



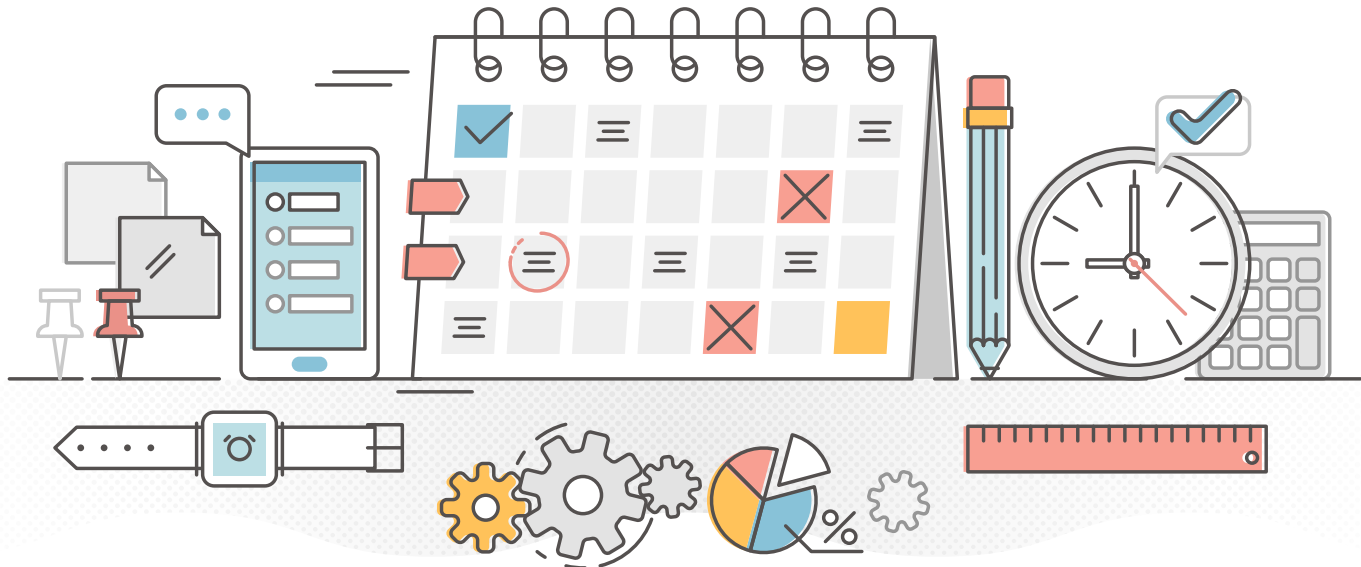
SUCCESSFUL YEAR-END FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGNS



Successful fundraising is a result of good planning and execution. However, many nonprofits write a year-end appeal letter and hope for the best.

Nearly 50% of nonprofits raise over 50% of their annual budgets in the last three months of the year. Why should this matter to you and your organization? Mostly because it means that you will be competing for the attention of donors who will receive many requests for support during this time.

Do more than write a letter and make a wish that it will be successful. This guide is designed to give you the tools to make your year-end fundraising campaign a successful effort.



KEYS TO A SUCCESSFUL YEAR-END CAMPAIGN

- ✓ **Make a plan**
- ✓ **Set a goal**
- ✓ **Build a matrix**
- ✓ **Craft strong messaging in both copy and imagery**
- ✓ **Be clear about what you need**
- ✓ **Ask more than once**
- ✓ **Thank donors for past and future giving**



PLANNING STEPS

Set Your Campaign Goal

Setting a goal is an important aspect of campaign success. **Without a goal how are you expected to achieve it?** Once you have a goal, communicate that goal to your staff and board so they can all help stay focused on what success looks like.

Data Review and Segmentation

Good data is vital. **Don't wait until you're ready to send out an appeal letter to review your data.** Make an initial selection of who you want to reach out to. Your data segmentation might include; Major Donors, Lapsed Donors, In-Kind Donors, and Board Prospects. Each of these groups might need a slightly different type of "ask" or outreach effort.



