Brian’s Top Ten: Ways to Make Your Donor Feel Special

1. Customize Your Correspondence. Make it personal and directed exclusively at that donor. Write or speak in your natural style, anything else will sound awkward.

2. Handwrite Whatever You Can. In this day and age anything handwritten scores points. Even an additional handwritten note on a printed thank you note says volumes.

3. Correspond Year-round. Make a point of corresponding mid-year and try to share some great news about the agency or the specific program the donor is supporting.

4. Have a Donors-only Event. Donors enjoy being with other donors – it serves as positive reinforcement for their giving. This could be a recognition event, or, better yet, it could be a program-related event or a chance to see a program in action.

5. Acknowledge Donors Publicly. Almost all donors enjoy recognition for their charitable gifts, whether it’s listings, plaques, symbolic gifts, etc.

6. Ask for Advice or Non-gift Assistance. Perhaps your donor can be part of a brainstorming session, or review some material that has yet to be circulated.

7. Have Others Send Thanks. Ask others who know the donor to send thanks as well, assuming the gift is public and the donor won’t be embarrassed.

8. Invite Your Donor to Visit. Ask the donor to accompany you in seeing the organization’s programs in action.

9. Think of Something Special to Give. It might be as simple as a picture of program participants engaged in an activity. Always be sure your thank you gift is about the organization.

10. Say thank you again and again. You can’t say thank you enough!