Charitable gifting using life insurance

There are various charitable gifting strategies when it comes to donating a life insurance policy to a charity, private foundation, or donor advised fund (for the purposes of this infographic referred to as charity). The following infographic illustrates the impact of donating appreciated shares where the charity is the owner and beneficiary of the life insurance policy. Under this strategy the donor must make an absolute assignment to the charity. If the donor wishes to maintain the ability to change the charitable organization, they should consider gifting to a private foundation or a donor advised fund. The following illustrates how donating appreciated shares to fund a $1,000,000 life insurance policy can be more tax-efficient than selling shares and donating the cash proceeds.

Using cash to fund donation of insurance policy

$60,000 x 10 years worth of shares sold annually to fund premium payments. Assumes shares with a cost basis of $20,000 are sold, and capital gains taxes of $10,000 are paid. After-tax cash of $50,000.

Donating appreciated shares to fund donation of insurance policy

$50,000 x 10 years of annual in-kind donation of shares with accrued gains directly to charity (assumes cost basis $20,000).
Charity is the owner and beneficiary of the policy.²

$1,000,000 on death of the insured will go to the charity.

+ Approx. $25,000 donation tax credit annually for 10 years.

Charity sells the securities and uses the proceeds from the sale to fund the $50,000 annual premium payments to the life insurance company.

Charity is the owner and beneficiary of the policy.²

$1,000,000 on death of the insured will go to the charity.

+ Approx. $25,000 donation tax credit annually for 10 years.

$0 taxes payable on donated shares.

Key facts and figures

$1,000,000 to the charity on death of the donor

$600,000 of shares sold to fund donation strategy

$100,000 in taxes paid

$25,000 donation tax credit generated annually x 10 years

$1,000,000 to the charity on death of the donor

$500,000 in-kind donation of shares required to fund donation strategy

$0 taxes payable on donated shares

$25,000 donation tax credit generated annually x 10 years
Assumes a universal life insurance policy with a $1,000,000 death benefit, and annual premiums of $50,000 for 10 years was purchased and donated to a charity. Insurance figures are for illustration purposes only and do not take into account any additional values such as accumulated dividends and interest. Assumes a male age 55 with a 50% marginal tax rate.

When a donor makes an absolute assignment of a policy to charity, the donor is deemed to have disposed of the policy and may have an income inclusion for tax purposes.

Speak to your TD Advisor if you are interested in enhancing your charitable gifting strategy through the use of insurance.