

# Raise Money without Asking!

## Donor Conversations – From Awkward to Inspirational

By Gail Perry MBA CFRE

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## Gail Perry, MBA CFRE

President, Gail Perry Group *@gailperrync*


- Philanthropy expert, speaker, author, consultant, coach
- 30+ years experience in major gift fundraising
- LinkedIn Top Voice in Philanthropy
- Coached 60+ capital campaigns
- Top 10 America's Fundraising Experts

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# Gail Perry Group

**Empowering nonprofits  
to achieve extraordinary  
fundraising results.**

- Successful **capital campaigns** for organizations of all sizes.
- Fundraising workshops and retreats for board members and CEOs.
- Universities and independent schools, medical, social services, arts and culture, environmental, animal, science and research.
- Major Gifts Intensive: Live coaching and training, Feb-June 2025.

A close-up photograph of a spiral-bound notebook. The notebook is open, showing a lined page. The words "Today's Agenda" are written in a dark purple or brown cursive script at the top of the page. The spiral binding is visible on the left side of the notebook.

Today's Agenda

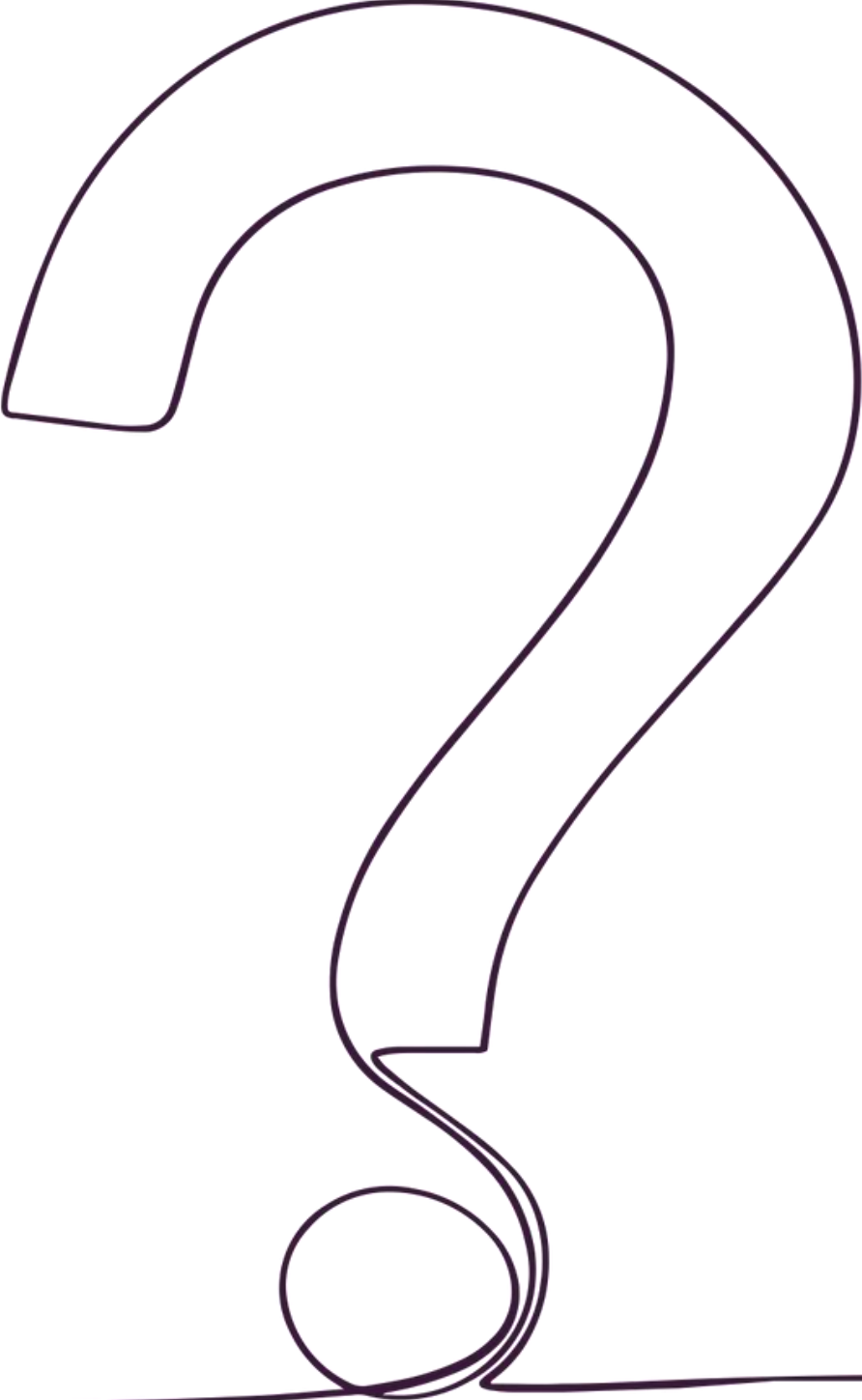
# Shifting the Paradigm - From Awkward to Inspirational!

