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#GI♥INGTUESDAY™

Giving Thanks Party Planning Guide & Toolkit

Contents

BEFORE your #GivingTuesday Giving Thanks Party (pages 1-2)
AT your #GivingTuesday Giving Thanks Party (page 3)
AFTER your #GivingTuesday Giving Thanks Party (page 3)
Sample language for #GivingTuesday Giving Thanks Party invitation (page 4)
Thanks-Giver Toolbox Cover Page (page 5)
Thanks-Giver Toolbox Sample Confidentiality and Non-disclosure agreement (page 6)
Thanks-Giver Toolbox Supporters Contact Sheet (page 7)
Thanks-Giver Toolbox Instructions for Contacting and Thanking Supporters (page 8)
Thanks-Giver Toolbox Call and Card Scripts (pages 9 - 10)
#GivingTuesday Giving Thanks Party Checklist (page 11)
#GivingTuesday Giving Thanks Party Sample Run of Show (page 12)

BEFORE your #GivingTuesday Giving Thanks Party

Step One: Find out who is able and willing to be a thanks-giver at your party

Reach out to your board and employees (and volunteers who act like employees). Find out who is willing to be a thanks-giver at your party and what time would best suit them on #GivingTuesday. ***Don't send out an official invitation.*** Simply reach out via email, phone, or text to get a headcount and make a working list.

You need to know two things before you can make an official invitation:

- Who would come to your Giving Thanks Party
- When would be the best time to host the party for the people who want to attend

Step Two: Choose your party hours and location.

Make your Giving Thanks party fit your thanks-givers' schedule. Maybe after work (6 p.m. to 9 p.m.) would work best for most of your thanks-givers. Maybe an "open house" format that allows thanks-givers to come and go during the day would work best. Find out what works for the board and staff members who are willing to participate and schedule your party for that day and time. It doesn't even have to be on #GivingTuesday. The main thing is to make it work for your thanks-givers.

Next, choose your party location. You can go easy here and just set up your party at your office if you have one. However, a party is more fun in a homey place. Once you know how many people would show up at your Giving Thanks Party, think of locations that will accommodate all of them and then a few more (just in case). You need a location where people can spread out while they're making calls or writing. Think about board members or community partners who would be willing to host your party in their home or place of business. People don't often feel much excitement about going to the office, so pick a place people would be excited to visit.

Step Three: Plan food and fun.

You want a festive atmosphere at your Giving Thanks Party. Why? You want your thanks-givers to be glad they're there! If they're having a good time, that feeling will find its way to the supporters they are calling and writing at the party. Picking the right place to host your party is important. You also need:

- Food! It's not a party until people are eating. You can go super-simple and make your party a cookie exchange or potluck. If you have \$100 to \$300, you can order catering or food from a local restaurant. Whatever you do, make sure the food will be the kind that makes people want to show up just to eat if not do anything else.
- Fun! Do a little brainstorm to come up with ideas for making your party fun (over and above the interactions your thanks-givers will have with some really great people). Perhaps you can find a way to combine party fun with what your thanks-givers are there to do. For example, maybe you have a contest and give a prize to the thanks-giver who tells the best story from a supporter. Maybe you simply give out door prizes (little gifts or schwag). You know your people, so pick something appealing but simple that will make them feel great.

Step Four: Send your official #GivingTuesday Giving Thanks Party invitations

Send 10 days to 2 weeks in advance

Use Constant Contact, Eventbrite, Facebook, Google Calendar, or whatever event organizing tool you use to send official invitations to your thanks-givers. **Sample language for #GivingTuesday Giving Thanks Party invitation.**

You may choose to invite a bigger group than the people who told you they could make it in Step One. Plans change. You may also consider sending your invitation to your clients. Clients calling to thank supporters is about as powerful an expression of thanks as you can get. However, make sure that any of your clients who want to participate know they are doing so of their own free choice. In other words, you are not compelling them to participate.

You may set up an option for people who cannot make it to your #GivingTuesday Giving Thanks Party. Perhaps you send them the **Thanks-Giver Toolbox** so they can call and write supporters on their own time. Make sure you clearly communicate this as an option in your invitation.

Step Five: Prepare the list you will give each thanks-giver

Each thanks-giver who attends your Giving Thanks Party should receive a list of 12 supporters to call and write at the party. The total number of supporters you call and write at your party depends on the number of thanks-givers who sign up to participate. So, for example, if you have 12 thanks-givers, plan to reach out to 144 supporters at your party. Be sure to prepare extra lists in case other people show up or your thanks-givers get through their lists of 12 faster than expected.

