

Michael Wagschal, Senior Philanthropic Specialist from US Trust, provided updated 2018 survey results compared to their 2013 data on the specific topic of the “philanthropic conversation”. Results were based on 300 responses from advisors and 103 high net worth (\$3million plus) individuals who give to charity and work with an advisor. There were clear positive trends overall that the subject is being discussed on a more frequent basis compared to five years ago. Some of the responses were not necessarily in alignment with one another. For example, when asked “who initiates the conversation?”, advisors said that they (the advisors) brought it up 39% of the time. When asked the same question, high net worth (HNW) individuals said advisors initiated only 6% of the time. The HNW response was likewise 61% when evaluating themselves on the question and the HNW only gave the advisors an 18% mark on initiating the conversation, clearly a disparity of perception. Yet both HNW consumers and advisors alike both gave strong correlating evidence that the conversation was indeed taking place the majority of time and more frequently than 5 years ago.

Take away Implications:

1. For Advisors (Attorneys, Accountants, Financial Planners/ Wealth Managers)

Listen more.

Initiate the conversation sooner with clients (more upfront in the relationship).

Be less technical, more values relationship based.

Engage the next generation for more total family planning.

Don't get hung up on the tax issues (usually secondary considerations).

Try to go deeper into the conversation to bring out donor's passion.

2. For Planned Gifts Officers and Non Profit Directors

Make sure donors know enough detail regarding the good work of the organization.

Help advisors become advocates for your organization.

Work with advisors who bring up the philanthropic conversation early in relationship.

Consider an educational campaign for advisors, asking your donors for recommendations and the specific names of advisors they already work with for cultivating an advanced network.

Michael W Colbert CLU, ChFC, CASL, CAP

Member, PGRTAZ