- Change Your Perspective
- Questions that Lead to a GIFT!
  - Find out the Donor's Story
  - What resonates with them most?
  - Want to get more involved?
  - Ask for advice
  - Would you like to know how you can help?
  - Is this a good time to discuss your support?

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# From Awkward to Inspirational

## The Seven Shifts You Have To Make

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1. Money vs. Possibilities
  2. Organization-centered vs. Donor-centered
  3. Formal Pitch vs. Informal Questions
  4. Fast vs. Slow
  5. Pushy vs. Permission
  6. Intellectual vs. Heart-Centered
  7. You Put Yourself in Charge vs. Donor is in Charge

OLD WORDS	NEW WORDS
I	We
Needs	Opportunities
I know	I don't want to assume
I'd love to	I'd welcome
I want to	Here's what I might suggest
Visit	Meeting
I'd like to talk to you	Here's what I might suggest

# Direct Donor Conversations



Can you really be direct and not pushy?



Always keep your focus

# Donors Expect To Do the Talking

*Watch their cues!*

**Donor:**



**You:**



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**It's all about what  
your donor thinks...  
and feels...and wants  
to accomplish.**

# Tone of Successful **Communications** is Changing

- Transparent
- Sharing status as **honestly** as you can
- Asking for the help you **really need**

# **1. “I’d love to know why you became a donor.”**

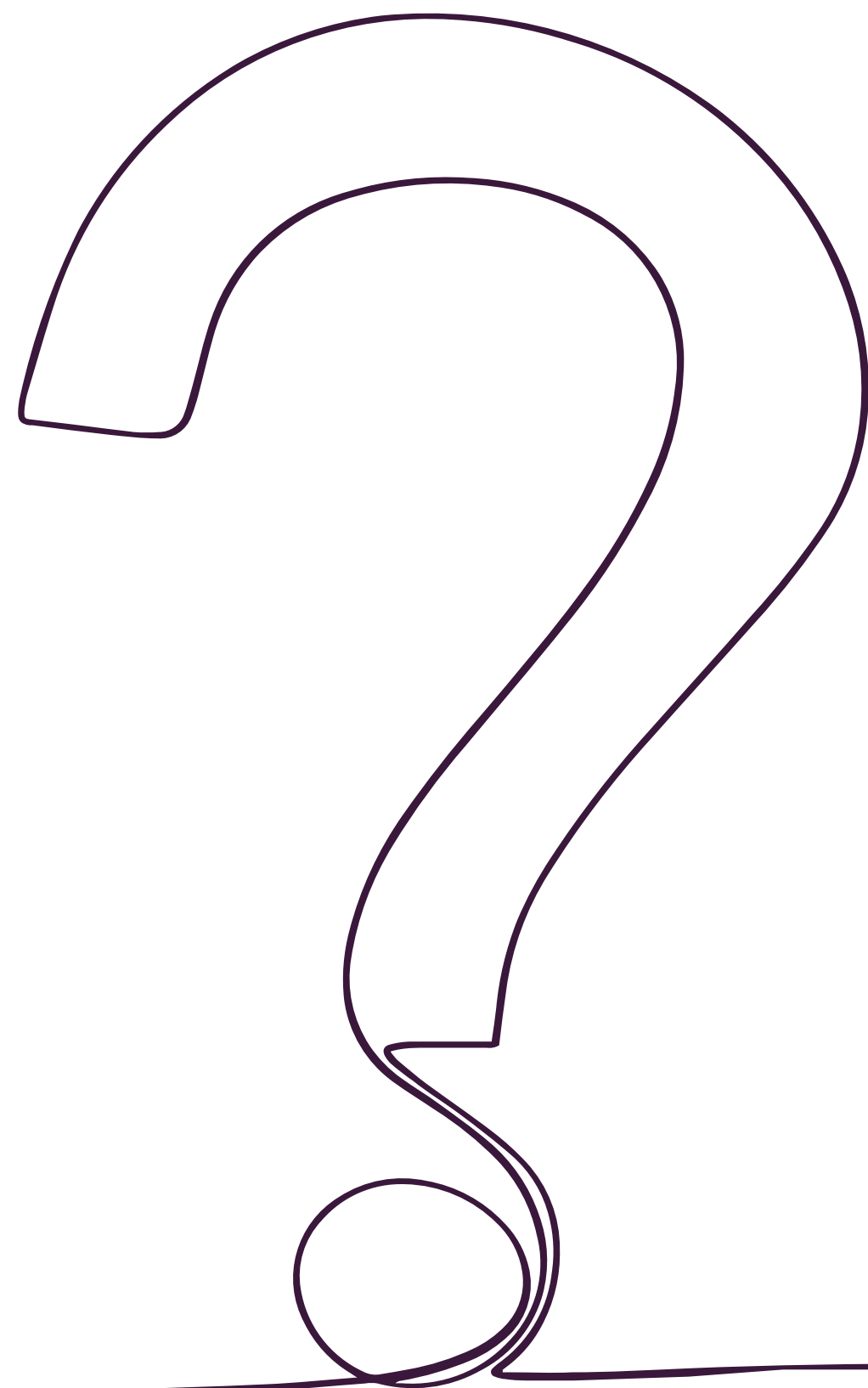
**I love your organization because of my mother...**





