

WOMEN
• FOR THE •
WORLD

VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

TOGETHER for SMITH



Asking Critical Questions



The three keys of a donor conversation

- Assume Less
- Accept More
- Listen Well



When we actively listen:

- We are fully attentive to the other person
- We listen to comprehend
- We expand our ability to match the interests and passion of the alumna with the mission of Smith



Keys to Active Listening



- Invite alumna to tell her story
- Listen with eyes
- Clarify what you hear before you respond
- Take notes



Asking Critical Questions:

- Sets the stage for successful strategy by obtaining information about the alumna's experience, beliefs and values
- Moves the relationship from conversational to transformational
- Ensures we see issues from the alumna's perspective; helps us anticipate objections to a solicitation
- Helps us match donor interests and passions to Smith priorities

Questions about the Alumna

- Why did you choose Smith?
- What was your experience like?
- How would you describe your personal mission?
- If you could change the world, what would you do?
- What kind of a relationship would you like with Smith?



Questions about Smith



- Why did you first give to Smith?
- What do you find most interesting about Smith today? What are you most concerned about?
- What are your expectations for Smith?
- Have you met the President? If you had time with her, what would you say?
- When was the last time you were on campus?

Questions about philanthropy

- What do you like to accomplish with your philanthropy? Is that true for your spouse/partner as well? What are your philanthropic goals as a family?
- Which organizations are your top three and why? (If Smith is not among them) How could we become one of your top three?
- Which giving experience gave you the most joy? What made it so pleasurable? What was the impact?
- When you give, do you give annually and to special projects?

Questions for Volunteers and Fundraisers

- What are the current institutional priorities?
- How will my gift make a difference?
- How will my gift count for my class?
- How can I be engaged?

