which donors will aspire
  - To encourage donors to identify with the values, vision and mission of the organization
  - To create some capillary force to move donors to increase their giving



## *Re-imagining Gift Clubs*

- How do we know the clubs actually help us accomplish these objectives?
  - To recognize donors for their philanthropy
  - To create affinity groups to which donors will aspire
  - To encourage donors to identify with the values, vision and mission of the organization
  - To create some capillary force to move donors to increase their giving



## *Re-imagining Gift Clubs*

We want our donors to identify our organization as the principal recipient of their philanthropy.

We want to help them reach their highest level of philanthropy.

Hence, we create gift clubs as the instrument of securing our donors' continuing, increasing, and ultimate philanthropy.



# *Re-imagining Gift Clubs*

- Donor behavior we want to promote:
  - Regular giving
  - Giving to priorities
  - Giving in usable ways
  - Giving to capacity
  - Feeling recognized
  - Participating
  - Spreading the message
  - Bringing others along

| <i>Status</i>      | <i>Descriptors</i>                         | <i>Behaviors</i>  | <i>Goal</i>  | <i>Recognition</i>   |
|--------------------|--|---|--|--|
| <b>Integrating</b> | 5 percent of donors; 80 percent of giving  | <i>All behaviors</i>  | Reward; reinforce commitment; extend feeling to others; build affiliation              | Naming ops; board membership; prez visits; special duties; committees; ackn; listings                      |
| <b>Engaging</b>    | 10 percent of donors; 10 percent of giving | <i>Gives often to priorities; feels recognized; participates; message brings others along</i> | Reward; reinforce commitment; engage in the life of the institution; build affiliation | Group visits; participation in events; select publications; use of institution; committees; ackn; listings |
| <b>Connecting</b>  | 15 percent of donors; 7 percent of giving  | <i>Gives often to priorities<br/>Feels recognized<br/>Participates</i>                        | Strengthen connection; raise sights; build affiliation                                 | Group visits; select publications; ackn; listings  |
| <b>Responding</b>  | 20 percent of donors; 2 percent of giving  | <i>Gives intermittently to priorities<br/>Feels recognized</i>                                | Strengthen connection; build continuity of giving                                      | Ackn; annual report; select publications; phone calls; visits  |
| <b>Organizing</b>  | 50 percent of donors; 1 percent of giving  | <i>Gives once in a while</i>  | Make connection  | Reinforce institutional values; ackn; annual report  |

| <i>Status</i>      | <i>Descriptors</i>                         | <i>Gift Club</i>                                      | <i>Goal</i>  | <i>Type of program</i>   |
|--------------------|--|---|--|--|
| <b>Integrating</b> | 5 percent of donors; 80 percent of giving  | <i>Highest Donor Club</i><br><i>Benefactor Club</i>   | Continue giving at all levels and by all means       | Board membership<br>Campaign leader<br>Event host<br>Subject of articles<br>Solicitation volunteer |
| <b>Engaging</b>    | 10 percent of donors; 10 percent of giving | <i>Planned Giving Club</i><br><i>Annual Fund Club</i> | Encourage bequest intention<br>Advance annual giving | Invitation A-list<br>Annual Fund vol<br>Host regional events<br>Annual visit                       |
| <b>Connecting</b>  | 15 percent of donors; 7 percent of giving  | <i>Annual Fund Club</i>                               | Encourage increasing annual giving                   | Special AF ackn<br>Stew calls from AF vol<br>Annual visit with vol                                 |
| <b>Responding</b>  | 20 percent of donors; 2 percent of giving  | <i>Annual Fund Club</i>                               | Encourage participation                              | Special AF ackn<br>Stew calls from AF vol  |
| <b>Organizing</b>  | 50 percent of donors; 1 percent of giving  | <i>Annual Fund Club</i>                               | Encourage annual participation                       | Direct phone and mail appeals<br>Special contact   |



# *Re-imagining Gift Clubs*

## **GIFT CLUB ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS:**

- Are gift clubs part of the communications strategy, with an emphasis on message delivery and a focus on donor recognition for philanthropy?
- Are gift clubs constructed against a five-year giving pyramid?
- Are they flexible, renewable every five years; redesigned with campaigns?
- Are they focused on a particular type of giving in order to promote that way of giving—major gifts, annual fund, planned giving?
- Are gift club categories used to promote giving at the next highest level?
- Is there a special effort to use membership to recognize planned gift donors?
- Is there a dollar goal set for the gift club donors?
- Is the success of the gift clubs measured in terms of the cost per dollar raised and the extent to which the gift clubs promote the overall fundraising goal for the development office?



