

Best Practices When Engaging with Your Donor

Attire: Dress conservatively and appropriate for the occasion. Nothing too short, tight, low cut, wrinkled or full of holes, even if trendy at the time. Closed toed shoes (not sneakers or sandals) are ideal for footwear, and low heels/flats for women.

- **Business attire** means suits for men and skirt/pants and blazer for women.
- **Business casual** means khakis/nice dockers/slacks with a polo/nice blouse/sweater.
- **Cocktail/Evening/Formal attire:** knee to floor length gowns/dresses for women, dark suits for men or tuxes if appropriate.

When in doubt, ask your host in advance of attending for proper attire guidelines.

Arrival: Plan to arrive 15 minutes ahead of said start time. If you arrive on time, you are late. You never know when traffic might hit, or a downpour of rain will occur. **PLAN ACCORDINGLY.** If you do find you will be late, contact your host ASAP with your new estimated arrival time. Be respectful of their time and keep them updated, and apologize.

Interacting with your donor:

- Be yourself! Speak to them with the same respect and tone you give to your older relatives. Address them as “Mr./Ms./Mrs Smith”, unless they give you the okay to call them Bob or Susan.
- Tell them about your major, your career plans, what brought you to USF and your positive experiences at USF. Make sure to say thank you/show your appreciation for what they have done for you, your family, and USF students overall.
- Never ask them for more money. If you are having struggles, please talk to the USF Foundation to discover what additional scholarships you might be eligible to apply for.
- If you have an issue with your scholarship funding, don’t discuss this with your donor. Contact the Financial Aid Office or the Foundation Scholarship Office.
- You are not required to share your cell phone number with your donor if you aren’t comfortable with it. If you do choose to share your cell phone number and your donor contacts you, be responsive!
- If your donor contacts you via your USF e-mail address, be responsive!
- Remember that you are a representative of USF – we know that you will represent the university well!

If giving a speech at an event:

Meet with USF staff ahead of time to review content, practice length and work out the nerves.