

## **Ideas for Your Email/Letter**

One of the most effective tools for raising large amounts of money is the fundraising letter/email letter. Before you write a fundraising letter...

Know why people give. The simplistic answer is that people give to get. However, most people give for reasons that stem from emotion, not logic.

- To get satisfaction through involvement in a worthwhile activity
- To get satisfaction by helping to solve a common problem
- To get recognized for contributing to a cause.

The paradox of a fundraising letter is that nobody likes to be sold, but fundraising letters are sales letters. To be effective, your fundraising letter must sell your campaign in a way that makes donors feel that your organization recognizes their donation as an important contribution to solving a common problem. Think about your mail. Think about what you read and what you throw away. Then, structure your letter to be one that you would read if it was sent to you. Although fundraising letters are business letters, you want to write a friendly letter that turns donors into active allies for your cause. Parts of a fundraising letter include:

### **Your Greeting**

You only get one chance to make a good first impression and in a fundraising letter, that impression starts with your greeting. "Dear Sir or Madam" may sound businesslike, but it is very impersonal. Likewise, "Dear Businessman", "Dear Loyal Member", and even "Dear Friend" may also be too impersonal. The objective is to make each donor an involved, and contributing, friend. If your letters are few, be sure to put a name in each greeting. If your list is long, start your letter with one cheerful word, "Greetings!"

### **The Body**

Telling your story. An effective sales technique is to:

- Tell them what you're going to tell them. Present your campaign in a positive light by beginning with a smile. Get them involved. Pay a compliment either here or in your next paragraph.
- Tell them. Be brief, but be detailed. Most importantly, stress what they "get". Explain both your overall goal, and how donors can help you achieve it. Let them know your time frame. Do ask the question, (i.e. "Can you help us?"). In addition, offer donation options like "supporter, subscriber, member and grantor" or "business, family, individual, student". If there are many seniors on your list, senior is another good option as well.
- Tell them what you told them. Again, summarize the problem, your proposal to solve it, and emphasize how their contribution is an important part of the solution.

### **The Closing**

- Include any pertinent contact information.
- Remind them that you have enclosed a SASE (Self-addressed stamped envelope).
- Thank them for their support.
- Leave them with a smile.

## **Additional Tips**

### **"Show me the Money"!**

Don't be nervous about asking people for money. This is a cause that is worthy and benefits every person in this country!!!! Be passionate!!!! I was once told "If you don't ask....you are guaranteed not to get!!!

### **Ask for the higher dollar amounts!**

I heard someone saying if they could just get a lot of people to give \$20 dollars!!! Ask for \$100.....believe it or not...most people can do it!!! Some will argue this point I know....however....maybe look at it in these terms....how much does the average couple spend at dinner on a date night? .... \$50.... \$75.... \$100 dollars??? Ask people if they would be willing to give up just one night out and instead give those dollars to the fund. It's always easier to back down a number than work someone up (that was kind of car-sales-ish...but you get my drift).

### **The \$300 dollar bogie!**

The \$300 dollar minimum is super easy, but getting started is always the hardest part!!!! If you think the previous two points would not be useful, try this one.....how about a 50/50 plan??????? Write down the names of 50 people you know....over the next 30 days call or email those folks and ask them for \$50 dollars... wham!!!!...you're at \$2500 dollars. If everyone running the MCM for Team Semper Fi did that we would crush last year's numbers! (That's what we aim to do)

### **Find an Advocate!**

Always be looking for someone who will be an advocate for your goal. In other words find a person of influence who believes in your cause and will help you spread the word. If you had three or four people who would help you...they could send the email to 20 or 30 people each...now you have an awesome networking system!!!! Seriously...it works!!!! Last year I had two different friends who contributed and felt so strongly about the cause that they forwarded the email link to some of their friends....who then contributed!!!!!!

### **Social Clubs**

What clubs do you or your families belong to? What clubs do you know about???? Do you have any friends or family that would invite you to speak??? If you are nervous about speaking...ask someone to help you!!!!!!!!!! Talk about the Fund! People are fascinated by the cause and can't imagine training for 6-8 months to spend a relatively short amount time running one race! Most people can't imagine running 26.2 miles and they are curious. Curiosity generates questions and donations.