What Are the Keys to Successful Fundraising?

THE ART OF THE ASK

Asking your classmates for a gift is similar to any other invitation. The way you ask will depend on your relationship with your classmates and their relationship with the College. It will also depend on your style.

Successful interactions have common elements that increase your chances of a positive outcome.

1. **Introduction and rapport building.** Identify yourself in the first line of your text or email or as you begin your phone call. Find common ground by mentioning Middlebury.

2. **Purpose.** Explain your role and why you’re reaching out. Be friendly, but also be up-front. Tell classmates that you’re in touch to ask them to contribute to Middlebury.

3. **Articulate the need.** Middlebury’s top fundraising priorities are the Annual Fund and financial aid. The information in “Why is fundraising so vital?” can prepare you for this component of your work.

4. **Urgency.** Remind your classmates of the benefit of giving now. The sooner a gift arrives, the sooner it can be put to work on campus.

5. **Express gratitude.** Thank your classmates for their time and for considering your request. Annual Giving can provide you with thank you cards and templates.
OTHER TIPS

- **Lead by example.** Make your own gift before reaching out to your classmates and share your reasons for contributing.

- **Practice.** It’s okay to be nervous. You can kick-start your outreach by reviewing the sample solicitations in the Middlebury Volunteer Portal (MVP) at go.middlebury.edu/mvp.

- **Remember.** Any gift made between July 1, 2018, and June 30, 2019, will count toward your class gift.

- **Understand why.** If a classmate says no to giving, it can be an opportunity to understand why. Share that feedback with Middlebury staff. Many alumni are grateful for the opportunity to express their concerns.

- **Get in touch.** If you are not able to address objections, please contact us. We’re happy to provide resources or be part of the conversation.

- **Stay in touch.** The Annual Giving staff, as well as members of the Annual Fund Executive Committee, are here to help you do this important work. Call us at 888-367-6433 or email supportmiddlebury@middlebury.edu. You can also find information by visiting go.middlebury.edu/classagent.

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CLASS AGENT CHECKLIST

**OCTOBER**

- October 19–21: Attend Alumni Leadership Conference
- Select and confirm classmate assignments
- Prepare to solicit your assigned classmates

**NOVEMBER**

- Fall solicitation letters mailed
- Winter calling period opens; begin making your outreach to classmates

**DECEMBER**

- Lead by example: make your gift
- December 31: End of tax year

**MARCH**

- Spring calling period begins; contact classmates

**APRIL**

- Spring solicitation letters mailed

**JUNE**

- Make final outreach to assignments who have not yet given
- June 30: End of fiscal year

**JULY**

- Wrap-up and thank-yous