

FROM YOUR AGENTS ACADEMY RESOURCE LIBRARY THANK YOU LETTER CHECKLIST

1. Personalized and Opens with Inspiration

‘Dear Jen’ not ‘Dear Friends of Save the Birds’. Never EVER ‘On behalf of’. Try: ‘You’re amazing! Your gift made my morning! The birds are soaring higher today!’

2. More ‘You’ than ‘We’

Seriously. Count them. Use ‘The Red Pen Test’ in all your fundraising and communications: circle the you’s with a red pen. Like King Tom Ahern says, it should look like it has the measles.

3. You speak to what the gift was for

Your gift is going help us build birdhouses, support citizen scientists monitoring the Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker populations, and advocate for more protected habitats.

4. You remind donors of your victories

Together with your amazing support, we provide urgent help to the Sapsuckers, the same way you helped us bring the Blue Tit back from the brink of extinction!

5. You promise something.

You’ll hear from us with an update on the Sapsucker project after the spring bird count and migration.

6. You share an honest and heart-felt thank you.

The Sapsuckers needed you and you were there. Thank you so much for your kind and compassionate gift and your confidence in our work.

7. You invite personal contact

We always love hearing from you. You can contact me/us anytime at (phone and email). And if you'd like to join one of our birding walks, please get in touch!

7. You sign off with something memorable.

Yours, for the birds, forever!

8. You sign it

If it's a printed letter, hand sign it. Even better, add a special personal note. If it's an email, add a signature and a photo. And no rock star signatures! Who can sign it? Board members, staff or program team. Hopefully a variety of people over the course of a donor's journey.

9. You get to the end and sigh contentedly

Your donor is left with the lasting impression that when they gave their money to save the birds, it was completely the right decision. If you get to the end and it doesn't feel like a real letter from one person to another, start over.

10. BONUS! Use the 9 moral adjectives

Dr. Jennifer Shang from Plymouth University shares the 9 moral adjectives that move people. They are: **caring, compassionate, fair, friendly, generous, helpful, honest, hard-working, kind**. She proved that when referring to public radio station supporters in the US as "kind and compassionate", they increased giving among women by 10%. That's because these adjectives describe a core sense of who we actually are, and a core sense of who we ideally want to be.

Well done, Special Agent! You're a #donorlove ninja! And by improving your thank you letter, you've just increased the chances that a first time donor will give again. And by keeping your thank you letters fresh, your loyal donors get something unique and personal every time they give! Woot!