



Most Things You'd Like to Know about Fundraising

Part 4: The Power Of Words – How To Craft A Good Fundraising Letter and Thank You Letters

Housekeeping

- We are recording this!
- Please mute your mic and stay muted unless you would like to make a comment or ask a question.
- Feel free to type questions into the chat box anytime.
 - We'll address these during the Q and A at the end.
- For those joining by phone, you can mute/unmute yourself by hitting “*6.”

Power Up Your Pantry

Power Up Your Pantry is a University of Missouri program intended for food pantries and other hunger relief groups looking for ways to enhance their current operations and better meet the needs of the people they serve.

Connect with us!

Website: foodsecurity.missouri.edu/power-up/

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/powerupyourpantry/>



Interdisciplinary Center
for Food Security



New Chapter Coaching, LLC

Our mission is to build a better world by increasing the effectiveness of nonprofit leaders and the impact of the organization they serve.

Our core services:

- Leadership Coaching
- Strategic Planning
- Strengths-Based Team Building
- Leadership Roundtables
- Executive Transition Management
- Facilitation of Retreats & Meetings
- Fundraising Assessments & Coaching



Jaime Freidrichs
Strategic Partner
Fundraising Coach

What are our objectives?



Outline a strong donation request letter



Identify strategies for collecting impact stories



Discuss best practices for direct mail



Learn how to write a great thank you letter





Last time, on *Most Things You'd Like to Know about Fundraising*

1. Your prospective donors have the **ability** to give and the **belief** in the work of and a **connection** to the organization (easy as A, B, C!).
2. When making an ask, you want to have a reason and a why.
 - The reason of why you are asking.
 - Use storytelling in describing the reason.
 - Keep in mind the why of the organization (what problem you are solving) and the why of the donor (why they are interested).
3. Ask directly and for a specific amount (don't be coy!)

What do you enjoy reading?





What makes a good story?

Setting
Character
Plot
Conflict
Theme

What makes a good story?

Setting

Character

Plot

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Theme



Outline for Effective Ask Letters

- I. Personalized Greeting (never “Dear Friend”)
 - II. Attention-grabbing intro paragraph
 - III. Story Part 1 - The Struggle of 1 Beneficiary
 - IV. Information about how donors solve this
 - V. Story Part 2 - The Triumph
 - VI. Strong statement for donor to be solution

Outline for Effective Ask Letters

VII. Direct ask with how dollars will be used

VIII. Close with Appreciation

IX. Handwritten signature with signature block that includes your phone and email

X. Handwritten note

XI. P.S. that provides urgency

My Number One Letter Tip

Use the magic word.

Not please →

YOU

Circle the you's and make sure you see a lot of circles throughout the page.



Characteristics of Effective Letters

Feel Conversational

Short Words - Short Sentences - Short Paragraphs

At Least 2 Pages (4 Pages for Acquisition)

Use Photos

Feel Urgent



Design Best Practices

Easy to Read Font

12-point or larger

Photos and White Space

Bold, Underline, Highlights, Bullets, “Handwriting”

Include a p.s.

NARNIA FOOD PANTRY

FEEDING NARNIANS SINCE 1950

John and Jane Donor
123 Main Street
Narnia, MO, 60000

Dear John and Jane,

There are some records you hate to see broken. You may have seen the article in the newspaper in January that this semester Narnia County schools have a record number of kids who qualify for the free and reduced school lunch program. **That's the kind of record that just breaks your heart.**

With so many of our neighbors struggling, you probably know someone personally who isn't quite making ends meet, who will go without at least one meal this week. But of course, they don't talk about it. And it might surprise you who is hungry.

I. Personalized Greeting
II. Attention-Grabbing Introduction

March 1, 2019

III. Story Part 1 - Struggle

That is the story I heard from Angie* when she came into the pantry this week. “I don’t like asking for help,” she said. Angie works more than full-time at a job she’s held for over two years, but with two growing kids at home (her son has gone up two shoe sizes in six months, she said), her paycheck and the sporadic child support she receives from her ex-husband aren’t enough to cover all the family’s needs.



Angie has been supplementing her groceries through the Narnia Food Pantry off and on for the past six months. That is typical here - **we often see families only when an extra unexpected expense has cropped up**. And though she says she doesn’t like asking for help, “I’m awfully grateful to get it when it comes to feeding my kids. I’d do anything for them.”

This month it was the heating bill, something so common that suddenly presented Angie with an impossible choice: risk a late payment and rack up extra fees, let her kids

**While this is a true story, we’ve changed the name, a few details and substituted a stock photo in order to protect Angie’s privacy.*

NARNIA FOOD PANTRY | 501 ASLAN ROAD | NARNIA, MO 60000 | www.narniafoodpantry.org

IV. How Donor Solves Struggle

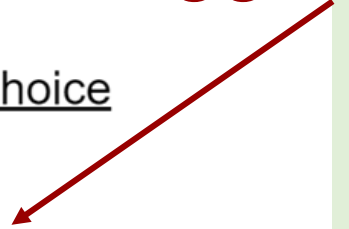
go hungry or ask for help from the Narnia Food Pantry. And because of you, the choice wasn't so impossible after all. Which is why Angie came in last week.

Your past support of the Narnia Food Pantry provides a full bag of nutritious food to your neighbors in need like Angie in times of hardship. Beyond full bellies and the fuel our bodies need to grow and function, the food you provide is a beacon of hope to families who are struggling, who often feel like no matter how hard they try, they can't get ahead.

