

Important points to remember:

- **Fund-raising is relationship building!**
- **Recognition should underscore every phase of your engagement with both individuals and institutions.**

STEP ONE:

Be sure all donors have been tracked throughout the program/project/event. Use this record to also be sure all donors have been thanked accordingly. Create a spreadsheet with first/last name, salutation, address, and zip if you don't already have one.

STEP TWO:

Create the acknowledgment letter. Include the following:

- The amount, mode, and date of the contribution, and
- A statement confirming that no goods or services were exchanged and the gift is tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.
- Sometimes, however, a gift may include both a contribution and payment for a good or service. For instance, if I buy a \$500 ticket to your gala event, which covers my ticket to your show with a "fair market value" of \$50, my tax-deductible contribution to you is \$450. Here it's imperative to indicate the full amount of my contribution and further specify my tax-deductible portion in my acknowledgment. For those of you exploring crowdfunding campaigns with or for a nonprofit, any costs related to your rewards would have to be similarly taken into account.

STEP THREE:

Double-check your letter for appropriate salutation, grammar, and word choice.

STEP FOUR:

Review your letter. Does it sound respectful, grateful, and honest? Does it briefly describe the positive outcomes from the program/project/event? Does it encourage your donor to remain engaged in other ways?

STEP FIVE:

Continue to thank and cultivate your donors through other ways including:

- Phone calls
- Handwritten notes
- Event invites
- Naming opportunities
- Public recognition in a speech, website, or program recognition
- Updating with details about their impact on the organization/audience served

STEP SIX:

Thank-yous should be mailed as soon as possible following the event/project/program. Use programs like MailMerge to speed up the process. Always try to use a real ink signature on the thank-you letter, even if the letter itself is a form letter.