

How To Write An Annual Fundraising Appeal Letter

What kind of letter am I going to write today...



Acquisition

The reader is a **stranger**.



Renewal

The reader is an **acquaintance**.

.5%

Response rate of

40-70%

A few questions your letter should answer...

1. Who are you?
2. What do you want?
3. Why should I trust you?
4. Why do you matter?
5. How do you relate to me?
6. What's the rush?

1. What did you do with my prior gift?
2. Are you grateful?
3. What do you want now?
4. Do you have proof?
5. Again: Who are you?
6. What's the rush?



Personalization helps!



1. The person's name
2. The pronouns "you" and "I"
3. An audience attribute: "As a parent, you know..."
4. Geography: "As a resident of..."
5. Hand-written touches

Don't forget to ASK!

Logo

[Optional Important Message]

Dear Ms. Smith,
If you're like me, the sight of kids running around on stage in silly costumes makes you giggle with delight.

Sincerely,
Ms. Sincerity Champion, ED

PS: I have more to say here.

ASK

ASK

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Know your

Single Most Important Thing

"Focus on the SMIT (single most important thing) you want to tell someone, right now. Ideally focused on a story about an individual."

- Jonathon Graspas



Your Letter Checklist

- Is the letter a **conversation** or a **brochure**?
- Is the opening sentence **short**?
- Is it **personal** ("you" and "I")?
- Have I said **why** I'm here? ("I'm writing to you today because...")
- Does it make a **promise**?
- Is there **urgency**?
- Are there at least **3 asks**?
- Does it **entertain** (tell a story, offer news)?
- Is the donor the **hero**?



Reply Device:

"The reply device: the purpose is to provide a practical way for the donor to post the gift. Nothing else."

- Jerry Huntsinger

YES! I'M A TRUE BELIEVER!

- I want to buy ___ days of True Believer's future at \$131. TOTAL ___
- I want to support a week for \$___
- I'm so excited I'd like to support on day/month all year at \$___
- I'm such a True Believer that I want a whole month at \$___
- Date/s I'd like to put my name on: ___/___/2013 (additional dates here:___)
- I'd like to honor ___ (please contact me to send my honoree a note)
- YES! I'm a True Believer but I can't buy a full day. Please accept my donation of ___ instead.
- YES! I'm a True Believer and I would like to make monthly payments of ___.

YOUR INFO

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: ___ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

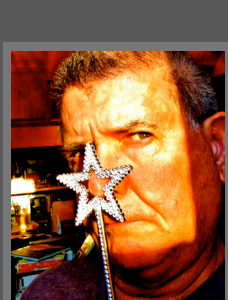
WAYS TO PAY

- Check/payable to True Believers.
- Credit card (MC, VISA, AMEX, DISCOVER)
- Name as it appears on card: _____
- Number: _____ Exp date: _____
- Security Code: _____
- Visit www.truebelievers.org to donate online.

May we publish your name in our donor list?
Yes No

Donor-centric reminder on a reply device:

"Our Companions Domestic Animal Sanctuary is solely supported by public contributions. Your involvement is critical to our work of drastically improving the standard of care for homeless pets. Thank you for being a part of this important mission."



Tom Ahern
Boomerang Communications
Head Coach

Author of four books, Tom Ahern is considered one of the world's top authorities on donor communications.



<https://boomerang.co/resources/>