Build Your Matrix

Neo may have been “The One” but in this matrix your donors are the one. A giving matrix defines how many gifts at various levels you need to reach your goal. This tool makes it clear what is needed to achieve your goal. Based on the matrix below you might need one gift of \$25,000, one gift of \$12,000 and two gifts of \$10,000 in addition to all the other levels. Knowing this will allow you to enlist your Board of Directors or other key stake-holders to help you do personal outreach to the donors you want to ask for support at those levels.



FUNDRAISING GOAL \$100,000

Gift Amount	No. of Gifts	No. of Prospects Required	Cumulative Total	Cumulative Percentage
25,000	1	5	25,000	25%
12,000	1	5	37,000	37%
10,000	2	10	57,000	57%
6,000	2	10	69,000	69%
4,000	3	15	81,000	81%
2,000	4	20	89,000	89%
1,000	4	20	93,000	93%
800	5	25	97,000	97%
400	5	25	99,000	99%
100	10	50	100,000	100%



Don't just rely on your letter for all your donations. Enlist the help of board members or key stake-holders, who have relationships with the top donors, in one-on-one outreach to secure your high-level gifts.

DRAFT YOUR CASE FOR SUPPORT

Write Content that Connects

Use strong copy and graphics to communicate your message and a clear reason donors should give now. Be sure to include:

- ✓ Why what you do is important
- ✓ How your organization fills a vital need
- ✓ How your work is making the community better
- ✓ If it will make the lives of others better
- ✓ If it will make the lives of your donors better
- ✓ Select images/graphics that communicate your message visually.



Write for everyone

There are three basic kinds of readers: the person who reads your letter from beginning to end, the person who skims the letter for the salient points, and the person who just looks at it and decides what the letter is about. The key to writing content that will succeed is to write for all three readers. Here's how.

- ✓ **Add imagery** that communicates your message. This will speak to your "skimmers" and "lookers."
- ✓ **Bold two or three lines** that are the salient points of the letter.
- ✓ **Make it clear what it is you need.** If your campaign goal is \$100,000 - tell donors so they can consider how their gift will help you achieve that goal.
- ✓ **Make it easy to give** with a personalized remit coupon and personalized giving ladder.

Using a tear-off remit at the bottom of your letter makes it easy for donors to respond and allows you to personalize the coupon. It can also save you money since the pieces don't have to be matched together!



Hippo Campus

Dear Bob & Sarah:

Thank you for joining us in caring for our hungry hippos! **Your last gift of \$100 bought a whole lot of hippo food** and you really changed the lives of some of our most in need hippos.



We hope you will consider joining our efforts again this year. We are excited to tell you that we are building a new sanctuary for our hippos and your support will make a huge difference.

Can we count on your gift of \$100 again? Maybe you will consider making it **\$110, \$120, or \$150!**

Thank you for your continued support!