Listening, engaging and  
finding out the donor's  
story -

**The key to their gift!**



**2. Could you see yourself becoming more involved with our organization?**

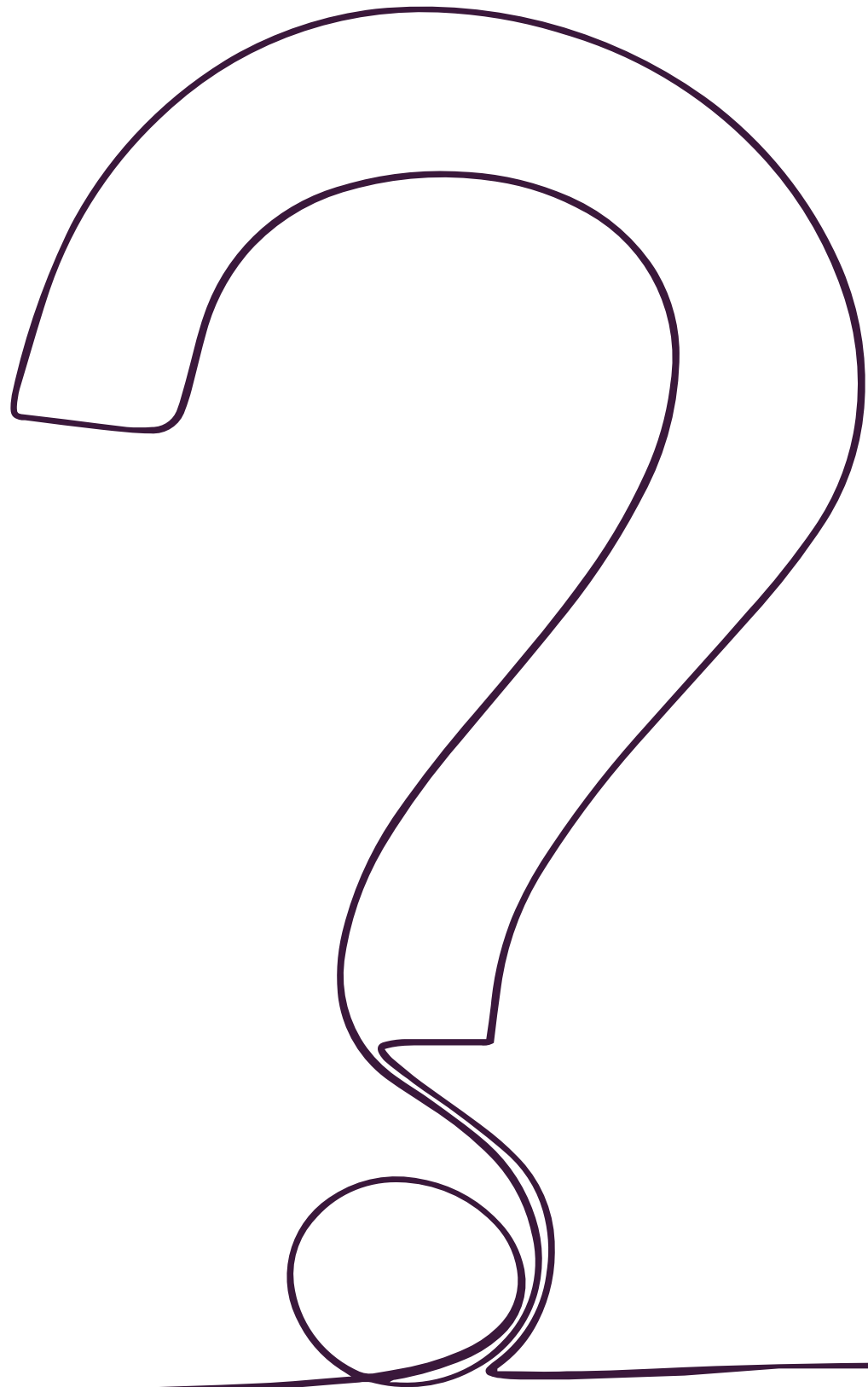
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***“You have to listen to their story,  
go with the flow – and *don’t be shy to  
propose something* – it opens new  
doors and opportunities.”***

Patrick Berard, CEO

Hema Quebec Foundation

Major Gifts Intensive



### **3. Which part of our work most interests you?**

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“I asked my donor  
how he came to be  
so generous, and I  
walked out with a  
\$5k gift!”

**Diane Fuller**  
The Fuller Center for  
Housing, Inc.

~ Major Gifts Intensive participant


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## 4. Ask for Advice and What They Think



Can I pick  
your brain?



What are your  
impressions  
about . . . ?



I'd love  
your opinion.

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If you want money, ask for advice.  
If you want advice, ask for money.

**We asked our top donor:**  
“We’d like your input on our business plan.” We walked out with a \$1.5 million challenge gift!

