**HOW TO WRITE AN EFFECTIVE FUNDRAISING LETTER**

There are three major parts to a fundraising letter:

### 1. The Introduction

***Grab the reader’s attention*** – Start your letter with something that will captivate the reader: a bold question, statement or program success story. Creating a scene is one of the most successful ways to get the message across and reminds them why the program mission is so important.

***Update reader on previous donation***– Research shows that thanking donors for their previous contributions and telling them what their last donation achieved before asking for another gift is the key holding onto your donors and having them give again.

### 2. The Ask

***Explain the cause –***You want to leave people with the impression that it is absolutely critical that you continue to do what you do. In order to do that, you need to show that there is a need and that your organization is critical in effectively addressing that need.

***Focus on a specific initiative*** – Organizations that have multiple project areas may be inclined to include information about everything they do in one letter, but this is likely to overwhelm the reader. Instead, focus on a particular project and provide details or stories to make it real for the reader. This helps them visualize the specific impact if their gift. For example, fundraising for a specific school’s book box.

***Specify the need*** – You should list suggested donation amounts that are appropriate for the particular donor. It is also effective to specify the total need you are looking for, as donors may be inclined to give a little extra to get you to the end goal. Also, be sure to state the impact of the gift so donors know exactly what they are giving.

### 3. The Closing

***Thank donors and reinforce importance of support –*** Make sure to thank donors in advance. It subtly assumes that they will contribute to the cause and shows that you have faith in them to do the right thing. You may also want to reinforce here why you need *their* help.



November 26, 2015

Replace with or add in your organization’s logo

Dear Friends of (*insert name of your literacy organization or personalize letter to one recipient*),

Literacy is the pathway to succeed in school and to realize a complete life. With your help, we are building that path for children in our community. With our partners, ONE TO ONE Literacy Society, we provide literacy support to students who are struggling with their reading. The ONE TO ONE reading program is growing, and the feedback we receive from teachers, volunteers and students is truly gratifying.

After reading with a ONE TO ONE tutor for a year, one parent wrote about their child:

*“…for the first time ever, her report card indicates that she is reading at grade level. What a relief it was for us to see that. In fact, lately I’ve had to return to her room and turn out the light a second time again as she’s got her nose in a book! Now that is true progress!”*

We continue to receive requests from educators to add more schools to the reading program. In order to meet this demand, we need your help. Our goal is to offer this program in (*insert number*) schools in our region.Imagine being able to bring that reading opportunity to every school where it is needed!

**We need your financial support to successfully run our program and meet the demand in the community.**

**Each school needs $1000 for the purchase of books and resources for this reading program. Our goal is to raise $\_\_\_ to allow us to provide this program in \_\_\_\_ schools.**

If you would like to support us financially, please know that every gift is appreciated and truly helps us to run our program. An investment in a child’s literacy is one of the most important gifts that you can make, and an investment that delivers its rewards year after year!

Together with your support we are helping children learn literacy skills for life – but without you it just would not be possible. Please consider making a tax receipted donation now by mailing a cheque payable to (*insert name*), at the address shown below. Add additional options for donations to be made.

Sincerely,

*Signature*

*Print your name*

District Coordinator, ONE TO ONE Literacy

*Through one-to-one tutoring, we help children learn literacy skills to last a lifetime.*

*(Insert footer with organization’s contact information for receiving donations)*