

## **Tips for Making the Most of Your Charitable Contributions Independent Sector**

1. **Plan for giving.** Plan your philanthropic activities right into your budget just as you would financial obligations.
2. **Keep the right records.** For gifts of less than \$250, a cashed check or receipt from the charitable organization is sufficient proof of contribution. For donating property or establishing an annuity, talk to your accountant.
3. **Be aware of how much is really tax-deductible.** If you receive a premium in exchange for your gift (such as a book or a dinner), the amount of your tax deduction is reduced by the fair market value of the premium. You can turn down the incentive item if you wish to claim a deduction for the full amount of your gift. Ask the receiving organization for more details.
4. **Ask about matching gifts.** Many employers match gifts made by their employees or make grants to organizations recommended by employees. Be sure to ask your company how it can help your gift go further.
5. **Remember your gift can be confidential.** If you prefer to have your gift remain confidential you can expect the charitable organization to honor your request.
6. **Consider alternative forms of giving.** Don't overlook the benefits to you and your cause received from bequests, charitable gift annuities, gifts in kind, endowments and many other creative forms of giving. Ask your tax advisor or attorney to help you make the best plan for you and your family.
7. **Volunteer.** In addition to financial support, consider giving your time and skills. Not only will you help the organization, but you'll also make contacts, gain experience, and learn more about the charitable cause to which you're committing your time and money.
8. **Be a proactive giver.** You don't have to wait to be asked. Plan a giving strategy in advance. Contact the charitable organizations of your choice to discuss how your gifts can be most effectively used and help make a difference in your community.

### **Other sources for information on giving:**

The Donor Bill of Rights was created by the *American Association of Fund Raising Counsel, Association for Healthcare Philanthropy, the Association of Fundraising Professionals, and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education*. It can be found on the Association of fundraising Professionals website at [www.afpnet.org/](http://www.afpnet.org/)

The Better Business Bureau's Tips on Charitable Giving provide information on the basics, how to respond to mail appeals, telephone, door to door, and street solicitations, the meaning of tax deductible, and information on financial statements. You can find this guide at [www.give.org/tips/giving.asp](http://www.give.org/tips/giving.asp)

The Oregon's Department of Justice website also provides tips for charitable giving at <http://www.doj.state.or.us/ChariGroup/Tipswise.htm>. Tips include do's and don'ts of giving and how to maximize your contribution.