



DIY Prospect Research Guide

Contact

Contact information (i.e. address, phone number, and email address) is essential for gift officers attempting to build a relationship with a prospect.

Personal

There are a number of free websites that contain public phone numbers.

- <http://www.findlinks.com/> Use the People Phone Book for individuals
- <http://dexknows.whitepages.com/> Use the Find A Person section
- <http://www.pipl.com/>
- <http://www.zabasearch.com/>

Tips for locating phone numbers:

- Search by the prospect and spouse names
- Search using the prospect and spouse initials
- Search by general metropolitan area (Phoenix) and more specific home city (Mesa)
- Match middle initial to increase likelihood that it is the correct individual
- Unlisted landline and mobile phone numbers are unlikely to be located through free sites

Business

Business contact information is of particular value to gift officers as a method for connecting with a prospect during working hours.

If the prospect's employer is known:

1. Begin with the company's website. This can generally be found through a Google search.
2. Attempt to locate the prospect by checking sections of the website labeled Staff, Our People, etc. Most websites also offer a search box where you can enter the employee's name.
3. Direct phone numbers and email addresses are more commonly available on the company website if it is a small company, the individual is an executive, or it's a service company.

4. If a direct number/email cannot be located, check the About Us or Contact Us pages to locate the general company phone number. If this is a multi-site organization, ensure that you obtain the phone number for the appropriate office location. There are also a number of sites that offer free company information:

- <http://www.manta.com/>
- <http://www.hoovers.com/>
- <http://implu.com/>

Certain professional organizations and licensing boards offer directory info:

- <http://www.ada.org/ada/findadentist/advancedsearch.aspx> Dentists
- <https://extapps.ama-assn.org/doctorfinder/recaptcha.jsp> Doctors
- <http://www.nextclient.com/resources/legal-links/state-bar-websites/> Lawyers
- http://www.realmarketing.com/real_estate_license_lookup.htm Real estate

If the prospect's employer is unknown, see the [career](#) section for tips on identifying the employer.

Career

Determining a prospect's occupation can be extremely helpful for calculating capacity and identifying potential connections. Gift officers usually obtain this information through the discovery process, but sometimes researchers can locate employment information through public outlets. If possible, the occupation of the prospect's spouse should also be identified.

- The Federal Elections Commission (FEC) collects occupation information from political donors, particularly if they donate at a high level. Because the donor's address is also included, political donations can be a highly accurate method of determining occupation.
 - o <http://www.campaignmoney.com/advanced.asp>
 - o <http://www.opensecrets.org/indivs/index.php>
- If a previous employer is known, search for a news release using the prospect's name and previous employer name. Depending on the prospect's industry and level, there may be a notice about the prospect leaving the old company or joining the new company.
- Self-reported information, such as a profile from a social networking site, can be helpful.
 - o <http://www.linkedin.com/>

- Sites that aggregate business information can also be useful, but caution should be used:
 - <http://www.pipl.com/>
 - <http://www.zoominfo.com/>
 - <http://www.implu.com/>

Family

Information about a prospect's spouse and other family members can be helpful in developing a more complete picture of the prospect. It can be difficult to locate this type of personal information, but there are resources that can be useful.

What to look for?

- Spouse name, occupation, publicly held assets, philanthropic interests, etc.
- Does the prospect have children? How old are they (i.e. are funds currently directed at college tuition)?
- Parents – are they connected to a family business or foundation?

Where to look?

- Real estate records – if the prospect is married, the spouse name is commonly listed on the deed
- Company bios – often individuals will list details about their family on their company site
- News articles – if the prospect is a prominent member of the community, the prospect may have been interviewed or profiled by a local media outlet; wedding announcements; Obituaries – detailed information about family trees can often reveal information about Publicly Held Assets

Vital Records

Birthdate/Age

Locating a prospect's birthdate or age can be helpful for determining their life stage and evaluating capacity. Potential sources for this information include:

- Company biographies and documents
- Professional directories/licensing agencies
- Vendor Data Append – Fee Service

