

Letter Writing Campaign – How to Write a Great Letter

As fundraisers, we understand that raising money can be intimidating at first. However, you will meet and exceed your goal if you follow a few simple steps including start early, use available resources, be creative and have fun! No matter what event you are participating in, the number one way to raise money is through a personalized letter writing campaign. This is a letter that you send to extended family, current and past friends, neighbors, old college roommates, your favorite teacher from fifth grade and just about anybody else that you can think of (or anyone else on your Holiday Card list). However, just sending out letters does not guarantee that you will reach your fundraising goal. Everybody is different, and you may need to think of an alternative way to raising money through corporate sponsorships and special events.

The Process

What makes a letter writing campaign so successful is how little time it takes to send to a lot of people. If you are sending your letter out through the mail be sure to include your URL address to your online fundraising website so your donors can donate online with ease. The donation process is pretty simple. You place your letter and your return addressed envelope into a standard envelope. Send it to everyone and let them send you their donations through the mail or have them donate online. Event easier- use all the emails you know and email the link to your fundraising page out!

Start Now! The key to a successful fundraising campaign is starting early! It is important to get your letters out at the beginning! So - start now! Finally, use our resources! Call our staff! Have them develop a personalized fundraising plan just for you...and then use it!

Writing a Good Letter

The key to a successful letter campaign is writing a good letter. Here are some suggestions to writing a successful fundraising letter.

1. Make it personal

We all love to get personal letters, so make your letter personal. Let them know what else is going on in your life other than this event. Then slide into what the event is about and why you are personally involved. Use email and snail mail!

2. Use humor

Everybody loves a chuckle, so use humor where appropriate.

3. Short and sweet

Try to keep the letter to one or two pages. If it is too long, you will lose your reader's interest.

4. Ask

Extremely important! What separates this letter from normal letters is that you are asking them to act. Don't just tell them you are doing this. Tell them you need their help.

5. Suggested giving levels

We recommend giving your donors suggested giving levels. It is also helpful to put your total fundraising goal in the letter so that they see you are aiming high. It is also good to

ask for specific amounts. So ask them to donate \$1 for every flight of stairs that you will climb (\$40). Or ask them to be your webpage sponsor and donate \$100 to have their name and message be on your personal page. Be creative. Finally, think about setting at least one high giving mark (\$250 - \$1,000). No one may give you that much, but if someone does - Congratulations!

6. Set a deadline

We give you a deadline for your own fundraising, but we recommend you set a deadline earlier than that. People are always motivated by deadlines. This way you can assess your fundraising before the real deadline.

7. Let them know how to donate

Tell them the procedure for making a donation. If they are confused, they are not likely to send a donation, so walk them step-by-step through the procedure. Be sure to include the website so that people can easily donate online. For emails make sure to include the link directly to your webpage.

8. Keep a list

Keep a list of all the people you send letters to. You can then compare this list to your report on line that shows who has pledged to you and you will get to see who hasn't donated. This is important for the next step:

9. Be prepared to send a reminder

A lot of people will get your letter and say, "What a neat idea. Sure I'll help out," and then set the letter down - only to forget about it. The best way to send a reminder is to give training updates. Write to your donors and tell them, "Training is going well" and "I'm going farther this weekend (25 flights of stairs) than I've ever gone before." Let them know that fundraising is going well, but you still have a bit farther to go. Ask them nicely if they would consider making a donation in honor of your training. We have seen reminder letters that have been more successful than original letters for bringing in the money. You can also send an email reminder through your personal fundraising Web site to remind people to donate or thank them for donating. Our staff can also provide you with news and updates on things that the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation has going on to include in your letter.

10. Thank your donors

Send a thank you card as soon as you receive a donation from someone. It is really nice to receive a note that says that your donation was important. In addition, send them a note after you finish the event to let them know how you did, both in the event and with your fundraising goal.

Please let our staff know if you would like us to help you craft your letter!
Good Luck!