

Fundraising copy checklist

What's your big idea?

1. Does your copy have a big idea; a concept that leaves a powerful impression and serves as an overriding theme for your letter pack?
2. Have you got a powerful story to illustrate your need?
3. Is your donor going to be powerfully moved or inspired by the end of the first few paragraphs?
4. Have you checked that your most powerful lead is not in fact your third paragraph?

Have you made your arguments?

5. Have you identified at least 20 reasons why the donor or prospect should give to you?
6. Have you deleted all the reasons that are about you rather than the donor?
7. Have you got at least 5 left?
8. Is your copy long enough to properly tell the story, explain the problem, demonstrate the solution and inspire your donor?
9. Have you provided evidence for your claims?
10. Have you talked about the benefits to the donor and what it means to them, rather than about your organisation?

Does it have urgency and call to action?

11. Do you have a clear call to action? (Is it so simple an idiot could understand it?)
12. Have you created urgency by providing a meaningful deadline?
13. Is your PS like a shot to the heart?

Have you used the right tone and style?

14. Does your letter sound like someone speaking to someone important to them, rather than a formal business letter, something from government or a school essay?
15. Have you gone through and found all the references to 'we' and 'us' and rewritten them to be about the donor instead?
16. Have you taken out all the overwhelmingly big numbers? (Let your donors grapple with one thing at a time, not millions.)

Does it have impact?

17. Is your letter memorable?

18. Will people talk about it at dinner parties?

Have you asked properly?

19. Did you work out what you would ask for and why before you started writing?

20. Have you told them how to donate (specifically and in detail) in your letter?

21. Have you told them at least 3 times and at least once on every page how much you want them to give and why?

22. Have you been specific about what each of your proposed gift amounts will achieve?

23. Are you giving them too many choices?