

## Follow Up

Once your campaign kicks into gear and you've set up strategic "asks," many of your congregants are going to respond. Once they have taken a direct action, your job is now to follow up on whatever they've done. This is going to be your biggest opportunity for nurturing the relationship with this individual.

The action taken won't always be a donation. Maybe they subscribed to your email list after viewing a social media ad. Perhaps they followed you on Facebook after clicking your website's "Join Us On Facebook" button. Whatever action an individual engages in, you *must* follow up to start out on the right foot.

## Showing Appreciation

The biggest goal you should have during your follow up - other than eliciting subsequent actions - is to express appreciation. The worst thing you can possibly do is let someone feel like their contribution - regardless of what it is - has gone unnoticed, unappreciated or unacknowledged. This is a quick way to lose future interactions. That's why following up is a key aspect of the DonorWERX Communications Plan.

When choosing how to follow up, think about the response your congregant will be expecting. For instance, they probably think you'll send a confirmation message that includes a "thank you" if they sign up for your email list. If they just made a significant donation for a special project, though, they'll no doubt expect a phone call or personalized note.

When crafting your follow-up message, you should also take into account what you would like the individual to do next. If they signed up for an email newsletter, for instance, you might want them to make a donation. If they made their first digital tithe, though, you should want them to sign up for automatic payments.


Make sure to shape your follow-up message with these factors in mind.

## What's in a Follow Up?

If there's one thing you should know about follow-ups, it's that they maintain a consistent structure. There are three main components regardless of the action your congregant took or the subsequent action you're hoping to elicit.

- The first component is the **thank you**. Make sure this is sincere and explains exactly how the individual's action is helping forward the mission of spreading God's Word.
- The second component of your follow-up message is **nurture, nurture and nurture**. This means keeping them consistently engaged and offering continued recognition of their contribution.
- The third and final component is the **ask**. While this may seem like a strange message for someone who has already done something, it's an essential element of garnering continued support.

The main fact to remember is that you should follow up at **every** step of the DonorExperience Map. Did they sign up for a virtual service? You should send a "thank you" email along with instructions on how to donate. Have they made an impact donation to a special project? Take time to schedule a one-on-one meeting to see if they've ever considered becoming a legacy donor.



There's always a follow-up step to take, and when you make these part of your overall communication and giving strategies, success will naturally become a part of those strategies as well. Continued targeted messaging is part of the Donor Experience and shows that you understand their values, so this is more than just an option. It's a necessity.

Before moving onto the next lesson, make sure to review our follow-up communication funnel example plan. *Ministry Magazine* lists follow-up as [one of the most important aspects](#) of service, so do not overlook its importance. This resource will be invaluable when shaping your responses or utilizing those already provided to you through the D.O.N.O.R. Framework.

