

Editing tools for communications success

- **Edit for unnecessary warm up sentences**

Eliminate words and phrases which warm up to the subject of asking people to give. If you want to ask your donors for a gift do early on in the appeal – people are not going to wait around till the end of your warm up session!

- **Edit for acronyms or jargon**

Using jargon or acronyms can work for communications inside the charity – staff members know what you are talking about and get on board. However, when you write to donors or the general public you need to make sure that you edit for those acronyms or phrases that are awkward or unfamiliar. They can hold up the supporter, confuse them and discourage them from reading your newsletters or appeals.

- **Edit for author's (CEO's?) pride**

When necessary question the complex word structures which demonstrate the author's literary or theological prowess. Remind the author that they are not delivering a speech but are writing short communications to invite people to respond in practical ways.

- **Edit for flow of ideas**

Writing a good communications piece can be often likened to building the structure of a house. So a sound framework really matters. There is a natural sequence of ideas which readers follow easily. Put your ideas in logical sequence even if it means turning your masterpiece inside out or upside down (again!).

- **Edit for highlighting the reasons 'Why' the donor should support this project**

Make your case for support and then make it again and again! Use all the reasons 'why' the donors should give to this project. Don't be tricked into believing that they will agree with your unsupported arguments or accept your statements at face value just because 'they like what you do.'

- **Edit to highlight the benefits to donors**

Effective fundraising is about mutual value creation. So, if you really want to offer something of value to donors in exchange for their gifts then start looking for ways to communicate clearly the benefits to the donors in your appeals.

- **Edit with your audience in mind**

Look at your copy from the point of view of your reader. Is your language, style, and tone something your prospect can be comfortable with and motivating them to respond? – If not, go back to the drawing board and start again.