Use the **Thanks-Giver Toolbox** to prepare a list for each of your thanks-givers.

Choose supporters for your call/write list based on more than just how much money they give. Think about the people who are most consistent, passionate, and reliable whether they give money or not. Some of your best supporters likely give a lot of their skills, talent, or time without making much of a financial contribution. Also consider community partners, government officials, and news media contacts who do things like make introductions, pull strings, and spread the word about you. In short: Money may not be the best measure of someone's worth to your small nonprofit.

Step Six: Make sure everything is in place for your #GivingTuesday Giving Thanks Party

Use the **Giving Thanks Party Checklist** to make sure you are ready for your party.

AT your #GivingTuesday Giving Thanks Party

Use the **Giving Thanks Party Checklist**, **Run of Show**, and **Thanks-Giver Toolbox** to have a great party!

AFTER your #GivingTuesday Giving Thanks Party

The VERY NEXT DAY, in the afterglow of your Giving Thanks Party:

- **Mail the greeting cards that your thanks-givers wrote the night before.** Since your thanks-givers addressed, sealed, and stamped the envelopes, all you have to do is drop them in the mail on your way to work in the morning.
- **Send out a remittance envelopes and requests to supporters who asked for them.** Make sure to include the Post-It note from the thanks-giver who took the request! This should be done first thing in the morning!
- **Enter all details from the worksheets you received from your thanks-givers into your donor data management system.** Even if you only have an Excel or Google spreadsheet, make sure you don't lose track of what your thanks-givers learned from their interactions with your supporters. You will use this information to deepen and enrich your relationships for the future.
- **Send a follow-up thank-you email to all of your thanks-givers.** It would be a good idea to make a quick **Constant Contact** or **SurveyMonkey** survey to find out what they thought of your Giving Thanks Party so you can do it again (better) next year.
- **Send hand-written thank-you notes to all of your thanks-givers.**
- **Go on about your year-end fundraising activities** knowing that your best supporters are even happier with you than they were before your #GivingTuesday Giving Thanks Party.



Sample language for #GivingTuesday Giving Thanks Party invitation.

Dear [name],

You're about to enjoy one of the most enriching and rewarding experiences of your entire year. That's because you are volunteering to be an official thanks-giver at our #GivingTuesday Giving Thanks Party on Tuesday, November 28.

So many people contribute so much in so many ways to our mission and our work. On #GivingTuesday (November 28), we're giving thanks *for* them and giving them our deepest thanks *to* them. You're going to join your board and staff colleagues in calling and writing our supporters to let them know how much you appreciate them. We'll mix in food, fun, and storytelling to make it holiday party for your best memories.

Here's how it will work:

- You'll come to [location] at [time] on #GivingTuesday (November 28), where you'll join your fellow board and staff colleagues. Please bring your mobile phone. If you don't have mobile phone, you'll write thank-you cards instead. We'll have beverages and food catered by [caterer].
- You'll receive a list of 12 of our best supporters, along with some biographical and contact information. You'll also receive a short summary of what each supporter contributed to our work over the last couple of years. Using an outline we provide, you'll simply call or write to say thank-you. **No asking for money!**
- At the end of the party, we'll set aside some time to share the stories and what we heard from our supporters. This is sure to be the highlight of our time together.

This is sure to be one of your favorite memories this holiday season.

We can't wait to see you and our supporters can't wait to hear from you on #GivingTuesday!

Sincerely,

[executive director]



Thanks-Giver Toolbox

[COVER PAGE]

Dear [name of thanks-giver]

Thank-you for volunteering to be a “thanks-giver” at our #GivingTuesday Giving Thanks Party!

This Thanks-Giver Toolbox will help you have a good time and spread gratitude and cheer among our best donors, partners, and volunteers.

If you or any of the supporters you contact have questions, [employee] is here to answer them.

The purpose of our Giving Thanks Party is simple: Celebrate our donors, partners, and volunteers and let them know how grateful we are for their support. You can be sure that they will be glad to hear from you as you let them know how much they mean to you personally as part of our organization and its mission.

Over the next 60 - 90 minutes, you’ll call and/or write thank-you notes to a dozen (or more) of our supporters. This Thanks-Giver Toolbox will give you everything you need to get through the process smoothly and have fun while doing it.

