

## CHECKLIST For Annual Appeals



Here's a convenient checklist you can use to test the appeal letters you create for camp.

### **PERSONALIZED**

Do you demonstrate that you know the reader and her/his interest, connection, history with camp? "Dear Fred" not "Dear Friend." More use of "you," "me," "we" and "us."

### **STRONG OPENING**

Do you hook your reader from the get go? Use short, crisp questions, or quotes to introduce your story and your storyteller. Use words to draw in and inspire them.

### **SIMPLE CONSISTENT THEME**

Do you focus on one easy to understand theme about improving the camp experience, access, the future of camp and the link to the future of Judaism?

### **AUTHENTIC, CONVERSATIONAL, POSITIVE TONE**

Do you write as you'd sound in a friendly conversation? Is your letter free of industry, organizational and fundraising jargon? Remember: IT'S CAMP. Or does it sound like it was written by a committee? Avoid negative messages, crisis mentality, too much focus on "NEED," or reference the economic crisis?

### **ASK CLEAR & SPECIFIC**

Can the reader have any doubt what your asking them to do and why? Do you request a specific gift amount (or menu of gift levels) and link it to specific benefits for campers and donors? Do you make it clear and easy to give including alternative channels?

### **GRATITUDE**

Do you show appreciation for and results from past support and for the time and consideration your reader is giving to your request?

### **SIGNATURE**

Is the letter signed by a real person (not a committee)? Is that person's title or connection to camp obvious to the reader?

### **P.S.**

Do you reiterate the ask, benefit, call to action/deadline, alternative channels to give? If a reader looks at your first sentence and P.S. would it be clear why you're writing?

## **\_\_REPLY DEVICE**

Does your reply card/envelope echo and support the theme, ask amount and purpose? Could it stand on its own in a pile of bills and remind your reader why she/he was inspired to give?

## **\_\_SUPPORTIVE CHANNELS**

Does your website's GIVING page share the look and feel and theme of the appeal letter? Do you reference the appeal in through e-mail, your e-newsletter, on your social media? Is the theme and content similar and mutually supportive?