

One of the most effective methods of personal fundraising is a letter Writing Campaign. Online is great, but not everyone responds to or feels comfortable with donating online. If you would like to do a mailing, I would be happy to organize the mailing on your behalf. You write the letter, email the letter to me along with your mailing list, and I will print them and mail them for you.

Here are some suggestions for writing a successful fundraising letter:

- Create a list of EVERYONE you know. Do not say “no” for anyone (see the memory jogger list attached). Send them the letter and let them decide. You can include friends, family, colleagues, business associates, trade associations, anyone you are comfortable contacting. If you send holiday cards, use that list. Do not hesitate to include casual acquaintances, as they will understand that you are seeking donations for a worthy cause.
- Ask. Include a call to action. Don’t just tell them what you are doing, ask for their help. Include your personal fundraising goal in the letter, and suggest giving levels. Do not diminish your request by being apologetic or by saying something similar to “I hope you can donate something”.
- If you are organizing the mailing yourself, make it personal. Hand address the outside envelope. Do not use mailing labels for the person’s name and address. Hand sign each letter. Write a short personal note to those you don’t see regularly, i.e., “Mary, I hope this finds you doing well!”
- Make it easy to donate. Include a return envelope for them to send their donation to you. Label the envelopes with your address. It is nice to include a stamp on the return envelope. State in your letter that all donations are 100% tax deductible and that 97% of every dollar goes directly to our mission.
- Suggest online donations. Include your personal fundraising website address in the letter. They can access your page at www.firstgiving.com and type your name in the search box.
- Set a deadline. People are always motivated by deadlines. We give you a deadline for your own fundraising, but we recommend that you set a deadline earlier than that date. This way you can assess your fundraising and revise your plan if needed before the actual deadline.
- Send a reminder to those what have not yet donated. Include training updates in your reminder, and let them know that fundraising is going well, but you still have a bit farther to go. Sometimes, reminder letters are more successful than original letters for bringing in the money.
- Send a “thank you” card. “Thanks” is a powerful word. It is nice to receive a note acknowledging the importance of a donation, not matter how small the amount.
- Put your HEART into your letter. Tell them why you are doing this. Don’t include too many facts and figures; instead include your personal story of why you have taken on this task. Someone will donate to you because they know you and want to support your reasons for doing this.