Death

Identifying and confirming the death of a prospect is a sensitive task that should be conducted with care. Sources include:

- Obituaries – confirm location, name, spouse, birthdate, biographical details, etc.
 - <http://www.obitsarchive.com>
- Social Security Death Index, offered by many genealogical websites:
 - <http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=3693>
- Other resources:
 - [Find A Grave](#)
 - [GenealogyBank](#)
 - [Obitfinder](#)
 - [ObitsArchive.com](#)
 - [Obituaries 101](#)
 - [Obituary Searches](#)
 - [Social Security Death Index](#)
 - [U.S. Social Security Death Index](#)

Publicly Held Assets

Real Estate

Real estate value is often used as the anchor for a capacity rating, as it typically easier to locate compared to other publicly held assets and is often indicative of the prospect's lifestyle.

Assessor Records

- The primary source for real estate values are county, city, or township assessor records. Many government assessors have free online directories that can be searched by owner name, address, or assessment number.
- A number of sites list assessor websites:
 - <http://www.pulawski.net/> All states
 - http://tax1.co.monmouth.nj.us/cgi-bin/prc6.cgi?menu=index&ms_user=glou&passwd=data&district=0801&mode=11 NJ
 - <http://illinoisassessors.com/> IL
- Total market value should be used for capacity rating purposes.
- Some assessors do not offer online records; others may charge to view property details.

Other Sources

- PropertyShark is particularly helpful for locating Northeast and California assessment records that may require a fee to view on the official assessor website. This is a paid site, but a limited number of daily free searches are offered.
 - <http://www.propertyshark.com/mason/> Fee Service
- When assessment records are unavailable, it may be appropriate to use an estimated value in the capacity rating calculation. If an estimate is used, this should be noted in the capacity breakdown.
 - <http://www.zillow.com/>
 - <http://www.blockshopper.com/>

Tips for locating and evaluating real estate:

- Search by prospect and spouse name/initials, both together and separately as real estate may be held in the name of only one of the spouses
- Search by company/trust/LLC name if one is known
- Check the assessment record for “Homestead Exemption-Yes” to indicate that the property is the primary address
- View the mailing address on the assessment record – this may lead to the identification of another property
- Viewing an image of the property can sometimes be helpful
 - <http://www.bing.com/maps/>
 - <http://maps.google.com/>

Insider stock holdings

Publicly traded companies must legally release information about the compensation of its insiders. These insiders include the top officers, Board of Directors, and entities holding 10% or more of the company’s stock.

EDGAR Search

- The Securities Exchange Commission (SEC) maintains an online repository of company filings.
 - <http://www.sec.gov/edgar/searchedgar/webusers.htm>
 - Search by company or fund name
 - May filter search further by document types and/or dates
- Key documents to review:

- o DEF 14A – Proxy Statement filed annually to provide shareholders with all relevant information before voting in board elections, etc. Contains insider bios and compensation details.
 - o 3, 4, and 5 – Insider stock ownership filings (3-initial, 4-changes, 5-annual statement).
- More information on EDGAR Search and interpreting SEC filings:
 - o <http://www.sec.gov/investor/pubs/edgarguide.htm>
 - o http://s.wsj.net/public/resources/documents/info-PROXYPRIMER1003_retro.html?mod=e2tw
 - o <http://learn.westlawbusiness.com/support/formtypes.html>

Other Sources

- Market Watch allows you to search insider records by name or company ticker to get details about stock holdings without reading entire documents:
 - o <http://www.marketwatch.com/tools/quotes/insiders.asp>
- SECInfo provides access to detailed SEC filings – can search by company and individual name
 - o <http://www.secinfo.com/>
- A Google search can sometimes be used to locate stock ownership (i.e. “name + form 5”)

Tips for locating and evaluating stock holdings:

- Read the SEC document footnotes carefully. These can provide a wealth of information.
- Stock holdings held by a prospect’s spouse should also be identified.
- Only direct stock holdings are included in the capacity rating calculation, but indirect stock holdings and fringe benefits mentioned in compensation/footnotes can provide greater insight into financial potential. Sometimes spouses and children receive direct or indirect control of the prospect’s holdings.

