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Changing Lives

Discovering the Joy of Generosity

How one client family moved from reactive to proactive in their giving

THE FAMILY

Tom and Mary Welden wrestled with the “burden of wealth” to do something meaningful with their resources. As a group president for a Fortune 100 company, Tom is responsible for the development of new business units. Board memberships, social activities, and raising children leave little time to attend to the increasing number of requests from charities.

When the Weldens implemented a financial strategy, the wealth planner helped them allocate resources into a charitable remainder trust and a donor advised fund. When it came time to disburse funds, however, the “who, where and why” remained unanswered.

THE NEED

The Weldens desired to maximize the impact of their resources. In the past three years, they gave over \$4 million to nearly 150 organizations. Their giving had been disorganized and inefficient.

Tom and Mary were reactive givers, donating to charities that made touching appeals. They confessed they were not giving to causes they truly cared about. They derived little joy from their giving and rarely took time to celebrate results.

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When the Weldens became Excellence in Giving clients, they wanted to know what the \$4 million given in the past had accomplished. They had a general idea which organizations they enjoyed supporting, but they could not measure the impact.

As the Weldens reviewed the situation, they agreed that they needed a plan to effectively channel their resources. The family had never articulated the purpose of their giving. What values were most important? What types of gifts would produce the most joy? Above all, the Weldens wanted to ensure their funds were making a meaningful difference in the lives of others.

THE SOLUTION

Excellence in Giving immediately began the Discovery process. The Philanthropic Discovery Questionnaire caused Tom and Mary to verbalize their individual passions and interests. After the interview, the conversations and decisions were compiled into a Joy-Filled Giving Profile™ and a Giving Game Plan™. These documents laid out the purpose and values that best reflected the Welden's giving philosophy. Future gifts would be evaluated for a "fit" against these purposes. Tom and Mary now clearly understood what they wanted their giving to accomplish.

"Excellence in Giving tracks results from projects, manages incoming requests, and maintains communication with the organizations they support."

"Over the last four years, our giving had become an unwieldy mix of organizations and causes," said Mary. "Now, with Excellence in Giving's help, we're able to concentrate on issues that are important to us. It's much easier to rejoice in the results when it's something we care about."

THE RELATIONSHIP

The Weldens have retained Excellence in Giving in an ongoing relationship to help them evaluate organizations and projects to fund. Excellence in Giving manages incoming requests, tracks results from projects, and maintains communications with the organizations they support.

During periodic phone conferences with the Weldens, the firm summarizes activities and impact reports from the nonprofits.

"We have much greater confidence and joy in our giving. They've taken us to a whole new level."

Tom and Mary continue to maintain friendships with nonprofit leaders without spending scarce time to ask difficult questions about the organization's performance. Excellence in Giving provides Tom with the same level of information he received as a board member, which enabled him to resign from five nonprofit boards. He and Mary provide significant input to the organizations they support through Excellence in Giving's relationships with senior leaders.

The tangible benefits have been clear to the Weldens. "Mary and I are able to be proactive in our giving," says Tom. "When I hear about an organization or even a topic we might be interested in funding, Excellence in Giving is able to validate that the dollars will have a high level of impact. We have much greater confidence and joy in our giving. They've taken us to a whole new level."

Contact Excellence in Giving at (719) 329-1515 or visit ExcellenceinGiving.com to learn how you can discover the joy of your generosity.