

Writing a Powerful, Persuasive Fundraising P.S.

The P.S. in your letter is NOT an afterthought. It is NOT an annoyance to be dashed off quickly ... then forgotten.

The P.S. is an important part of your complete fundraising DM package. It is, oftentimes, one of the first things your prospective donor will read – particularly if she is the type of reader who scans the letter when she opens it.

As such, the P.S. is like a signpost that convinces the scanner to read the entire letter, because there's something of interest in it for her.

Once again, we've asked fundraising guru Jerry Huntsinger to give us tips for writing powerful P.S. copy that pulls your donor/prospect into your letter. He gave us 10 – far more than we expected. (All these tips will work wonders for any P.S. you write ... for any DM niche.)

Here they are ...

1.

Tell your donor exactly what to do, when to do it, how much to give, and how to use the reply device. (This one was included in last week's Golden Thread.):

P.S. Enclosed is your World Hunger Day reply card. Please check the \$10 gift box and fill in the blank line if you wish to give an additional amount. Then, mail the reply card back to me – before March 20 – in the postage-paid envelope I am providing for you. And thanks so much!

2.

Ask for IMMEDIATE action:

P.S. Can you send your gift today, Mrs. Jones? Every hour's delay means a longer line at the bush clinic. I must send another doctor and nurse immediately. Perhaps you can sit down this very moment and write your check, and then mail it to me in the envelope I am enclosing. Thanks so much.

3.

Suggest a deadline:

P.S. School starts September 6. Can I depend on your help in time to buy a dress for a little girl?

4.

Mention that there's a limited supply of whatever premium you're offering:

P.S. I only have a limited supply of the health manual available. First come, first served! Please write me today so you won't be disappointed.

5.

Make the reader feel like a member of a limited audience:

P.S. This appeal is only going to individuals like you who have a unique respect for our National Gallery. That's why I must depend on your immediate response.

6.

Emphasize that there are no strings attached to your "thank-you" gift:

P.S. This inspiring booklet is yours, with no strings attached, in appreciation for your gift of \$10 or more.

7.

Offer an installment payment option:

P.S. perhaps you cannot give \$100 right now – but can you send \$25 a month for four months? Your continued support will be such a blessing.

8.

Present a personal appeal from a person who desperately needs help:

P.S. I must replenish the Scholarship Fund immediately. Right now, a young woman is waiting. She writes: "I'm working day and night in order to have an education. But I can't pay the tuition."

9.

Present an additional argument:

P.S. I almost forgot to mention – if the building contractor can begin work immediately, we save 9% because of the anticipated rise in the cost of steel. Your immediate gift serves a double purpose!

10.

Try a handwritten P.S.:

P.S. What more can I say? This problem is desperate – more desperate than you can imagine, unless you were to join me here at the hospital in Bogota.

Two final pieces of very good advice from Jerry:

"Come up with at least half a dozen different versions of your P.S. before deciding on the one you'll use.

"And regardless of how you use your P.S., never fail to ask for action. This is what a fundraising letter is all about. You'll resolve any questions that may be hanging concerning the reply mechanics, and you'll get the person thinking about taking action. This serves to overcome human inertia."

[Ed. Note: Jerry Huntsinger is Senior Creative Consultant for Craver, Matthews, Smith, & Company. He contributes a regular column to Fundraising Success Magazine. You can get a free subscription at www.fundraisingsuccessmag.com.]

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