Lori Fridley

You can count on my gift of \$100

\$100 \$110 \$120 \$150 Other \$___

Bob & Sarah Smith
123 Green Avenue
Hilly Valley, CA 90000



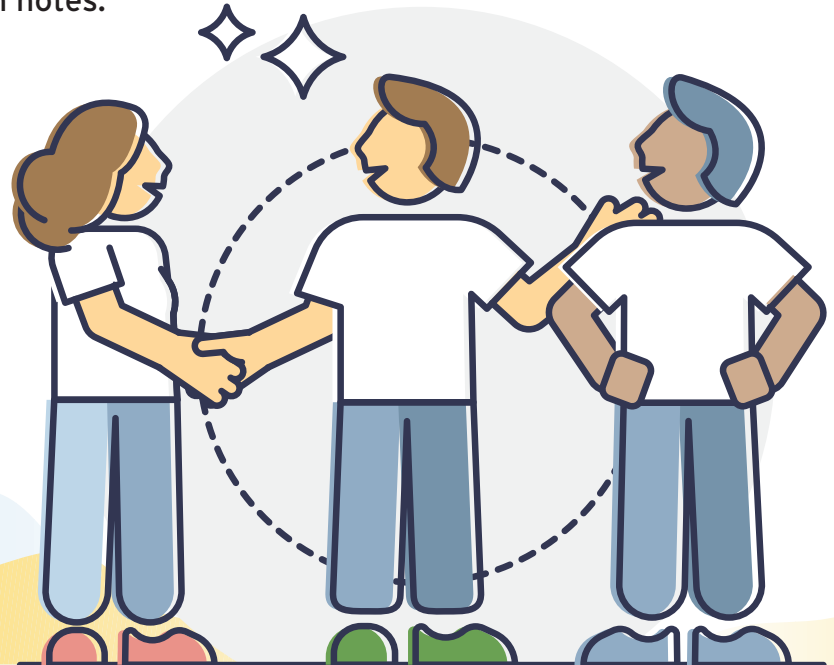
Hippo Campus

FOLLOW-UP

Don't just write and wait!

Your appeal letter is at the heart of your campaign. It contains your case for support and the tools for donors to act. However, don't just mail and wait. Your giving matrix is a guide to the number of gifts you need at each level. Enlist the help of your board of director and key stakeholders in reaching out to your major donors to **ask for the support you need**. This means face-to-face meetings over coffee or lunch, phone calls, and hand written notes.

Also, plan a follow-up postcard or email. **Let those donors who haven't responded know that there is still time to help** and how important their support is to reaching your goal.



HOW WILL YOU SAY THANK YOU?



Once a donor sends you that gift of support - **saying thank you in a timely manner is crucially important.** Research has shown that the number one reason donors don't give again is because they don't feel appreciated.

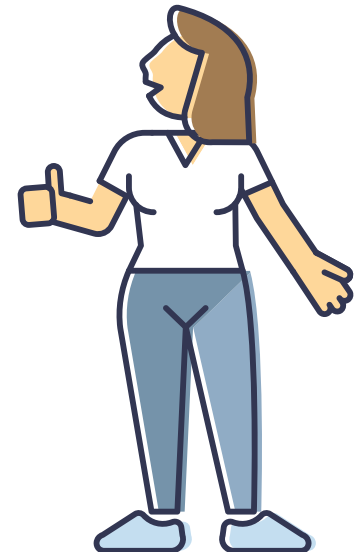
Of course all donors should get a tax-letter acknowledging their gift... but consider going one step further for donors at higher levels by making thank you calls and writing personal notes. Create a "gratitude committee" made up of past and current board members, volunteers, and staff to help with this activity. You may be surprised at how far a small gesture can go!

YEAR END CAMPAIGN CHECKLIST

- Set A Campaign Goal.
- Review & Segment Data: Get an idea of how many records you are working with, this will help you create a budget for your campaign.
- Set A Campaign Budget.
- Major Donor Review.
 - ✓ How many do you have?
 - ✓ Will they get the same piece as everyone else?
 - ✓ Will you need personalized notes for these donors?
- Create Your Giving Matrix: This will ensure you know how many gifts you will need to get to your goal. (create your own using giftrangecalculator.com)
- Contact your printer to let them know what the campaign will look like. Things to consider when talking with your printer:
 - ✓ How many pieces will you need?
 - ✓ Will it use variable data?
 - ✓ Can your piece be automated?
 - ✓ What kind of paper and envelopes do want to use?
 - ✓ When do you want the letter to drop?
 - ✓ When do you want your follow-up to drop?



- Draft your letter, and follow up piece.
- Meet with your graphic designer, if using one, to review copy, art, photos, logos, and colors.
- Share layout draft of appeal with leadership, board members, or anyone else who may need to give feedback.
- Final draft of appeal and follow-up.
- Pull your final data selection.
- Send data and artwork to printer.
- Make a plan with your gratitude committee for weekly phone calls and personal notes.
- Major donor outreach with Board of Directors and key stakeholders.
- Celebrate your successful campaign and begin thinking about what you have to do next!





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