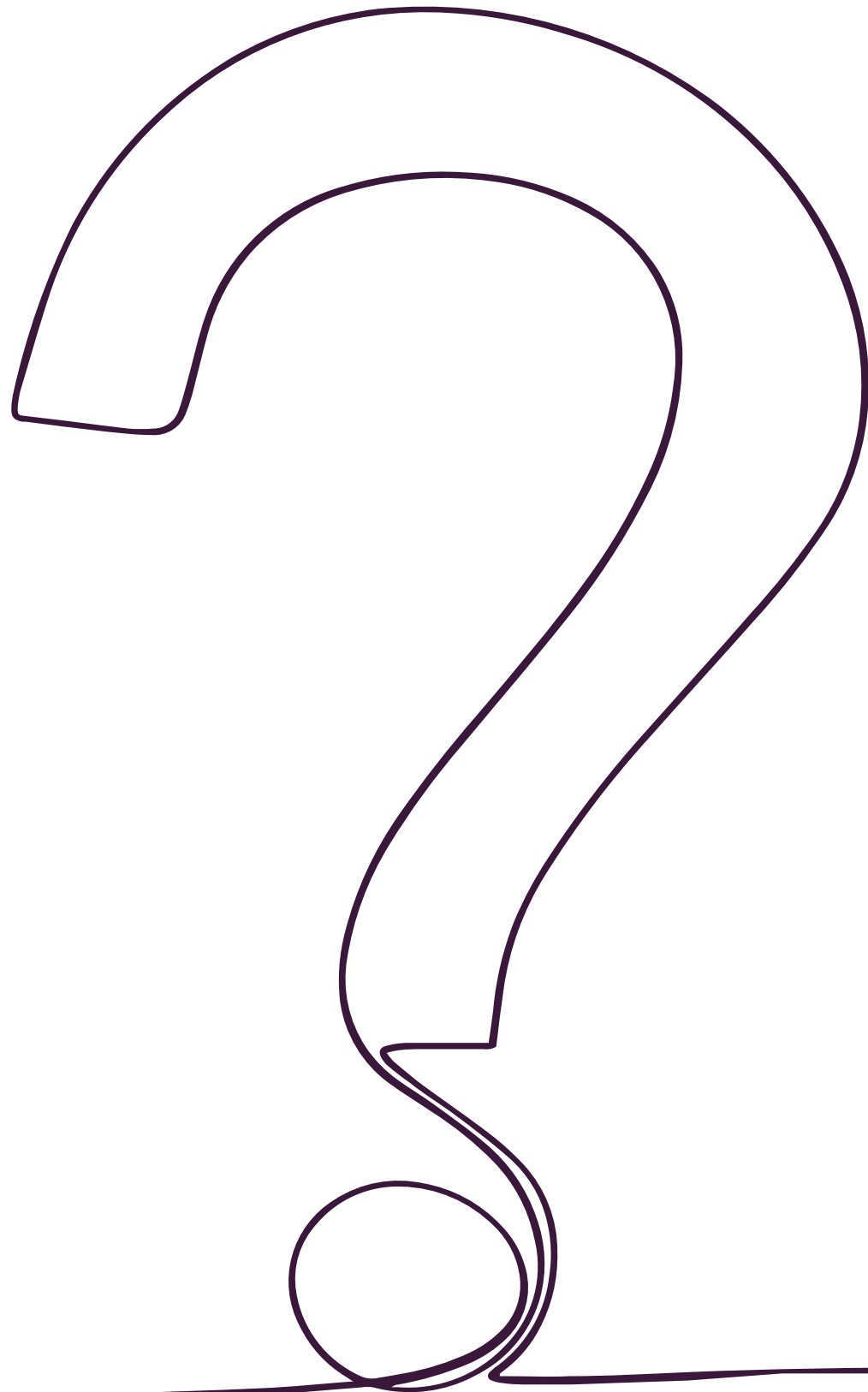
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*Indraloka*  
ANIMAL SANCTUARY

