



## Diagram of the Month

### The Donor Belief Christmas Tree



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Understanding our donors real motivations for donating is vital if we are to truly engage them in our mission. We have lots of information from our databases about *how* people give – their recency, frequency and value. But too often we rely on our “gut feel” of *why* people give, without really asking the deeper questions about their beliefs and motivations.

To help not for profits better understand their donors we ask 3 questions:

1. What do you *know* about your donors
2. What do *you think you know* about your donors
3. What do *you need to know* about your donors

The Donor Belief Christmas Tree helps to prompt deeper thinking about our donors:

### Personal values – what matters to me?

How do I view the role of money, my faith, family or friends in my life. What self image do I try and preserve and how does my locus of control impact my giving. What constitutes success or significance to me. Am I benevolent or achievement orientated? What shapes the frames through which I interpret the world?

### Change Beliefs – what creates change?

What do I think actually changes the world? Is it government policies and democracy, inspirational people and pressure groups, empowered individuals taking responsibility, the exercising of rights, changing power balances and systems? And what role do I play – is it about me or we? Does giving work?

### Issue Beliefs – how do I want the world to be better?

This may be determined by experiences and exposure, to beliefs about the likelihood of success, the role of gender or commitment to the underdog or the innocent and, of course, my personal connection to the cause. But we shouldn't underestimate fashion, peer pressure and other social norms.

### Organisational Beliefs – who can help me achieve the change I want to see?

Who shares my vision, can explain it simply, offers a solution that fits with my values and can demonstrate the progress they are making? Who do I know and trust? How does their brand reflect my own values and beliefs – does it fit with my identity?

### Action Options – what action am I going to take?

Do I need to donate, advocate, volunteer, change my purchasing behaviours or champion your cause? Is this something that is private or public, to solve a problem now or to become committed to for the future? Through which mechanisms and channels might I take this action? How easy is it and what is the social cost?

### Relationship Requirements – what do I want from the organisation?

Am I delegating responsibility to you to solve the problem for me or am I joining a movement? What information will provide the reassurance that you are making a difference with my contribution? Do I want to engage more and what does supporting you say about me?

More is a strategic marketing, management and fundraising consultancy specialising in helping not for profits increase their impact

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