

Giving Strategies for the Rest of Us

We understand that you can't give mega bucks to support the causes that are important to you, but you do want to be as supportive as you can. The trouble is, when does that support begin to jeopardize your family's future? While there are various outlets for your cash, are there other assets that could be used for gifts? Are there tax-smart gifting methods that may improve your financial picture? Are there other strategies one should consider when supporting the organizations whose mission you love?

Great questions and common ones for those of us who are not ultra-affluent. Being more than a "checkbook" philanthropist (giving when balances are higher without much thinking or planning) requires just that – more thinking and planning. Determining how much you can securely afford to donate while taking care of the family, choosing the assets that in gifting create tax savings, and taking advantage of gifting strategies that can help you and your cause are all key considerations of what is called "planned giving." This thinking and planning is not only used by the ultra-affluent, they are also important and valuable when we consider more significant philanthropy for the rest of *us*.

Unfortunately, many wonderful nonprofit organizations are not yet in the position to hire well-trained planned giving specialists to address these questions and advise their donors on the best ways to support the cause. They often have development directors who work to develop relationships with donors, to learn what each supporter is looking to achieve, and how he/she wants to be engaged with the organization. But these individuals (and many nonprofits have just one person doing everything) are busy with the annual fundraising events, sponsorships, and soliciting regular gifts. On their own, rarely do these individuals have the knowledge and experience to help with such "planned gifts."

More than 40 years in the investment industry and 10 years focusing on philanthropy have allowed me to learn a great deal about both – investment planning and philanthropic planning. When helping individuals and families, I can directly address these issues: what you can afford to give, which assets create the best possible tax advantages, and which strategies might best help the donor and the nonprofit cause. In coordination with your tax and legal advisor, I can help create the philanthropic plan that will best support your favorite organization while helping your family pursue the financial future you've always envisioned.

I often work with those nonprofits that do not have planned giving specialists to help facilitate such planned gifts via customized investment and philanthropic planning. I also assist those individuals who wish to be philanthropic but want to be more than the "checkbook" philanthropist. After all, Bill and Melinda Gates don't much worry about these issues, but they certainly do affect philanthropy for the rest of us.

Love your mission – how can I be more supportive?

Stifel does not provide legal or tax advice. You should consult with your legal and tax advisors regarding your particular situation.