



HEART & SOUL OF PHILANTHROPY



A great gift is more than an action and more than an amount. Great gifts engage our whole being. Through them we express who we are—our purpose, dreams, intent, and heart. They're the way we move into the world to connect and create. Great gifts are not perfunctory, not something we do out of impulse or habit or guilt. Or because a particular person asked. Great gifts open us. Even transform us. Not all gifts reach this threshold. But the art of development is to engage more of the giver more of the time.

1 IMMERSION. When we immerse, we feel as others feel. We see as they see and know as they know. We walk with them, *as them*. We know through our being—not just with our mind. One experience often does what a lifetime of data and persuasion cannot. No presentation or case for support opens the heart so powerfully as raw experience. This is why foundations increasingly *take* their donors rather than *tell* their donors. Immersive experience is the ask and the thanks. Little needs to be said.

2 LIFE STORY. We give abundantly not just because there is a need or we are wealthy. Before generosity flows in remarkable, unstoppable ways, something more essential happens. We begin to live from purpose. We understand more of who we are and what we want our life to mean. This is the *root* of philanthropy. Most organizations begin on the *branches* and talk about their issues. But the power point is the giver's life path. Savvy foundations create ways for givers to learn more about themselves and design a philanthropic life.

3 TRIBE. What's often missing in life is not status or power or possession, but belonging. We want not only to do something important, but to bond and connect. To journey with remarkable people. Not to attend an event or be an audience—but to think with, learn with, and adventure with others like us. We want small circles that are meaningful and intimate. Modern tribes. For foundations, the breakthrough is not just designing the relationship between the giver and organization, but among givers. Relationship is often even more attractive than issues. When this happens, people give in order to belong.

4 PRESENCE. We are not the same in all places or around all people. Some sweep us into their presence so potently we can think and feel in ways we don't ordinarily. We function at a higher octave where there's more clarity and flow. We're more connected to the thought stream of ideas. And more aware of our own heart. This is the power of presence—the way in which each of us makes either more or less possible in those around us. The way we bend the space. High-level development is about presence more than mechanics. It's who we are, not just what we do, that matters.

5 VIBRANCY. Giving can be rational and strategic. But we are more than our minds. We want full-bodied vibrancy in all areas of life, including generosity. Bold foundations bring novelty and imagination into their interactions and spaces. After each gift they create surprising, fresh ways to invoke delight. Each encounter is vivid. Givers leave feeling energized rather than depleted. People want more and make the connection a greater part of their life because it is so vitalizing.

6 FLOW. Relationships have continuity and movement. Little things keep them alive. They're always current, always part of us. A gift may or may not be part of a relationship. It can be an isolated action. If so, it gradually fades and becomes more distant. Organizations that focus on *gifts* rather than *givers* often have peaks and valleys in momentum—gaps and lags. Relational foundations keep the energy flowing. There's no drop off, no need to rekindle the fire.