Income

Income is indicative of the cash flow that an individual may have. This should be identified for the spouse as well.

Publicly Traded Company Insider

- EDGAR Search from the SEC can be used to obtain compensation for company insiders
 - o <http://www.sec.gov/edgar/searchedgar/webusers.htm>

- o Review the latest DEF14A, and examine the footnotes for additional details.
- Salary.com Executive Salary Wizard can be used to locate executive salaries from SEC documents simply by searching by individual or company name
 - o http://swz.salary.com/ExecComp/LayoutScripts/Excl_CompanySearch.aspx

Salary Estimates

- If an exact salary is unavailable, the median range salary for a comparable position in the same geographical area may be used
- A number of sites can be used to determine a salary estimate
 - o <http://www.salary.com/category/salary/>
 - o <http://www.payscale.com/wizards/choose.asp>
- Alternatively, comparable positions at the insider level in publicly traded companies may be used to estimate salary. This requires identifying publicly traded companies of a similar size within a similar industry. Two or three positions should be identified and averaged to determine an estimate for the prospect.
 - o http://biz.yahoo.com/p/sum_conameu.html Helpful for identifying similar companies

Other Income

- The recent sale of stock, private company ownership, or real estate can be included in the income estimation for the capacity rating, provided that any assets acquired after the sale are subtracted from the total.

Tips for evaluating income:

- Include the prospect and spouse

Private company ownership

Evaluating private company ownership can be challenging, but entrepreneurs are often good prospects and there are a number of useful resources. Private companies owned by the prospect's spouse should also be considered.

Company Ownership

- State incorporation sites, depending on the laws of the particular state, can provide a wealth of information about private companies.
 - o <http://indorgs.virginia.edu/portico/businesses.html#inc>

Company Value

- Annual sales are the simplest measure of company value. A number of sites capture this information:
 - o <http://www.hoovers.com/>
 - o <http://www.dnb.com/>
 - o <http://www.manta.com/>
- Note: Privately held companies are not required to disclose their financial data and voluntarily reported data may be conservative or unreliable

Tips for evaluating private company ownership:

- Locate original incorporation papers, if possible, to determine founders.
- View media sources for mentions of company valuations or mergers/sales.

Philanthropy

Charitable Donations

The details of an individual's charitable giving may indicate their interests and capacity.

- <https://www.nozasearch.com/> - comprehensive database of donations – Fee Service
- Foundation Center (foundation gifts)
- GuideStar (foundation gifts)
- Google search
 - o Name+donor+location
 - o Name+giving+location
 - o Name+gift+location
 - o Name+spouse name+donor+location
- Political donations – reflects ability and propensity to give cash
 - o <http://www.campaignmoney.com/advanced.asp> - detailed FEC records for past 12 years
 - o <http://www.opensecrets.org/> - Donor Lookup – basic info for all FEC records

Family Foundations

Information about Family Foundations and Form 990s help to reveal a family's philanthropic interests. Sometimes an individual prospect will give through their family foundation rather

than give on an individual level. The form 990 can also be used to identify other family members or confirm contact information as well as identify the type of assets funding the foundation.

- Foundation Form 990s - search by name of foundation, if know or last name if unsure of how the foundation name is listed
- GuideStar:
 - o <http://www2.guidestar.org/> Free limited access with free account sign up
- Foundation Center:
 - o <http://foundationcenter.org/findfunders/990finder/> Free limited access
- National Center of Charitable Statistics:
 - o <http://nccsweb.urban.org/PubApps/search.php?a=1&basic=1&bmf=1> Free limited access

Community/Board Service

Information about other organizations the prospect is or has been involved with can provide insight to that individual's interests and obligations. The service of a prospect's spouse should also be reviewed.

- Company bios – individuals with bios often list the organizations they are involved with
- Foundation – search by prospect name to check 990s for board membership
 - o <http://fonline.foundationcenter.org/> Fee service
 - o <http://www2.guidestar.org/> Free limited access
- Google search – variations of “name + board + location” often yield results