

# Successful Fundraising Tips



## Writing a Great Letter

The key to a successful letter campaign is writing a great letter. Here are some suggestions:

### 1. Make it Personal

We all love to get personal letters, so make your letter personal. Let them know what else is going on in your life other than this event. Then move on into what the event is about and why you are involved. A hand addressed envelope draws much more interest than a label or computer generated envelope. You might want to use colored paper and envelopes as they will stand out. Also, you will want to include a self-addressed envelope. This will make it easier for your donors to mail their contribution back to you. Make sure your name appears on the return address.

### 2. Use Humor

Everyone loves to laugh, so use humor where appropriate. Start your letter with something like, "Have you heard that (your name) has gone a bit crazy again and is thinking of participating in a (1/2 or full) marathon..."

### 3. Short and Sweet

Try to keep the letter to one page if possible. Too long, and you will lose the reader

### 4. Use a Patient or Someone you know as an Honoree

Let people know that you are not just training, but that you are training in honor of someone. Introduce your honoree to your donors. Please talk to Susan Sappington, your fundraising coach, for a list of Lazarex Cancer Foundation patients.

## **5. Ask**

Very important! What separates this letter from normal letters is that you are asking them to act. Don't just tell them you are doing this, but that you need their help.

## **6. Suggested Giving Levels**

We recommend giving your donors suggested giving levels. If you don't put your overall goal into your letter, donors may not know how much you need to raise. They will need the suggested giving level to gauge what size donation they think is appropriate. So ask them to donate, for example, \$2 for every mile, or ask them to be a t-shirt sponsor (donate \$50 and their name will be written on the t-shirt you wear at the starting line). Be creative. Check out the sample on the Lazarex Cancer Foundation website. [www.lazarexfoundation.org](http://www.lazarexfoundation.org)

## **7. Set a Deadline**

People are motivated by deadlines. We have a deadline of May 15<sup>th</sup> for your first \$500 in order to cover your race registration and other expenses. You can continue fundraising right up until the day of the race. Make your donors aware of your deadlines and they will work with you.

## **8. Let them know how to Donate**

Make donating easy by walking your supporters step-by-step through the donation procedure. Be sure to include your webpage address for your personal fundraising webpage powered by Active.com so that people can easily donate online.

Some people are not comfortable using their credit cards online and will give you their credit card information on your sponsor sheet instead. You can also enter this information directly on your personal fundraising page. Please contact Susan Sappington if you have any questions or concerns.

When you receive checks or cash, you will need to add the amounts onto your webpage to track your progress. To do this, call Susan or go to the "customize your webpage" link from the original email sent to you by active.com or visit [www.active.com/donations/](http://www.active.com/donations/) and log in to your Active.com account. Click on the "Track Offline Donations" tab, and enter the information. This will add the donor and amount to your totals. Then mail the checks to the Lazarex Cancer Foundation office at P.O. Box 741, Danville, CA 94526.

## **9. Keep a List**

Keep a list of all the people you send letters to. You can then compare this list to your online donations and you will see who hasn't donated yet. This is so important for the next step.

## **10. Be Prepared to Send a Reminder**

People have a habit of procrastinating. They will receive your letter and then might forget about it. The best way to send a reminder is to give training updates. You can use postcards that are less expensive and can be created right from your computer. Write to your donors and tell them, "Training is going well" and "I'm going farther this weekend (10 miles) than I've ever gone before". Let them know that fundraising is going well, but you still have a bit farther to go. Ask them nicely if they would consider making a donation in honor of your training. Many times, the reminder letter is more successful than the original letters for bringing in money. Another great way to keep your donors informed is by emails. Through your active.com webpage, you have

the ability to send email blasts on a weekly basis. Check out the sample on the Lazarex Cancer Foundation website. [www.lazarexfoundation.org](http://www.lazarexfoundation.org)

## **11. Send a Thank You Card**

Send a thank you card. It is really nice to receive a note that your donation was important, not to mention that your donors probably want to know how you did. A good thank you card will set you up well for the next event you do with “Team for Life”.

These are all just suggestions of things we have seen work. The final letter needs to come from your heart and hand. If you would like, please contact Susan Sappington, your fundraising coach, to review your letter before you send it out.

Congratulations on becoming a part of The Lazarex Cancer Foundation, “Team for Life’ Good luck with your fundraising goals. We are here for you every step of the way.