In-Kind Donations (It’s as Good as Money!)



So what exactly is an in-kind donation? An in-kind donation is a non-monetary gift of a product or service *to* a nonprofit *from* an individual, a business, or a corporation. It can be tangible – games, crafts, or books for mentoring time, food for a group activity, items for a silent auction, office supplies – or intangible – furniture or equipment repair, accounting services, consultant services, printing services, space provided for an event (without charge). In-kind donations can help you free up your budget for the other things that you *have* to spend money on.

In-kind donations are often a simpler way for businesses to give because they don’t have to worry about their cash flow. Additionally, businesses often pay less for goods, so they can afford to donate more in goods than they could in cash.

Once you know what you need, you can start asking. Begin with the people closest to your organization like board members, school staff, and mentors. Tell them what you need and how you would use it and what part of your budget it would remove some of the burden from. Then venture out into the community. Don’t be afraid to reach out to businesses even if you haven’t established a connection yet. People are usually open to listening to your request and are happy to hear about all of the positive things happening in TeamMates. Also, touch on the impact the gift will have and the difference it will make.

Example Script for Meeting with Potential In-Kind Donors:

*“Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with the TeamMates Mentoring Program. Are you familiar with TeamMates?” (See what they have to say, and tell them a little more.) “Let me tell you a little bit about our organization: TeamMates was founded in 1991 by Tom and Nancy Osborne to provide support and encouragement to students by matching them with mentors. We have \_\_\_ matches in (Chapter/Program Name)*. *We have \_\_\_ mentees currently waiting for mentors*. *Providing unconditional support, affirmation, and a reliable safe adult friend for students in 3rd - 12th grade has resulted in 82% of our mentees expressing hope for the future.”*

*Make the ask: “We would like to mail newsletters to prospective mentors in the community, and we wanted to see if you would be interested in providing an in-kind donation for the printing. Ideally, we would like to mail out 300 newsletters. We have heard great things about your printing company and know you do stellar work. We are hoping that by mailing out these newsletters we will find mentors for all of the mentees on our waiting list. Would you be able to help us out? We would make sure to recognize your generosity in our newsletter and also on our Facebook page.”*

If they agree to provide an in-kind donation, great! If not, that’s okay. Don’t take rejection personally. The only way you will ever find out if they would like to give is by asking. End the conversation by sharing information about mentoring and let them know that they could also help out by volunteering their time and/or letting their employees know about mentoring for TeamMates. If you have TeamMates brochures, leave some with the business to distribute.

Make sure to report any in-kind donation received to development@teammates.org. The Development Team will send a thank-you letter to the in-kind donor.

The final take away here is: **Don’t be afraid to ask!** You may be pleasantly surprised to find that some businesses will give you even more than you ask for. People feel good about supporting an impactful nonprofit like TeamMates! Give them the opportunity to do this. 😊