

Donor Thank You Letters



Why you should send thank you letters.

Did you know that 37% of **donors are annoyed if an organization doesn't thank them** for their charitable donation? What about the other 63%? How do they feel? Even if they don't express their annoyance, the lack of a thank you could also directly impact their future donations. And what's more, 65% of donors would give more if they knew the impact of their donations.

So how do you keep your donors happy and encourage them to continue supporting your cause? It's as simple as a personalized thank you letter that details the impact of their donation. Follow these five must-do's when writing your next donor thank you letter. These steps will allow you to further engage your donor base while increasing the likelihood of future donations.

How to craft the perfect thank you letter.



1 Be Intentional

Thank you letters need strategic planning to ensure they include both thought and intention. The biggest thank you letter mistake is treating it as 'just' a letter and not as an additional donor interaction. By adopting this donor interaction mindset and using thank you letters intentionally, you can reiterate your mission and find ways to deepen your connection to the recipient.

2 Handwritten Letters are Best

Yes, it's time to dust off the calligraphy set and put the pen to paper (literally). Though handwritten letters may seem outdated, it's a sure-fire way to show your thought and appreciation to your donors. The extra effort required for the letter further reiterates your gratitude for the donor's contribution to your mission. All that said, any thank you letter is better than no thank you letter. You can also use email, phone, or other channels to thank donors, and it can still make an impact.

3 Make it Personal

This sounds like a no-brainer, though it may surprise you how many people forget! When you're writing a letter, make sure you know who to address. This could be the primary donor or donors if it is a private donation, or the CEO if it is a corporate gift. There is no better way to ensure the loss of future donations than by addressing a thank you letter 'To Whom It May Concern' or using the wrong name or title. You can also make it more personal by referencing their last gift or their specific interests as it relates to your organization. Having a robust CRM and fundraising intelligence tool can help you easily understand and manage your donors on this level.

4 Define the Impact

Remember, donors aren't donating to you, they are donating to your cause. This means, once you receive a donation, show donors specifically how their donation has made an impact. Make sure you understand their giving **affinity** and use it to tailor the message to tell the story of the impact they made. You can share emotional, compelling stories or connect to current events, to showcase your organization's impact. For example, if your food bank receives a donation, find a way to demonstrate how many meals the donor helped provide. This helps create a bond between the monetary transaction and the tangible action by the nonprofit. This will bring donors closer to your cause and connect them on a personal level.

5 Include a Call to Action, Sometimes

If it is appropriate, you can include a call to action, highlighting a current or upcoming campaign that might interest your donor. This keeps the donor engaged and also informs them about additional opportunities to give. That said, not every thank you letter has to have a call to action. Sometimes it is best to just connect with a donor, without asking for anything. It helps the relationship feel authentic, and more like a conversation instead of one-way communication.

Thank you letter examples of *do's* and *don'ts*.



To whom it may concern,
Thank you very much for your donation to Forever Fur Friends Animal Shelter. Your donation of \$100 will go a long way in helping fulfill our mission.
Please consider offering another financial gift of \$500, as it would help us greatly reach our campaign goals.
Our services help animals in distress. Without donors like you, we wouldn't be able to have as great of an impact. Thank you so much for your support.
Best,
Sarah Smith



Dear Mrs. Delaney,
We are so grateful for your generous donation to Forever Fur Friends Animal Shelter. Your contribution of \$100 will provide 250 meals for hungry cats and dogs, as well as cover the cost of much-needed medical care. Your support truly makes a difference in the lives of the animals in our care.
I wanted to share some exciting news with you - later this year, we will be launching our 'Friday Is For Furry Friends' campaign. This initiative aims to find loving homes for fostered animals every Friday. However, this campaign requires a significant financial commitment to be successful.
As we approach year-end, we hope you will consider making a \$150 donation towards this campaign. With your help, we can place five cats and five dogs into new homes, giving them a chance at a better quality of life and a brighter future.
Our mission is to assist animals in distress and provide them with the care they need. Without donors like you, we wouldn't be able to have the impact that we do. Your support means the world to us.
Thank you once again for your generosity.
Warm regards,
Sarah Smith and the Forever Fur Friends Animal Shelter Team

Interested in having more information on your donors and prospects so you can understand them on a *deeper* level?

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