

THANK DONORS WELL CHECKLIST

Thanking donors well is the right thing to do – it’s polite, it assures the donor that she made a good giving choice, and it closes the cycle of giving which clears the path for the next donation.

Make sure you’re thanking donors well by following this checklist of Dos and Don’ts.

Do THIS	Not this
Write and send a warm, sincere letter	Send a boring, generic letter
Personalize it, using their name in the salutation (“Dear Sandy”)	Make it generic or fill-in-the-blank or send it to “Dear Friend.”
Send it within 48 hours if you’re mailing it, send it immediately if emailing it	Send out thank you letters once a month
Make it a real letter on letterhead	Send a post card
Print each one	Make a copy of a copy
Start the letter with a short, hooky sentence like this: “We needed you and you were there.”	Start with something boring like “On behalf of the Board, staff, and volunteers, please accept our gratitude for your donation.”
Make it conversational and easy to read, with short sentences	Use jargon and long, heavy paragraphs
Add handwritten, personal notes to the letter	Add nothing special
Don’t ask for another gift. Let the thanks be the only purpose.	Include a reply envelope or ask for another gift
Let the donor know what you’re going to do with their money.	Say nothing about how you’ll use the money.
Use the word “you” a lot.	Use the words “we” and “our” a lot.
Give the name and phone/email of a specific person the donor can reach with questions.	Offer no assistance.
Use a real signature on the letter.	Use a scanned signature or a cursive font.

Proof for spelling and grammatical errors.	Don't proof the letter.
Use a donor-tracking software to generate the letters.	Start from a blank screen and write a fresh letter each time.
Change and freshen up the letter each month.	Use the same dry, boring letter from now on.

Want to learn more about thanking donors well and see some examples of excellent thank-you letters? We share fundraising tips, tools, and techniques every week at Get Fully Funded in the Inspiration Zone. It's always a quick read with practical "how to" info that you can use right away, sprinkled with a bit of Southern humor. Subscribe today to get a regular dose of fundraising motivation delivered straight to your inbox. www.GetFullyFunded.com/Inspiration-Zone

