

Talking about charitable giving

How to Start the Discussion

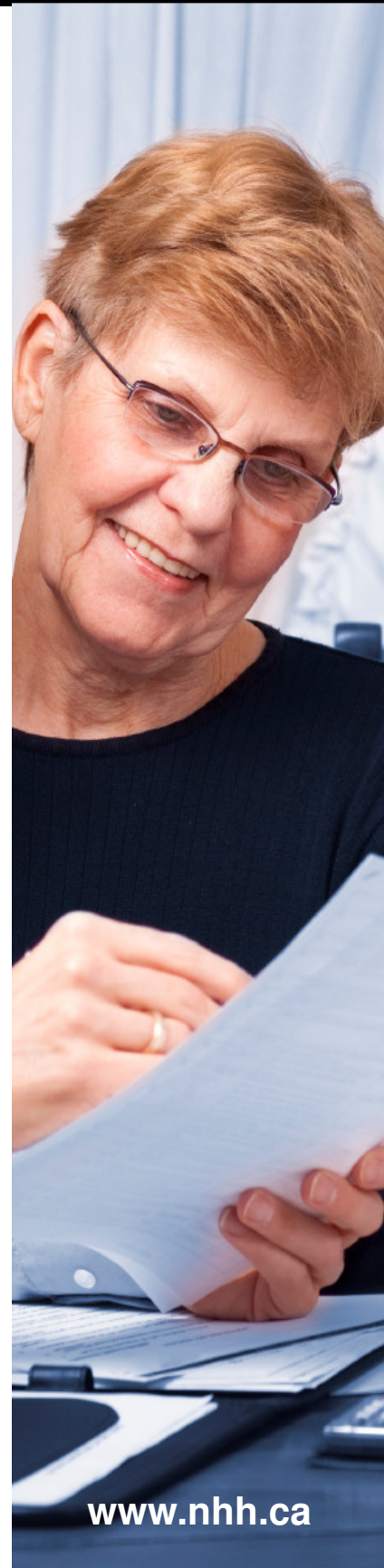
One of the easiest and most important things you can do to help your clients enjoy the benefits of charitable giving is to ask them a simple question:

“Are there any charitable or community needs you would like to consider supporting?”

Why raise charitable giving at all?

Your clients are increasing their knowledge about options and expect you, their advisor, to help them create innovative, comprehensive financial plans that take care of their families and friends, minimize taxes and reflect their values. Confronted with the task of transferring assets from one generation to another, people are increasingly choosing to integrate charitable giving into their planning to realize personal as well as financial benefits.

- Charitable giving can generate **significant tax benefits** in both annual and estate tax situations – your client may not be aware of this opportunity.
- The ability to provide for a charitable gift often produces a **deep sense of fulfillment and satisfaction** – your client may be very grateful to you for not only asking the "giving question", but also helping him/her to satisfy that philanthropic desire.
- Your client may never have mentioned an interest in charitable giving – perhaps due to a disappointing experience or to **lack of information** about the range and scope of opportunity. You can offer your client an opportunity to become informed without any obligation.
- Your client may think that his/her resources are not sufficient to consider charitable giving. You can show your client a variety of **creative ways to make a gift** that is compatible with his/her personal and financial circumstances.
- It's **good** for society, it's good for your clients, and as an expert in charitable giving, it can be good for your business too.
- You'd be surprised how many of your clients are **searching for a way to give back** to society, to memorialize a loved one, or simply to do good.
- **Perhaps you live/work in this community too.** This is an opportunity not only to serve your client, but also to help your community thrive.



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Who is in need of your help?

Recognizing that many of your clients may want to pass on their values through a charitable legacy is important to your success. In particular, clients who come to mind include the following:

- Unmarried
- People who are financially comfortable but not necessarily wealthy
- Married, without children
- Owners of privately held companies
- Married couples who have independent children
- Owners of appreciated securities or real estate
- Widows
- People with an existing relationship to a cause or community organization

When should you raise the subject of charitable giving?

Your greatest opportunities to help your clients maximize the personal benefits of giving occur when they are making major business, personal and financial decisions, such as:

- estate planning;
- writing or revising a will;
- sale of a business or other major asset;
- retirement planning; and
- at times of a financial windfall, such as an inheritance, a merger or acquisition.

Circumstances in clients' lives usually cause them to begin or alter their financial plans, including charitable giving. The following scenarios might signal an opportunity for a discussion about planning and how charitable giving can help achieve their goals.

- Your clients tell you that they are about to take their company public, or that they want to transfer ownership of the family business to the next generation.
- Your client tells you he wants more income from his stock but worries about capital gains tax if he sells.
- Your client discovers he has a large retirement fund which his heirs will receive only a portion of.
- Your client says she would like to provide income to her mother, sister, niece, or others.

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