Last week, Angie was especially happy to see peanut butter back in the pantry as an option for her bag. "My daughter would eat peanut butter sandwiches three times a day if I let her," Angie told me with a grin. "I'm going to save some of this to take the kids on a picnic one weekend when the weather warms up."

What do you make of a statement like that? For me, that statement is full of hope. Spring is on the horizon. Good times are ahead. We have things to look forward to.

V. Story Part 2 - Triumph



VI. Donor
= Solution

You brought that hope to Angie and her kids through your past support. And so today, I'm writing to you to ask you to again help your neighbors in need. Because we need you.

Could you make a gift of \$50, \$100 or \$500 to the Narnia Food Pantry today?

Every dollar you give provides \$11 worth of food. But just as important, every pound of food you provide gives your neighbors in need a pound of hope.

VIII. Close
with
Thank
You

Thank you for caring about your Narnia County neighbors. People like you make this community such a great place to live. I hope you'll choose to help again.

X. Hand-
written
note

*John and Jane,
Hope you're well!
Thank you for
all you do to help!
-LP*

Sincerely,

Lucy Pevensie

Lucy Pevensie, Executive Director

(800) 123-4567 | lpevensie@narniafoodpantry.org

P.S. I know you help because you care, but I wanted to let you know that we have a limited number of tax credits available to reward people like you on a first come, first served basis. Let me know very soon if you're interested in this benefit for your donation so we don't run out. You deserve it!

VII. Direct ask
with how
dollars will be
used

IX. Hand-
written
signature with
phone/email

XI. P.S. that
provides
urgency



Questions for Review

1. Do I use the word “you” enough?
2. What emotions does my letter evoke?
 3. Do I tell a story?
 4. Does the need feel urgent?
5. Is the request direct and tangible?



Collecting Impact Stories

- Maintain a shared folder to record these stories
- Designate a story-getter at all events
- Train volunteers to note nice comments they hear
- Include in client surveys
- Give clients an option to jot down expressions of gratitude
- Develop a short form for clients to give stories and permission
- Social media contest to collect stories

Where to Find Stock Photos

**We've changed the names and are using stock photos to protect this family's privacy.*

- [canva.com](https://www.canva.com) (free service with many free photos)
 - [shutterstock.com](https://www.shutterstock.com) (subscription)
- unsplash.com (free to join, but limited selection)
 - marketing professional



Direct Mail Best Practices

Timing & frequency

Segmentation

Newsletters

Include a response envelope

Use an outer envelope teaser

Why stewardship matters

Legal requirements:

a) Date of gift

b) Amount of gift

c) Value of goods or services received or
a statement that none were:

“For tax considerations, you received no goods
or services in exchange for your gift.”



Good Thank You Letters

Short Words - Short Sentences - Short Paragraphs

Within a week of the gift (48-hours is better)

Include one story of impact



Don't say "thanks"

"thanks" removes the most important word

always "thank you"

Make the Donor the Hero



Instead of “you helped us do it” → “you did it”



Other Good Phrases

“because of you”

“you made the difference”

“you fed xxxxxx hungry people last month”

Example

NARNIA FOOD PANTRY

FEEDING NARNIANS SINCE 1950

March 10, 2019

John and Jane Donor
123 Main Street
Narnia, MO, 60000

Dear John and Jane,

Thank you so much for your gift of \$1,000.00 that we received on March 10, 2019. Because of you, the people of Narnia County are being fed each week through the Narnia Food Pantry.

My friend Delores visited the pantry again this week. She's a widow who is getting on in years and she always enjoys spending a little time visiting with whoever is working at the pantry when she comes in.

Delores really struggles to make it on her small social security check, especially in the winter months. This week after a visit from some of her family members, she found herself almost completely without food. But through the generous support of friends like you, Delores went home with a full box of wholesome food that will last her a couple of weeks at least. She was so grateful.

I am grateful too... to you. You make sure that our neighbors who are struggling don't go hungry. We need the support of people like you to keep our pantry stocked and ready for whenever people need help.

Thank you for caring about Delores, and your community. You are welcome at the pantry anytime to see the impact you are making here.

*I really can't thank you
enough, Jane and John!
Hope to chat soon!*

Sincerely,

Lucy Pevensie

Lucy Pevensie, Executive Director
(800) 123-4567 | lpevensie@narniafoodpantry.org

P.S. For tax considerations, you received no goods or services in exchange for your gift. This letter may also serve as your receipt.

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Fundraising Secrets of Success

To give donors the chance to change the world, you must:

1. Know the mission of the organization
2. Know what you are asking for
3. Know who you are asking
4. Ask!!!
5. Thank your donors.





Resources

- Giving USA 2018
- Independent Sector
- Candid (formerly Foundation Center)
- Grant Space
- Association of Fundraising Professionals
- Board Source
- Council for Nonprofits



Questions?



Final session...

- Wednesday, March 13: It Takes More Than One Person - How To Engage Board and Other Volunteers in Fund Raising and How to Effectively Track Donors

Thank you for joining us!

GET INVOLVED



LIKE "POWER UP YOUR PANTRY" ON FACEBOOK.



DOWNLOAD "POWER UP YOUR PANTRY" GUIDE SHEETS FOR FREE AT: [FOODSECURITY.MISSOURI.EDU/POWER-UP/](https://foodsecurity.missouri.edu/power-up/)



CONTACT US FOR QUESTIONS OR INPUT. WE APPRECIATE THE FEEDBACK!

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Interdisciplinary Center
for Food Security