

Silent Auction – Sample Solicitation Conversation

Local merchants—especially ones you visit frequently—are a great source of donations for the Silent Auction. And the best time to ask is when you’re making a purchase or getting a service. While you’re getting a haircut, your nails done, getting a tattoo, eating dinner or breakfast out, buying clothing, coffee, groceries. The options are endless. Keep some blank forms with you in your bag so if the opportunity comes, up, you can jump on it.

YOU: “Would it be alright if I spoke to the manager or owner for a minute?”

MANAGER: “Yes, may I help you?”

YOU: “I shop here regularly, and I wonder if you would consider donating something for my child’s school silent auction. Any donation would of course be tax deductible.”

MANAGER: “Yes, I’d love to. Do you have a letter?”

YOU: “I’ve got it right here, and I’ve also got a tax receipt form right here. Would you like to take care of it right away? I’ve also got blank gift certificates here if you need one.”

MANAGER: “Great...”

That was easy. Now you just fill out the Donation Form and Tax Receipt form with the manager, get the donation, and you’re off to the races.

What if the Manager is gone?

SALES PERSON: “He/She’s not here right now.”

YOU: “Is there a good time I can come back?”

Or...

SALES PERSON: “Why don’t you just leave something.”

YOU: “Sure. Here’s a letter and a donation form for him/her. Can you make sure he/she gets it? Is there a good time I can come back to follow up?”

What if the Manager says NO?

MANAGER: “Sorry, we can’t help you.”

YOU: “I understand. Thanks for you time. Can I come back and ask again next year?”

Just keep it polite, and be sure to FOLLOW UP!!!