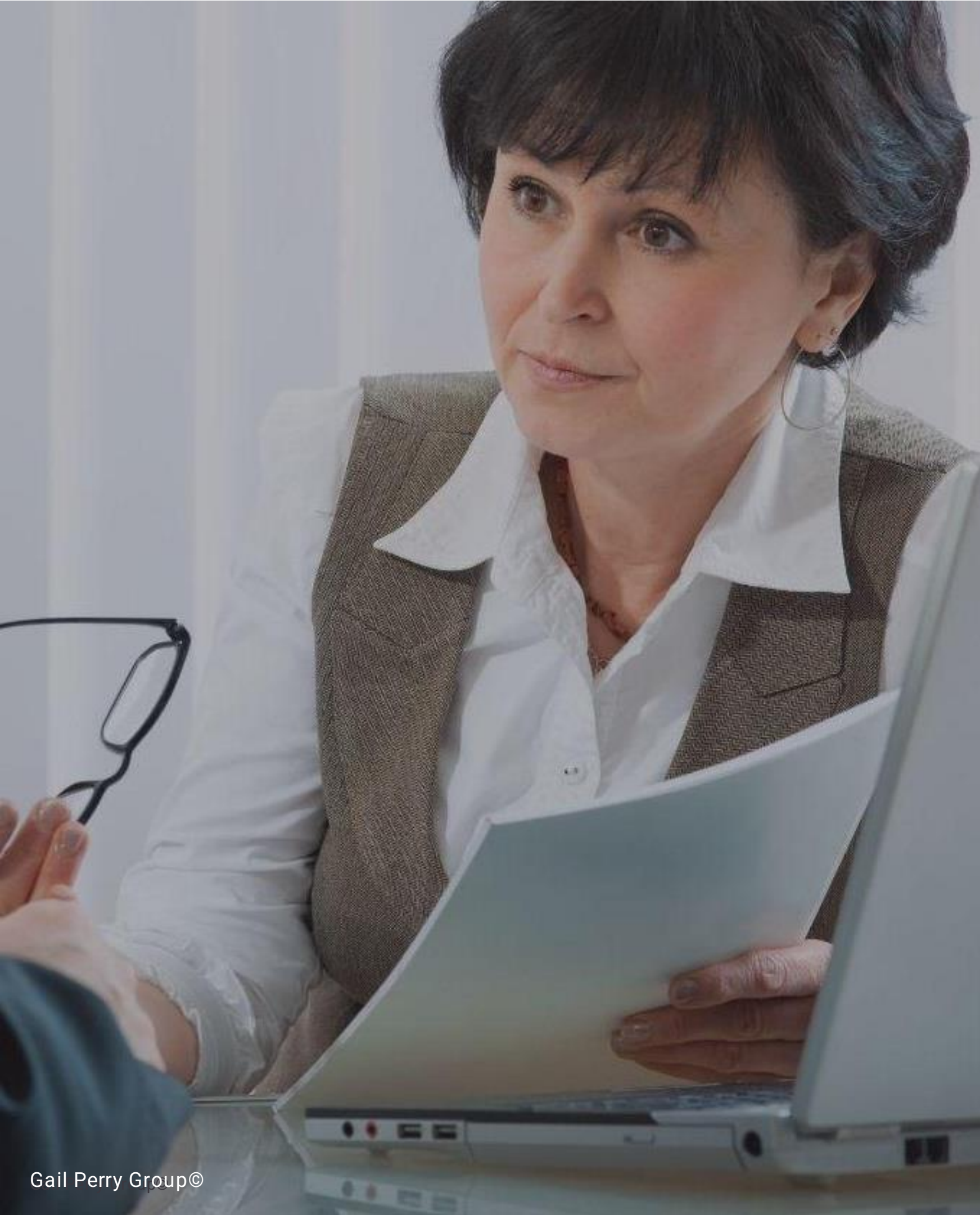
~ Major Gifts Intensive participant





**5. Would you like to know more about how you can impact this project?**

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## 6. “Is this a good time to discuss your support?”

“If you ever made a gift, what would you like to accomplish?”

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1. Donor Story: “How did you come to be a donor?”
2. What resonates with you the most?
3. “Could you see yourself becoming more involved?”
4. Ask for advice and input.
5. “Would you like to know more about how you can help?”
6. “Would this be a good time to discuss your support?”



And the donor said:

***"You have made me feel heard. I didn't feel  
that way before.  
I want to donate \$100k in support of your new  
leadership."***



“Gail, I was always focused on the **relationship building**, the **listening**, the **gratitude**, asking for her **advice** and letting her know the amazing **difference** her previous gift had made. And it really paid off!”

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**Odessa Dwarika, M.A.**

Executive Director,  
Jhamtse International  
Major Gifts Intensive

# Donor Power Questions HANDOUT


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## Scan Now

10 POWER QUESTIONS  
THAT LEAD TO A  
CONVERSATIONAL ASK

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Today's Agenda

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# Capital Campaigns, Fundraising Strategy Fired-Up Fundraising Board Retreats

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