

TEMPLATE FOR FUNDRAISING LETTER

Your name:

Designation:

Name of the organizations:

Address:

Date:

Name of the donor:

Address of the donor:

Personalized Salutation:

Opening paragraph: In this opening paragraph, you should strive to capture reader's attention (personal story, unexpected fact, etc.)

Second paragraph: In this paragraph, you should introduce yourself briefly. You should also introduce your organization and its objective. So you must provide the donor with overall background of the organization.

Third paragraph: In this paragraph you should give the details of the fundraising effort. If it is a special cause then give the details of that cause. In case of event, let the donor know about the estimated cost and how much is desired from this fundraising effort and for what purpose.. If the donor has given before, you acknowledge past gifts and discuss how these past gifts have benefited those you help.

Fourth Paragraph: This last closing paragraph is very important, as here you need to appeal the donor to donate a specific amount to the cause. Let the donor know what his contribution means to your organization and how it will specifically benefit those your organization helps.

Complimentary close: Thank donor for their anticipated action.

Sincerely,

Personalized signature

P.S. Reference again the need for a gift today. Reference the enclosed materials to be completed and returned with the donor's gift.

Here are some samples of real fundraising letters, each written in a different style. You can use one as a starting point, but the best letters will reflect your own individual personality. Just be yourself, be sincere, and people will respond. Write from the heart and tell your story.

Sample Fundraising Letter 1:

Dear Matthew,

On the night of June 9-10, 2012, I will join thousands of other people on a 18-mile walk as part of the Out of the Darkness Overnight, an event that raises money for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. The goal of this journey, which will begin at dusk and finish at dawn, is to raise funds for suicide prevention, erase the stigma surrounding suicide and its causes, to encourage those suffering from mental illness to seek treatment, and to show support for the families and friends of the 30,000 Americans who die by suicide and the 20 million people that suffer from depression each year.

I am writing to you today to ask for your support of this effort.

I know from my own experience of losing my sister Mia to suicide that serious depression and other mental illnesses can be fatal. Mia struggled with depression and alcohol, and tried very hard to overcome her illnesses and move forward with her life. She cared for many people and was loved by even more. We have been forever changed by her loss and will continue to miss her deeply every day of our lives. By participating in this event, I hope to raise awareness of the serious threat that mental illness can pose and the treatment options that can help people overcome it. If one person can be saved from the illness that killed Mia, my efforts to walk 20 miles and to raise money for this cause will be worthwhile.

Please take a moment to read the enclosed fact sheet about suicide and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. Think about how much you can give to this cause and complete the enclosed donation form today. You can also donate online at www.TheOvernight.org. My goal is to raise \$5,000 or more. I hope that you will help me reach my goal by making a donation today.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and for being a part of my life, both when Mia was alive and in the three years since she died. It is through the love and support of family and friends that I have survived.

Sincerely,

Carol

Sample Fundraising Letter 2:

Dear Mr. Williams,

On the night of June 9-10, 2012, I'll be participating in a very special and powerful event throughout the night to prevent suicide. It's the Out of the Darkness Overnight and I'd like to tell you about it.

I'll walk 18 miles throughout the night with thousands of other people. The net proceeds will support the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's programs and mission.

I've agreed to raise a minimum of \$1,000 in donations. My personal goal is to raise \$3,000. But I need your help. Would you please consider making a fully tax-deductible donation of \$100 to help me meet my goal? Just follow the link below to visit my personal fundraising webpage, where you can donate online.

Suicide is the 11th leading cause of death and the second leading cause of death among college students. Every year, more than 32,000 people in the United States will die from suicide. That's why I'm doing this. To do something bold about an issue that so few people talk about. I hope that you'll share this incredible journey with me - by supporting me in my fundraising efforts.

Thank you in advance for your generosity.

All my best,

Glenn

P.S. Your employer may augment your donation through a matching gift program - please check your company's policy.

Sample Fundraising Letter 3:

Dear Julie,

On the night of June 9-10, 2012, I'm participating in a unique event that's very important to me. It's called Out of the Darkness Overnight and it's a 20-mile walk through the night, from dusk until dawn. The goal of this remarkable journey is to raise funds for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

Twenty million Americans suffer from depression - that's about 10 percent of the population. Thankfully, depression is among the most treatable of psychiatric illnesses. Some estimates suggest that between 80 percent and 90 percent of people with depression respond positively to treatment, and almost all patients gain some relief from their symptoms. But first, depression has to be recognized. Unfortunately, depression left untreated often leads to suicide. I'm participating in this event to try to change that fact.

I am writing to you today to ask for your support. I've experienced some of the dark days of depression personally, but through help I have come out the other side. That is why walking in the Overnight is so close to my heart. My goal is to raise at least \$2,000 for this cause. You can help by making a donation. You can give online at www.TheOvernight.org (select "Support a Participant" and search for my name) or fill out the enclosed donation form and mail it in to the bank address on the form.

Thank you for your consideration and support. I'll keep you updated on my progress as I continue my fundraising efforts and take part in this inspiring event.

Sincerely,

Angela

Sample Fundraising Letter 4:

Dear Patty,

I am preparing for something very important in my life, and I am asking for your moral, financial, and emotional support.

My uncle, Jeff, took his own life fifteen years ago. It's not something that I have talked about often, but it is something that I have carried around in my heart for a long time.

I want to commemorate Jeff's life by participating in Out of the Darkness Overnight, an event that raises money for suicide prevention research, education, survivor and awareness programs. I will be among thousands of people walking 18 miles from sunset to sunrise to send a message of hope to the world.

No one talked to me about my uncle's suicide. That's why I'm walking in Out of the Darkness Overnight, to raise awareness and let people know it is ok to talk about suicide and mental illness. I want to do my part to prevent this tragedy from happening in other families.

Your contribution \$25, along with contributions from thousands of others, will have a serious impact on this cause. To help make a difference, you can click the link below to visit my personal fundraising webpage and donate online. I encourage you to share this letter with other people who may want to lend their support as well.

Sincerely,

Michelle

P.S. Your donation today will help assure that others get the support they need to prevent suicide!

Sample Fundraising Letter 5:

Dear Maria,

On the night of June 9-10, 2012, my husband, Raj, and I will be joining thousands of others in Out of Darkness Overnight, a 18-mile walk throughout the night. Our goal is to raise funds and awareness about suicide and depression. But, to achieve this goal I need your help. I am asking you to lend your moral, emotional, and financial support to Raj and me.

I have never felt comfortable asking for money, not even for the kids' school fundraisers! However, this cause is very important to me. As you know, my sister Melanie died by suicide when she was just 21. Please join Raj and me in our fight to end the silence about suicide and mental illness. Will you consider helping us with a tax-deductible donation of \$100? I am going all out in an attempt to collect as much money from as many donors as possible. Your contribution along with the donations of thousands of others will have a serious impact for this cause. Net proceeds will fund the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's research, education, survivor and awareness programs - both to prevent suicide and to assist those affected by suicide.

I know I am asking for a lot. But it will take a lot to help end the overwhelming silence that surrounds suicide. When you have made your decision simply go to www.TheOvernight.org, click "Support a Participant", and look up my personal fundraising webpage to donate online.

From the bottom of my heart I thank you for your support. I will certainly keep you posted on our progress as Raj and I train and prepare for this event.

Sincerely,

Kelley

Which of these letters does the best job? Consider such things as:

- Personalization
- Donor interests
- Compelling story
- Direct ask amount
- You vs. I attitude
- Benefits focused