Your Thanks-Giver Toolbox contains:

- Confidentiality agreement (you must sign and give to [employee] before starting)
- Your list of 12 supporters with contact details, giving history, and some biographical information
- Scripts to use when calling and/or writing to supporters
- A one-page sheet on what’s new at [nonprofit] in case supporters ask questions
- Twelve greeting cards, envelopes, stamps, and [executive director] business cards
- Instructions for helping a supporter make a donation (if he or she asks to do so)

Thank-you for being part of one of the most important events of the year for [nonprofit]. I think you’ll really enjoy getting to know the people who make our mission and organization work! And I know they’ll enjoy meeting you, too.

Sincerely,

[executive director]



Thanks-Giver Toolbox
Sample volunteer non-disclosure and confidentiality agreement

The following information about [nonprofit's] development program and its donors and volunteers shall not be shared with non-board members and non-employees of [nonprofit]:

- Lists of names, addresses, phone numbers, or email addresses
- Giving history or giving interests (as in how much money a donor gave or how much a donor may give and for what purpose)
- Any other personal information that a donor or volunteer would prefer to remain private

As a volunteer representing [nonprofit], I understand and agree to the following:

- I am provided with this information in strict confidence to enable me to perform my functions as a volunteer
- I will not share this information outside the [nonprofit] board and employees or volunteers acting on behalf of [nonprofit]
- I will ensure the information I receive is kept safe and secure from any unauthorized access, which includes preventing access to my computer files, paper files, or other media which contain [nonprofit] data. When my status as a volunteer is inactive, I will destroy all electronic copies and shred all paper copies of the data I received.

Read and Understood (Signature) Date

Print Name Date



Thanks-Giver Toolbox: Supporter Contact Sheet

Preferred name(s)	Phone	Email	Mailing address	Support history	Biographical	Notes from call
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						



Thanks-Giver Toolbox: Instructions for contacting/thanking supporters

You will first attempt to call each person to thank them for their support. Use the scripts we give you to either speak to the person (if he or she answers the phone) or leave a message. After each call, dash off a quick thank-you note on one of the cards we provide you. You will address, seal, and stamp the envelope so we can drop your card in the mail tomorrow morning.

Step One: Place the phone call

- Using your own mobile phone, place a phone call to the supporter.
- If he/she answers, use Script #1
- If he/she does not answer and you get voicemail, use Script #2.

Step Two: Write down the outcome of your phone call on your contact sheet. For example: “Left message,” or “supporter was happy for call, but did not wish to talk,” etc. Important: If the person wants to make a donation or requests further information or support, please make a note of this and share it with [executive director].

Step Three: Dash off a quick thank-you note on the cards we will provide you. If you spoke to the person, be sure to reference the call. If you did not speak to the person, say that you’re sorry you missed them and that you want to be sure they know how thankful you are. Follow Script #3 or Script #4 for writing your follow-up card. Be sure to address, seal, and stamp the envelope so we can mail it tomorrow morning.

If you’re not making phone calls, but writing cards only, please use Script #5. Address, seal, and stamp your envelopes and give them to [employee].

Step Four: When you’re done contacting your 12 supporters, turn your contact list over to [employee]. Be sure to note new information or special requests you received from the people you contacted.



Thanks-Giver Toolbox: Call and note scripts

Script #1: What to say if the person answers the phone

- Greet the person by name
- Introduce yourself: Name and your position with the organization
- “In the spirit of Thanksgiving, I’m calling to say ‘thank-you’ for being such a great friend and partner. All that we are able to do for [mission], we are only able to do it because of you. Thank-you so much! Is there anything I can do to make you more glad that you support [nonprofit]?”
- LISTEN. Be natural! If someone wants to talk, they consider you a friend so do what you do in normal friendly conversations. Just enjoy the rapport!
- Don’t keep the person on the phone too long. If you pick up signals that they don’t really want to talk, just say “thank-you” and wish them happy holidays.

Script #2: What to say if you leave a message

- “[Name], hello! This is [your name], and I’m a [board member, client, employee, volunteer, etc.] with [nonprofit]. You’ve been a great friend and partner and I’m just calling to let you know that we are so thankful for you. If there is anything we can do better or if you have any questions, please give us a call [phone number]. Again, thank-you, and we hope you enjoy a happy holiday season!”

