

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?