## *Re-imagining Gift Clubs*

How do you get from the chart to the club?

- Begin with a review of your own data
  - What are the levels of giving (gift pyramid)?
  - What are the particular problems you face?
    - Low participation
    - Low dollar amounts
    - No upward momentum
    - Undeveloped planned giving program
    - Absence of higher level recognition



## *Re-imagining Gift Clubs*

- Develop gift clubs around your cycle of fundraising
  - Is there a campaign in the near future?
    - A short-term opportunity
    - Something significant as recognition
    - “Offer ends. . .”



## *Re-imagining Gift Clubs*

- Two clubs to invest in
  - Current-use, unrestricted giving
    - To spread the message
    - To inculcate the value of giving
    - To regularize stewardship
  - Planned giving
    - To recognize the living
    - To encourage other giving

# Re-imagining Gift Clubs

## ● Things to avoid

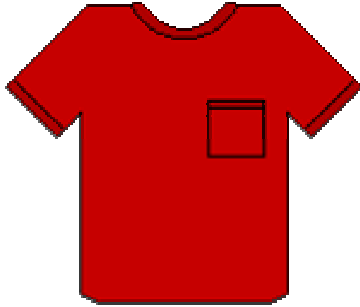
- Gift clubs from hell
  - Complicated rules
  - Extensive extravagant benefits
- No variability
  - Stasis, no variability, no “this week only. . .”

## ● Things to try

- Gift clubs that serve
  - “You give—you get...”
  - Cafeteria benefits or “the benefit of philanthropy”
- Gift club specials
  - Challenges
  - Surprise benefits

# Re-imagining Gift Clubs

- Some rules of engagement



- Get buy-in from the highest level
    - Managing gift club program is a good idea
    - Assist fundraisers to use gift clubs



## *Re-imagining Gift Clubs*

- Measure results and act accordingly
  - Quarterly and annual numbers
  - Survey donors on **outcome**, not output
  - Be bold in adjusting program for success
  - Jettison what doesn't work
- Provide adequate management
  - Manager of gift clubs? Or director of donor relations?
  - Responsibility and accountability



## *Re-imagining Gift Clubs*

- What about those trinkets and benefits?
  - Serendipity
  - Flexibility
  - Reinforce the message



# *Re-imagining Gift Clubs*

- Some things to consider
  - The gift club IS the annual fund program
  - A beginning, a middle, an end
    - Article that makes the case
    - Direct appeal, phone appeal, personal visits
    - Acknowledgment and correspondence
    - A mini-annual report
  - Publish the results, the growing statistics

# Re-imagining Gift Clubs

Every Student, Every Day



# Re-imagining Gift Clubs



## Gift Clubs

Clarkson recognizes donors who contribute \$150 or more annually with the designation of membership in one of the following Gift Clubs:

| Gift Club                  | Contribution Amount |
|----------------------------|---------------------|
| Thomas S. Clarkson Society | \$50,000+           |
| Sandstone Society          | \$25,000-49,999     |
| 1896 Society               | \$15,000-24,999     |
| Roundtable Counselor       | \$10,000-14,999     |
| Knight of the Roundtable   | \$5,000-9,999       |
| Roundtable Benefactor      | \$2,500-4,999       |
| Roundtable                 | \$1,500-2,499       |
| Roundtable Associate*      | \$500-1,499         |
| Old Main Society           | \$750-1,499         |
| Holcroft Society           | \$500-749           |
| Woodstock Society          | \$300-499           |
| Adirondack Club            | \$150-299           |