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Donor Stewardship Checklist:

Essential Steps to Engage and Appreciate Your Supporters

When someone gives something valuable like **money or time**, it is important to show how those things have made an impact and how much you appreciate them by expressing **gratitude** and reporting on their impact.

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Make sure to give supporters what they need and do your best to help them feel like they're getting something out of the relationship, too.

Here are some tips to stand out with stewardship:

1 Send Receipts & Acknowledgements Quickly ☐

Sending a prompt response to a gift shows respect for the donation and makes your organization stand out.

- Receipts should be sent immediately when supporters donate online.
- Acknowledgments should be mailed within 48 hours to three days.

You should never wait so long that supporters forget why they gave in the first place.

2 Personalize Receipts & Acknowledgments ☐

Communication to any supporter should be personalized as much as possible and can include:

- Personalized salutation (Not "donor" or "friend")
- Compelling content that expresses gratitude
- Copy that conveys how the gift will be used and the subsequent impact
- If you use images, ensure they are positive and uplifting
- Hand-signed, if mailed
- Signed by a beneficiary, board member, or executive director
- Include a personal note if possible

Mentioning the impact of the gift or the last interaction the supporter had with the organization are also impactful ways to personalize acknowledgements.

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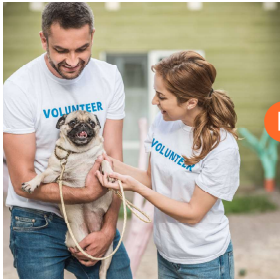
Sample Donation Receipt

A donation receipt is often a donor's first impression of your organization. Use customization and images to make it memorable.

A From the organization

B Personalized greeting

C Engaging subject line - short, sweet, and to the point!

D Compelling, positive visual image or video

A From: **Organization Name**

Subject: **Your Gift in Action** **C**

B Dear Donor Name,

This is a great place for a memorable sentence that conveys gratitude and impact!

Donor Name:

Amount:

Donation Interval:

Receipt #:

Donated At:

Payment Method:

Subscribed to Mailing List:

Donor Address

 D

This is a great space for 1-2 more sentences about impact or to showcase how the donation will be used.

Gratefully,

Organization Name

Contact information

If you have any questions about your donation, please contact support.

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3 Keep Communication Consistent ☐

Sending regular correspondence at consistent intervals conveys professionalism and builds organizational recognition.

- If you promise something at a certain cadence, stick to it.
- Send newsletters and updates at the same time weekly and monthly
- If you don't have a lot to report, a simple campaign or program update will do.
- Use storytelling and compelling images to convey the impact your organization.

4 Be Transparent ☐

Be transparent about what's going on at your organization and what your donors funds are being used for. Even if something not so great is going on at your organization, share it. Authenticity and truthfulness are key here. Ways to encourage transparency might include:

- Deliver impactful programs and services
- Include financial disclosures and reports on the website
- Send tax receipts to donors of all amounts
- Adhere to industry standards, such as AFP's Donor Bill of Rights

5 Ask for Feedback ☐

Make sure that you're giving your supporters what they need and doing your best to help them feel like they're getting something out of the relationship, too.

- Engage supporters regularly through meetings, events, and serving opportunities.
- Create and send a donor survey to learn more about what motivates them.

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Sample Acknowledgment

This sample acknowledgment showcases the principles highlighted above, plus some extra tips and tricks.

A Personalized salutation

B Refrain from using anything too personal when closing your letter.

C Hand-signed (in blue if possible)

D It's best to be prompt. Try to send within 48 hours of receiving the gift.

E Use paragraphs that are short in length

F Include contact information

G Get creative with organization or personal stationery that is not letterhead sized.

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Date **D**

Recipient Name
123 Anywhere St.
Any City, ST 12345

A Dear Preferred Name,

Wow! Use an attention getter in this first sentence. Please, please try not to start your letter with "Thank you for your generous donation." **E**

Next, genuinely say thank you and include a bit about your mission or the "why" of what you do.

Transition to your second paragraph to share more about the impact or reach of the organization's programs.

As you close your letter, express gratitude one more time.

B Sincerely,

C Sign Here

Writer's Name Here
Title Here

+123-456-7890 **F**
hello@reallygreatsite.com
www.reallygreatsite.com

G

About Donorbox

Donorbox provides nonprofits with digital giving tools and services to improve their fundraising activities, form better relationships with donors, and build sustainable growth.

See how our platform can help boost your fundraising or visit our blog for more nonprofit marketing tips.

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