YOUR

End-of-Year Fundraising Kit

2026

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The Last 60 Days: Your Year-End Checklist

Tape this up. Check one box a day. You've got this.

This week

☐ Give to your own nonprofit on your mobile device. If it takes more than a minute, fix it.
☐ Add a monthly giving choice to your donate page and reply card.
☐ Write your year-end thank-you letter now, before the gifts come in.
☐ Pull your top 25 donors by lifetime giving.
☐ Put Thank-You Thursday on your calendar. 30 minutes, every week.

Before Thanksgiving, November 26

☐ Get your year-end letter in the mail.
☐ Ask board members to add a handwritten note to letters for donors they know.
☐ Send a short we-miss-you note to donors who gave last year but not this year.

GivingTuesday, December 1: your thank-you day

☐ Send every donor a short thank-you with one small story. No ask.
☐ Make three thank-you calls. Ask one question: "What made you decide to give?"

Through December

☐ Call your top 25 donors. Thank them. Ask your one question.
☐ Send a second ask to everyone who hasn't given yet. Same story. Shorter letter.
☐ Tell donors about the new tax break: most can now deduct up to $1,000 in cash gifts, or $2,000 for married couples filing jointly, even if they don't itemize. (Check with your tax advisor.)

The last week, December 26 to 31

☐ Send three or four short emails. Two of them on December 31.
☐ Check your donate page every day, on your phone first.

Every single day

☐ Thank every gift within 48 hours, signed by a real person.

January 4

☐ Start your thank-a-thon. Every year-end donor hears from you.
☐ Put your December donors on a 90-day plan for their second gift.

Foolproof Year-End Fundraising 2026

Fundraising Menu

Thank you for helping with our year-end campaign! This is an "All you can eat" menu! Please commit to as many items as you like — but at least one per category.

Board Member:_____ Date:_____

Appetizer

- ☐ Write personal notes on appeal letters
- ☐ Attend and mingle with guests at a house party
- ☐ Review donor names to help with year-end appeal
- ☐ Provide prospect names/addresses for appeal
- ☐ Hand-write thank you notes BEFORE the campaign
- ☐ Other:_____

Main Course

- ☐ Personal visit with major donor
- ☐ Host a house party
- ☐ Hand-address envelopes to major donors for year-end appeal
- ☐ Make donor thank you calls
- ☐ Invite a prospect for a program/facilities tour
- ☐ Buy stamps for year-end appeal letters/thank you's
- ☐ Accompany staff member on donor visit
- ☐ Other:_____

Dessert

- ☐ Create social media posts and share
- ☐ Make thank you calls to donors
- ☐ Write thank you notes to donors
- ☐ Donate food for mailing party
- ☐ Proof final appeal (for grammar only)
- ☐ Other:_____

Grateful Acknowledgement to Andy Robinson

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Your Donor Call Script

Our world may be upside down right now, but you, dear fundraiser have the power to help ease that fear and uncertainty with a personal touch! 😊

Make a practice to call five donors today and every day to say hello and to find out how they're holding up. Let your donors know that you CARE. Tell them what you're doing with your team and remind them that their previous support allows you to meet needs in your community.

Modify this script, adapted by a training given for our Year-End Fundraising Program by Simon Scriver, and create your own.

Remember, practice makes perfect. Once you begin chatting with your donors, you'll develop a rhythm for these calls and (yes, it's true!) and even begin to enjoy them. As this practice becomes habit, you'll also find your calls beginning to inform your fundraising and marketing in a way that nothing else can touch.

1. Begin by introducing yourself and building rapport.

Just like we create a personna when we're writing fundraising copy, imagine your donor is your grandmother, a beloved aunt or neighbor.

> "Hi, it's [First Name] from [Organization]. Do you have a few minutes for a quick chat?"
> "Is now a good time? You're not in the middle of something, are you?"

2. Find out how they're holding up.

> "We've all been through so many challenges and I was calling to see how you're doing." Do they have any special challenges (childcare, aging parents, quarantine, etc.). Give thanks and highlight what their support made possible.

Remember, there's always an opportunity to show genuine appreciation. Get into a gratitude mindset before making your calls.

> "Thank you for coming to our event last fall…"
> "Thank you for your support last year. Because of your support, we were able to…"
> "It's only because of support of people like you that we've come this far."

3. That's it! These calls are solely for gratitude and to let your supporters know they're not alone.

> Make notes of the discussion in your donor's record.

Find your own voice and your own structure. *Remember that your donors are changing the world through you*.

Voicemail

For the vast majority of your calls, you'll reach voicemail. Do leave a message.

> "Hi there, this is [Your Name] calling. I'm the [Title] from [Org]. I'm calling today to thank you for… And also to find out how you're holding up right now. If you have any questions at all or there's anything that we can do for you, you can reach me at 000-000-0000.
>
> Thank you again for your past support. It's only because of support of people like you that we've come this far."