

Checklist for Effective Appeal Letters

Content
<input type="checkbox"/> Has the marketing proposition behind the appeal been worked out? Is it consistent with the organization's case for giving?
<input type="checkbox"/> Makes clear what problem the organization is addressing and how a gift will help solve that problem?
<input type="checkbox"/> Is the letter from one person to another? Not from a committee?
<input type="checkbox"/> Engaging? Personal, even chatty style?
<input type="checkbox"/> Creates a bond; uses 'you' and 'I'?
<input type="checkbox"/> Appeals to emotions via narrative?
<input type="checkbox"/> Uses a limited vocabulary, short sentences and paragraphs? Have extra adjectives or adverbs, verbal crutches, circumlocutions been edited out? Uses active voice not passive voice?
<input type="checkbox"/> Includes a call for giving in the body of the letter (first or last paragraph) and in the P. S.?
<input type="checkbox"/> Asks for a specific amount, not just for "support"?
<input type="checkbox"/> Focuses on the difference the money will make in the life of an individual and how the gift will deliver the mission, not how much the organization needs the money?
<input type="checkbox"/> Includes "thank you"?
<input type="checkbox"/> Starts with a personalized salutation, and may include the donor's name in a critical sentence in the body text?
<input type="checkbox"/> Reminds the donor of the benefits of giving? Describes an opportunity for the donor to meet personal needs or achieve personal desires by supporting a worthy charitable aim?
<input type="checkbox"/> Are the claims in the letter believable and the narrative authentic?
<input type="checkbox"/> Is it clear why readers need to respond right now?
<input type="checkbox"/> Does the opening paragraph of the letter engage the reader's attention?
<input type="checkbox"/> Does the P.S. disclose some benefit or intriguing fact that's not discussed in the body copy? Is it especially interesting?
<input type="checkbox"/> Does an extra gift or upgrade letter lay out the reasons why the donor's aims will benefit from giving more?

Design
<input type="checkbox"/> Looks like a letter?
<input type="checkbox"/> Photos or graphic elements are correctly placed: top right or middle left; no middle graphic crosses the whole page?
<input type="checkbox"/> Uses a high quality signature; blue if possible?
<input type="checkbox"/> One signature?
<input type="checkbox"/> Photos, if any, are of people and have captions?
<input type="checkbox"/> Uses spot or full color in one or more non-text elements?
<input type="checkbox"/> Do a few important phrases in underline, italics or bold lead the reader on the first glance-over through the essential elements of the narrative and the appeal??
<input type="checkbox"/> Uses two pages (front and back) if needed to tell the story without crowding?
<input type="checkbox"/> No more than seven lines per paragraph?

Typography
<input type="checkbox"/> Uses a serif typeface?
<input type="checkbox"/> Text is in black only?
<input type="checkbox"/> Uses 11/13, 11/12, 10/12 or 12/13 point text/leading?
<input type="checkbox"/> No reverse type?
<input type="checkbox"/> Any color behind the text is limited to 10% tint?
<input type="checkbox"/> Headlines, if any, are in Lower Case, not ALL CAPS?
<input type="checkbox"/> Left justified or fully justified?