Script #3: What to write in your follow-up card if you spoke to the person on the phone

- “Dear [name], thank-you for the pleasure of visiting with you on the phone on November 28. Most of all, thank-you for being a great friend and partner to [nonprofit]. You’re the reason we are able to do what we do for [mission]. I included [executive director’s/my] business card. Please reach out any time. Thank-you and happy holidays! Sincerely, [your name].”

Script #4: What to write in your follow-up card if you left a message or the person did not answer

- “Dear [name], thank-you for being a great friend and partner to [nonprofit]. You’re the reason we are able to do what we do for [mission]. I included [executive director’s/my] business card. Please use it any time you have questions or suggestions. Thank-you and happy holidays! Sincerely, [your name and title].”

Script #5: What to write in your card if you didn’t call the person at all

- “Dear [name], this is quick note to let you know how thankful we are for you as a friend and partner. You are a very important part of our the work we do to [mission]. I included [executive director/my] business card. Please use it any time you have a question or suggestion. Thank-you and happy holidays! Sincerely, [your name and title].”

What to do if...**...the person wants to make a donation over the phone**

- Thank the person for her/his generosity. Say that [employee] has the capability to take a donation over the phone using a credit or debit card. Tell the person that you will hand the phone to [employee] to process her/his donation. When the donation is complete, [employee] will hand the phone back to you. Be sure to be enthusiastic in your thanks to the donor.

...the person requests donation or other information be sent

- Thank the person for her/his interest. Make sure you have an accurate email address, that you understand what the person wants to know/wants you to send (repeat it back to her/him), and promise a response within 24 hours. Take the request directly to [employee].

...the person has questions about [nonprofit] that I can't answer

- Thank the person for her/his interest. Offer to either find and send the information (see above) or ask if he/she would like to speak to the executive director now. If he or she asks for information to be sent, turn the request over to [employee]. If he or she asks to speak to someone right away, ask him/her if you can hand the phone over to [employee].

...the person is angry that I called

- Apologize immediately, say “thank-you for your support,” and say good-bye. Don't try to prolong it.



Giving Thanks Party Checklist

Two to four weeks out

- Poll your board, staff, volunteer staff, and some of your best clients to find out who would be able and willing to participate in your Giving Thanks Party on November 28.
- Set the time for your Giving Thanks Party
- Confirm the location for your Giving Thanks Party
- Confirm food and fun/games for your Giving Thanks Party
- Use Constant Contact, Eventbrite, Google Calendar, or some other tool to email invitations
- Find someone to video record the event and someone to share the event on your social media
- Choose gifts you will give to your thanks-givers for their help

One week out

- Call anyone who hasn't RSVP'ed yet to remind them of the Giving Thanks Party
- Prepare supporter lists for each thanks-giver
- Make sure you have enough cards, envelopes, pens, and stamps
- Send reminder email both to attendees and to those who didn't RSVP yet

One to two days before

- Call to confirm catering (or confirm beverages and food) and location are ready
- Call to confirm that Wifi is operational in the location and that you are able to send emails (in case supporters request a link to make a donation)
- Make sure you are ready to take credit card donations over the phone if supporters ask to give
- Send reminder email to thanks-givers with any changes/important details (parking, etc.)
- Prepare each **Thanks-Giver Toolbox** and gifts
- Make sure you are ready for your fun activity
- Make sure the space is ready (festive, fun, inviting, warm)

At your Giving Thanks Party

- Greet thanks-givers as they arrive and do a brief orientation
- As thanks-givers make calls and write cards, circulate through the space to check on them
- Make sure you are posting photos/video on social media
- Be sure to record the stories that thanks-givers tell
- Gather Thanks-Giver Toolboxes from thanks-givers and hand out gifts

Day after your Giving Thanks Party

- Mail the greeting cards your thanks-givers wrote at your Giving Thanks party
- Mail donation forms to any supporters who requested them the night before
- Enter supporter data in your data management tool
- Send an email (with survey) to your thanks-givers to thank them for their help
- Mail hand-written thank-you notes to your thanks-givers



Giving Thanks Party Sample Run of Show

3 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.	Get the food, location, Thanks-Giver Toolkits, and WiFi ready and set up
5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.	Thanks-givers arrive, eat, orientation
6:30 p.m. - 8 p.m.	Calls and card-writing
8 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.	Sharing stories