

1. **Research potential donor companies** through: Foundation Center (and cooperating collections), Gale Business Directory via libraries, bios of key leadership on web sites, Washington Business Journal. Based on your research, identify companies with business, personal or community interests that align with your mission and geographic area.
2. **Know the funding application process, deadlines, and contacts.** Find out who got funded previously for what. Submit what is asked for ahead of time to the right person and place. Be strategic about timing unsolicited requests to be ahead of budget planning cycles.
3. **Develop a firm proposal with several options or levels for potential involvement,** but be flexible. Be willing to adapt to corporate interests but if in the end there is not alignment, suggest another good organization that does meet their interests. What goes around comes around.
4. **Follow up to find out why you weren't selected for funding.** What could you have done differently, how could you be more competitive? Keep the company informed of your success and thank them for considering your organization. Don't share "sour grapes."
5. **Make the giving easy.** Pick up the check, provide flyers, boxes for donations, and receipts. Provide informative articles for employee, corporate, financial institution, and utility newsletters with specific examples of how/what to give or volunteer. Include pictures!
6. **Collaborate rather than compete with other nonprofits or public agencies to go after a really big sponsor.** Hitting a company with multiple golf tournament/gala sponsorships, gift basket donations for similar mission may result in only crumbs (or nothing) for all.
7. **Cultivate a relationship with your key contacts.** Take and share great photos from the funded event or activity. Celebrate and recognize their successes as well, new branches or contracts, promotions (WBJ is a good place to find this). Nominate partners for awards. If they look good so do you! Invite them to your events and share your newsletter with them.
8. **Identify and report the return on investment (ROI) for the donation.** Answer the "so what" happens if I give, volunteer, participate: # of children receiving healthcare, seniors stay in their homes, workers prepared for employment, animals or habitats saved, etc.
9. **Join and be an active member of your local Chamber of Commerce.** Volunteer at events, include items in their e- and print news. Suggest chamber member giving and volunteer options. Join Leadership or service organizations like Rotary, Kiwanis, LFI, etc.
10. **Register with your local Volunteer Center** to develop corporate group volunteer opportunities, including service and skill-based volunteer opportunities (ask lawyers for legal services, accountants for financial planning, marketing firms for media help). Many companies base at least some corporate giving on where their employees volunteer, matching "dollars for doers." Track your volunteers' employers and follow up with them.

(Developed with information from FCPS Office of Business Partnerships, Deloitte, Telos, and Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship).