

Nana Murphy's Fundraising Playbook

From Ireland With Love



The Companion Handouts
to Dublin Charity
Merchants Quay Ireland's
5-Year Case Study on
Donor-Centric Fundraising
for Retention, Revenue,
& Results



Nana Murphy

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The Companion Handouts to
 Dublin Charity Merchants Quay
 Ireland's 5-Year Case Study on
 Donor-Centric Fundraising for
 Retention, Revenue, & Results

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Irish charity MQI's Riverbank homeless centre in Dublin.

Nana Murphy's Fundraising Playbook: From Ireland with Love

The year was 2008...

That's when US-born fundraiser Denisa Casement, CFRE, moved to Dublin to start up fundraising for Irish homeless charity Merchants Quay Ireland (MQI). Two weeks later, Lehman Bros collapsed – followed quickly by a banking crisis that made the one in the U.S. look like a blip on the radar screen. And it was here, in the teeth of one of the worst recessions in Irish history, an unlikely donor love story began.



Denisa Casement



Lisa Sargent



Sandra Collette

Nana Murphy's Fundraising Playbook holds the companion handouts to 2016 AFP International Fundraising Conference premier "From Ireland With Love," presented by Casement and her longstanding creative team of fundraising copywriter Lisa Sargent and donor-centric design expert Sandra Collette. On the *Playbook's* pages you'll find many of the basic rules, copywriting and design methodologies, and

field-tested strategies that took Merchants Quay Ireland from annual revenues of just €250K to €3 million (a more than tenfold increase) in a little over five years. With a donor retention rate of 64% in 2013-14 on a database that through active and ongoing acquisition now stands more than eight times larger than it was back when Casement first walked through MQI's doors and the Irish recession dug in, the tips and tactics you'll find on the following pages have proven – in good times and bad – to be worth their weight in donor gold.

May the *Playbook* guide your nonprofit organization to world-class donor care... bigger revenues... higher retention rates... and a better world for us all.

Here's to your donors!

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Play #1: Know your Nana

Who is this woman and how can she help you fundraise better?



Every nonprofit has a Nana Murphy... that is, an average donor. If you want better fundraising results, you must know *your* nonprofit's Nana Murphy. At many organizations, *that* means an older – late 60s, 70s, and 80s – woman. (Think grandmother. Or as the Irish say, “nana.”) She likes to read. She reads her mail, with eyeglasses. She gives to multiple charities. She responds to authenticity, emotion, and honesty. And yes, she knows when you dish out something other than that.

In short, unless you are a grandmother in your 70s, you are not your donor. *That* means your fundraising and donor communications decisions – from type font to newsletter content to package format – don't hinge on how you feel. They hinge on how your Nana Murphy feels. This cutout Nana, for you to place on your desk or bulletin board, is to remind you to keep your donors at the heart of everything you do... just like MOI has been doing for over seven years now, to great results.

<cut along the dotted line

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Strategy Secrets



*"The future depends on
what you do today."*

— Mahatma Gandhi

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Play #2: Know your numbers

8 all-star fundraising formulas (and how to calculate them)

For all the talk about donor retention, it's shocking to know how many nonprofits never calculate this vital benchmark – or many others for that matter – for the simple reason that they don't know how. Here are eight key formulas to get you started...

1. Response Rate = Number of gifts received ÷ Number of mail packs sent

2. Average Gift (AG) = Total income ÷ Number of donations received

3. Retention Rate = (Number who gave in Year One and again in Year Two) ÷ Total number who gave in Year One

4. Return on Investment (ROI) = Total Income ÷ Total Cost (note: may be as a percent, as in 200%, or as a ratio, as in 2:1)

5. Cost to Raise a Euro (Dollar, or Other Currency) = Total Cost ÷ Total Income (expressed as a percent, as in 39%, or decimal, as in .39)

6. Net Income = Total Income – Total Cost

7. Lifetime Value (LTV) = Avg Annual Gift ÷ Annual Attrition Rate

8. Casement Quotient™ (for Calculating the Value of Your Team) = (Annual fundraising income ÷ 52) ÷ total # of hours in your work week*

**e.g. n 2015 MQI's fundraising team raised €1,627/hr, or €2,300/day per day per person. This helps their board and other decision-makers to value the team's time accordingly.*

[END]



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Play #3: Move beyond an Annual Appeal

Denisa's strategies for growth and sustainability

A single annual appeal at year-end does not a donor communications program make. If you want higher fundraising revenues and a bigger donor base, you need a better strategy. Try MQI's...

1. Eliminate fundraising and donor communications team silos.

At MQI we don't build artificial silos around departments such as major gifts or planned giving. A "team ethos" reigns instead, right down to the open office space that promotes a daily running conversation and synergy among team members. No one is cloistered, and there are no turf wars over donors. Dublin staff are cross-trained and keep their trans-Atlantic creative team in the loop more than many in-house teams, including report-backs on metrics and sending along

quarterly packs of donor feedback notes and hard copy mail samples.

2. And don't silo your donors, either. At MQI, for example, everyone gets the donor newsletter, from monthlies to majors to corporate and legacy givers. (Note: team performance metrics – such as the Casement Quotient™ on page 5 – go a long way towards preventing my-donors/your-donors battles.)

3. Continually recruit new donors: even with a solid donor retention rate, if you

don't do ongoing acquisition, your donor base is shrinking. And sooner or later that spells catastrophe. Merchants Quay Ireland does several acquisition campaigns throughout the year – year in and year out.

4. Have a welcome pack and update it regularly to retain new donors. This is not a one-and-done kind of project: MQI reexamines and refreshes its pack at least once a year.

5. Mail enough. At MQI this works out to four newsletters and four appeals per year, in addition to any related thank-yous. (Note: we started with fewer mailings. Income and response rates *increased* as we added more. Those self-proclaimed experts who tell you to "rest" your donors? Ignore them: Absence does not make donors' hearts grow fonder.)

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Play #3: Move beyond an Annual Appeal, continued

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6. **Make Ask/Thank/Report-Back your mission.**

At MOI this isn't just table talk. It's the driving, daily force behind our donor retention communications program. This means:

- Ask, and not just for money – in appeals, ask for donations. In newsletters and other communications, ask donors to attend free events, for their opinions in surveys, and more.
- Thank, and not just in thank-yous – Send warm, personal thank you letters. Thank in newsletters, from articles to captions to call-outs. Thank donors in your invitations to special events.
- Report back, dependably – Newsletters are sent quarterly, like clockwork. They have no direct ask for gifts.

7. **Always and actively be converting cash donors to monthly donors.**

- Ten percent of MOI's donor base is monthly – and that number is growing.
- Include a monthly giving option on all reply devices & donation pages for both current donor appeals and acquisition appeals
 - We set aside one appeal each year to ask our under €150 donors to convert to a monthly gift; six different

segments are asked for a single, finely calibrated, monthly amount.

8. **Upcycle your best-performing material – not the material that you or your staff or your department heads like best.**

- At MOI:
- Winning warm, or 'house,' appeals get modified and tested as acquisition packs, to excellent results;

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Play #3: Move beyond an Annual Appeal, continued

continued from page 7

- Newsletter stories are converted to emails and newspaper advertorials and inserts;
- Our best-performing newsletters are converted to welcome packs;
- Winning emotive images are used everywhere – from outer envelopes to building banners to legacy literature;
- In-house versions of winning packs are overprinted and kept on hand for donor visits, hyper-personalising, etc;
- Articles and infographics are adapted for use on MQI's website and in the annual report.

9. Know who's in your database.

For example:

- NOT DONORS – if you treat these lukewarm prospects like active donors, prepare to be disappointed: Bought a raffle ticket/rubber duck/calendar/

candy bar... Signed a petition (great advocates but they're not donors yet) ... Attended an event with a friend/sponsor... Sponsored a friend in your whatever-a-thon. Again, NOT active donors.

- LAPSED DONORS – (haven't given in over 24 months) Often discounted, these donors are MUCH better than lukewarm, and respond really well to the right communications. For MQI, Christmas is the best time to renew lapsed donors.
- CURRENT DONORS (have given in the last 0-24 months)

10. And know the value of who's

in your database. You must know the value of a current donor in order to make a sound business case for acquisition costs and investing in donor retention. Here's how to achieve that:

- Track the results of your current donors (0-24 months) separately from all other segments.
- Calculate the Lifetime Value, or LTV, of your current donors. (Refer to page 5, #7 for how to calculate.)
- Compare the LTV to the cost of acquisition (ACQ): Cost of new donor ACQ - LTV = Net Value. This is a rough Net Value of new donors.

To illustrate: if your retention rate for new donors is 50%, you will keep 500 of every 1,000 donors you acquire. If your lifetime value per donor is \$300 (again for example) then the net value of your new donors is \$150,000, or (1000 new donors/50% retention = 500) X LTV = Net Value

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Play #3: Move beyond an Annual Appeal, continued

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- Calculate the LTV for the donors you're losing through attrition, too. This tells you how much you should invest to keep those donors.

Continuing from above

illustration: if you have a 50% retention rate, this means

you also have a 50% attrition rate. Using the same \$300 LTV, every 500 donors you lose is \$150,000 in lost donation revenues. This helps you make the case for how much it's worth investing on retention communications to keep those donors.

11. Ask for the right amount. Are your ask levels designed to retain donors or are you constantly trying to upgrade to the highest possible gift? (This is an example of bad agency practices.) In order to build donor loyalty and retention you must inspire them to give (through great creative) and make giving do-able. Looking at their giving history enables you to take your cues from the donor. Donors don't like to say no... so make it easier to say yes, more often. MOI looks at highest gift and average gift in context:

- Is their highest gift at year end? Then that's when we ask for it.
- Outside of the holidays, we look at average gift. Then we create an ask string with that gift in the middle.
- Caveat: this strategy horrifies agencies. But with

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Play #3: Move beyond an Annual Appeal, continued

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nonprofit retention rates
floundering in dark, abyss-like
depths, it's time to change
tactics.

12. Continually personalize & offer opportunities for more personal engagement.

- At MOI every thank you letter contains: an invitation to monthly tour/Open Day/Free Concert, and contact details for the fundraising team – first name, phone number and email address of a *real person*.
- Hand-signed letters (as many as possible depending on volume)
- Custom letters that acknowledge a note or phone call from the donor
- Immediate thank-you calls for gifts above a certain threshold
- Hand-signed note from CEO for gifts above a certain threshold

- Major Donors receive CEO's contact info
- Acknowledgment of prayer requests sent to the friary. Note: MOI and the Franciscan Friary next door are separate organizations. But not all donors remember this. So, we send any prayer requests received to the friary *and acknowledge this in the thank-you letter*.
- Newsletters include: Wish list for in-kind donations (with fundraising staff contact details); invitations to monthly tour/Open Day/Free Concert; legacy call-out boxes with free details upon request.

13. End review by committee.

The review and approval process for your creative matters a lot: don't subject it to death by a thousand cuts in a review process that includes all

of your board, your executive team, and a dozen random programs people.

14. Do multichannel, but think monochannel.

Whether it's your website, your emails, your DRTV ads, your text-to-give campaign, or your direct mail pack, there is only one channel to donors: YOU. At MOI teams are not siloed by channel: instead the same staff and creative team oversees everything that goes out, following the entire process through and ensuring a seamless flow and donor experience from beginning to end.

15. And cross channels.

MOI cross channels immediately: for example, after an online gift and the thank-you redirect and thank-you email, donors also get sent a thank-you letter via post within 24 hours – and a welcome pack soon after. DRTV

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Play #3: Move beyond an Annual Appeal, continued

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responders who don't give but request information via post actually receive it, and quickly: usually within 2-3 days.

16. Keep donors over egos, always. Remember you are not your donors. We create and upcycle material based on what donors have responded to most strongly in the past, not based on whether we personally like a piece.

17. Drip-feed legacy. Making a gift in your will is a message that MOI donors hear often, hear warmly, and hear in a personal, nostalgic, and reflective way: in newsletter call-out boxes and articles, on tours & visits, in special inserts. The process goes on, subtly, all year long – again to solid results.

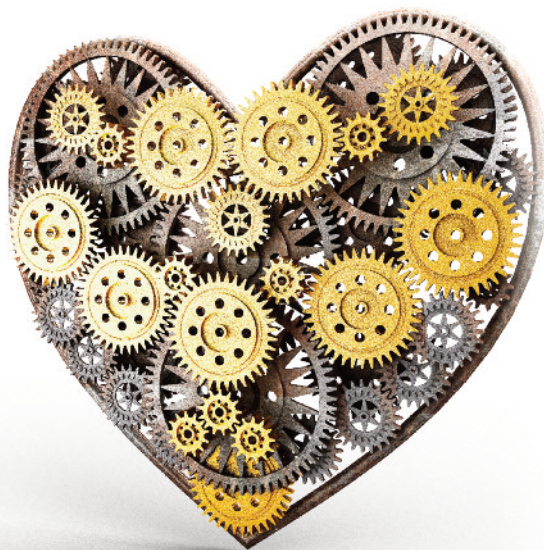
18. Monitor continuously. Know this: *Planning* a great donor experience is not the same as *daily implementation* of excellent donor care – and the road to attrition hell is paved with good intentions and bad implementation. Every morning at Merchants Quay Ireland, one of the fundraising team runs a report of new donors from the day before and makes sure they get a hand-signed thank you. Every two weeks a team member runs a new donor

report and makes sure they all receive a personalized welcome pack. These are a few examples of the checks and balances in place that constantly monitor the donor journey to be sure what's supposed to happen, actually does: so no one falls through the cracks.

19. And above all... at MOI, culture eats strategy for lunch.

- Donor retention and loyalty isn't about one thing you do it's about every thing you do.
- Your strategy and processes must support a donor-centered culture.
- Every process must be assessed by its impact on the donor experience.
- We sometimes choose to do things less efficiently because they keep the donor experience more human.

[END]



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Copywriting Secrets

*"The idea is to write it
so that people hear
it and it slides through the
brain and goes straight to
the heart."*

— Maya Angelou



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Play #4: Up your interviewing game, part I

Interview essentials for more emotive appeals and newsletters

For better appeals and newsletters, you must get serious about interviewing. Better interview questions yield better answers. Better audio and transcripts mean better background material. And in the hands of your writer, better background material equals better appeals and newsletters... happier donors... higher retention... more donations. These tips will get you started —

Equipment:

MOI records all interviews on an Olympus Digital Voice Recorder VN6800 (newer model exists). When complete, both .wmv recordings and Word file of the interview transcript are used to write the project at hand. All transcripts are saved for future use/upcycling in articles, pull-quotes, testimonials, etc.

Art of the Interview (Dos and Dont's)

- 1. Do prepare your questions ahead of time.** At Merchants Quay Ireland we customize interview questions for every project. That's how important they are. Here's why: When you get into an interview it's easy to lose yourself, then you're back at the office and

realize you never asked your interviewee how it felt to be homeless at Christmas, for example, and it's a Christmas appeal you're writing. Having questions at the ready prevents this. You won't rigidly follow your list – in fact some you may not get to. But it's vital to have well-crafted questions at hand.

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"Always the beautiful answer who asks a more beautiful question." — e.e. cummings

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Play #4: Up your interviewing game, part I, continued

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- 2. Do set the ground rules.** Also vital. NPR's Terry Gross recommends that you let your interviewee "set the limits on what's private and therefore off-limits." The best way to do this is to hand them control from the start – so begin by saying something like, "If there's anything you don't want to answer, or you're uncomfortable with, just let me know." (If you're interviewing an expert, you could even say, "and if there's anything I need you to clarify, I'll speak up too. Fair enough?" This puts them in the driver's seat.)
- 3. Do violate decorum:** as an interviewer you have a limited amount of time to get the details you need. You also have a kind of implicit latitude to ask questions – intimate questions – that, as NPR's Gross says, you

usually don't ask someone you've just met. Yes, respect your interviewee always. But remember: they are there because they *want* to tell their story; doing so is as beneficial to them as it is to you. Plus, you've already set the ground rules. They know if it's too much they can decline to answer. Believe me, it rarely happens.

(Tips 2 and 3, from "Interviewing: Tips from a Pro" by The Listening Resource's [Susan Eliot](#). Source no longer available online.)

- 4. Do ask open-ended questions – and avoid yes/no questions.** Open-ended questions deliver better interview results than almost any other strategy. In other words, the questions that start with things like Who, What, When, Where, and How. On page 16 and [here online](#) is a list of open-ended questions to kickstart your next interview.

- 5. Do listen deeply.** (This means, think!) An [article in *The Atlantic*](#), for example (again covering the tactics of NPR master interviewer Terry Gross), explains: "If the interviewer is using [the time while the other person is talking] to simply move down to the next item on the question list, the results will be terrible. But if the interviewer is listening, then he or she is in a position to pick up leads ('Now, that's an intriguing idea, tell us more about...'), to look for interesting tensions, to sum up and give shape to what the subject has said." Or as John Sawatsky, interviewer of such renown they call him [The Question Man](#), says, "Build the interview on answers, not questions."
- 6. Don't lead the interviewee.** In a piece by [37 Signals](#), there are two excellent Sawatsky

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Play #4: Up your interviewing game, part I, continued

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examples of this: “instead of asking Sarah Ferguson, for example, ‘Is it hard being a duchess?’ ask: ‘What’s it like being a duchess?’ Instead of asking Ronald Reagan, ‘Were you scared when you were shot?’ ask: ‘What’s it like to be shot?’”.

- 7. Do wait.** Or, as one source put it, “Endure awkward silences.” When an interviewee pauses during an answer, wait. Avoid the temptation to fill the silence. If you let the silence hang, comfortable or un, nine times out of ten your interviewee will fill it by adding to their answer.
- 8. Do stow your ego.** It’s not about you sounding smart. In fact, if you don’t understand something, don’t pretend that

you do. Instead, ask for clarification. (To one of the world’s top experts on diabetes – and another time to a foremost expert on virtual 3D surgery, I’ve said, “I don’t understand what you mean. Can you please explain how that works?” Both happily complied – and later sent me invaluable support articles, photos and emails.)

- 9. Do stop talking.** The interviewee is the star here, not you. It’s not about you doing all the talking – one of the most common mistakes I see. John Sawatsky calls this rule, “Less is more.” (Superb example of a “less” question at Tip #6: *What’s it like to be shot?*) If your questions are long, loaded dissertations – if you interrupt people to interject your own thoughts – you’ll get puny answers. Which leads us to...

- 10. Don’t ask double-barreled questions!** John Sawatsky explains it thusly: by asking two interview questions in one, you give the interviewee the option of choosing to answer only one – which they do. [The American Journalism Review](#) gives this example: “Whom did you like interviewing most and what’s your most impressive interviewing coup?” Split your double barrel questions in two, and ask them separately.

- 11. Do give them the last word.** Ask if there’s anything else they’d like to add. (Then wait for the answer.)

- 12. Do say thank you... and ask to follow-up.** Get an email, phone number, whatever they prefer. Ask to reach out with follow-up questions if needed.

[END]

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Play #5: Up your interviewing game, part 2

64 open-ended questions to elevate your interviews

To see why open-ended questions are so powerful to use in your interviews, read Play #4 on page 13. Then put them to the test with these 65 question seeds...

1. Tell me your story...
2. Will you help me understand...
3. Describe for me...
4. Would you please tell me about...
5. What are your plans for the future?
6. What's the best/worst thing that's happened to you...
7. Where do you think you'd be now if you hadn't/had...
8. How did you first hear about...
9. If you could say one thing to the people who support XXX, what would it be?
10. What have you learned since...
11. How did you make that choice...
12. What does that mean to you...
13. In what way does...
14. How is life different for...
15. How did you feel when...
16. What made you decide to...
17. Why did you start...
18. What did you do next?
19. When did you feel most afraid/happy/sad...
20. What did you want to be when you were growing up?
21. If you could say one thing to others who now stand in your shoes, what would it be?
22. Can you re-enact the story for me, please?
23. What was the moment when everything changed? (Ask for the turning point)
24. What are the biggest challenges you face/faced?
25. What is your ideal solution/resolution?
26. How do you know that?
27. What makes you say that?
28. What does that mean?
29. Can you give me an example?
30. What's that like?
31. And?
32. How often does that happen?
33. How did you feel when...?

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Play #5: Up your interviewing game, part 2, continued

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- 34. How does that make you feel...?
- 35. What's it like to be...?
- 36. Tell me a story from your childhood...
- 37. If you could choose, what would you be doing X years from now...?
- 38. If you hadn't become _____, what might you have done...?
- 39. What was the best day of your life...?
- 40. Who was the person who most influenced you, and how?
- 41. If you were writing your epitaph, what would you say?
- 42. What's your vision for...?
- 43. What is your earliest memory?
- 44. How did being [homeless, hungry, abused, first in your family to graduate from college, etc.] change you?
- 45. What were your parents like?
- 46. What lessons did you learn from this time in your life? [Option: what lessons have you learned from...]
- 47. What are some of the happiest moments of your life?
- 48. What are some of the saddest?
- 49. Who are some of the most important people in your life? Can you tell me about them?
- 50. Do you have any regrets? [And: Would you like to share them? Have you worked to overcome them? How?]
- 51. What have you learned about yourself [from your experience, etc.]?
- 52. If you have children or family, what do you want them to know?
- 53. What has been a difficult thing to communicate to family, friends, or loved ones about [your experience]?
- 54. What was your relationship to _____? Do you have any traditions to honor _____?
- 55. What is one of your favorite memories of _____?
- 56. How did you change after losing _____?
- 57. When did you find out about _____'s death?
- 58. What has helped the most in your grief?
- 59. What was your relationship to _____?
- 60. What was your relationship like?
- 61. Tell me about _____.
- 62. What did _____ look like?
- 63. Do you have any favorite stories about _____?
- 64. LAST QUESTION OF ANY INTERVIEW: Is there anything else you'd like to tell me today?

Sources:

1. Questions 45-64 from the fabulous StoryCorps National Day of Listening. Find all their questions here: <http://nationaldayoflistening.org/downloads/DIY-Instruction-Guide.pdf>.
2. "Storytelling for Nonprofits: The Magic Seeds You Need First." Lisa Sargent, *The Loyalty Letter e-News*, April 2010.
3. "John Sawatsky and the Power of Simple Questions." *37 Signals*, August 2006.


[END]

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Play #7: Get grateful

The better donation thank-you letter checklist

A donor retention strategy without proper donation thank-you letters is no strategy at all – especially since, with a few proven pointers, you can have your thank yous sparkling in no time. This checklist – from Lisa Sargent's free before and after [thank you letter clinic on SOFII](#) – will help...

- 
- Is it personalized? (As in “Dear Lisa” vs. “Dear Friend”)
 - Is the gift amount noted?
 - Do you start with something other than “Thank you for your gift of...”?
 - Are you using an exciting lead?
 - Do you tell the donor when and how they will next hear from you?
 - If this is a repeat gift, do you also thank donor for their:
 - Past generosity (and indicate all its made possible), and
 - Continued contributions/ support

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Play #7: Get grateful, continued

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- If this is a gift membership (meaning made by someone else on giftee's behalf):
 - Do not thank the giftee, but talk about what "this kind gift makes possible"
 - Send a thank you letter to the gifter so they know their gift is on its way as intended
- Say something new or timely in the P.S. – videos online, a holiday message, an upcoming opportunity to visit or meet with you, etc.
- Include a contact number they can use if they have questions (you can add an e-mail, but not the generic "info@yourorg.org." Direct them to a warm body, please.)
- Do you need to thank them for something specific? For example:
 - Membership renewal
 - Holiday appeal
 - Memorial gift
- Capital campaign (focus on all the good this new building/machine/wing will do)
- Do you need to reference something specific? For example:
 - A gift you'll be sending
 - A certificate or photo you've enclosed
- Do you have a website? Mention it in the letter, with a simple call-for-action to drive them there. ("Keep up with all the ways you're helping XYZ at www.XYZ.org.")
- And remember to:
 - Keep the letter short (3-4 paras plus a P.S.)
 - Add required tax-deductible language
 - Share with them "all your gift makes possible..."
- Use more "you" than "we" and "our."
- Say thank you more than once.
- Who is your signatory? (President or CEO = first choice)
- Proof your letter:
 - Use spell check
 - Print the letter and read it out loud, word for word
- If you can, hand-sign them all. If you have too many donors, determine an amount at which you or a board member will hand-sign. And an amount for a phone call.
- Make sure your donation thank you does NOT include:
 - An additional "ask" for more money — but you can invite them to tour your programmes, visit, attend an event, etc.
 - An upgrade to monthly giving or other program
 - ~~A gift reply envelope (even if there is no ask)*~~
**Note from Lisa: My thank you letters never include an Ask for more money or a reply slip. But many of my clients include a reply envelope — it hasn't hurt retention at all. [END]*

Nana Murphy's Fundraising Playbook: From Ireland with Love

Play #8: Improve your appeal anatomy

Lisa's 25 ½ tips for writing better fundraising materials

Want to raise more money so you can do more good? Start with stronger appeals. But first, start with this dead simple copywriting checklist...

- Talk to Nana Murphy.**
Whether you write to donors via email or direct mail, keep their “picture” in your mind. Is your average donor 75 years old, female and a grandmother? See her. How does she feel? What’s she thinking? Writing to one person gives your communications an intimate voice... and a human touch.
- Be a “master of exclusion.”**
That’s what the brothers Heath wrote in *Made to Stick* (read it if you haven’t). Knowing what to leave out keeps your stories simple. And people remember simple. So don’t introduce too many themes, people, pets, whatever. Keep it simple.
- Add you, subtract the ‘Royal We’. (I is good too.)** Because of you, 20 children have fresh drinking water. Thanks to *you*, Fido has a loving home. With *your* support, five more adults can learn to read. People love “you.” So: less “institutional we.” Less “us.” The magic word is “you.” (Note: Tribal we, as in, “together we can move mountains,” is good stuff, used properly. For more, see [“Ushering in the Age of Donor Realism”](#).)
- Focus on benefits, hard and soft.** Does the donation come with a magazine subscription? Say so. Will it bring 25 pets in from the cold? Say that, too.
- Write a pack, not a letter.**
Your outer envelope, letter, reply/remittance envelope, and reply slip should – whenever possible – reinforce each other.
- Define your OAF.** Offer. Audience. Format. Before you start writing, you need to know what you’re asking people to do, when they need to do it by (e.g., is there a deadline?), who you’re writing to in the first place, and whether or not there are restrictions on the format of the pack itself.

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Nana Murphy's Fundraising Playbook: From Ireland with Love

Play #8: Improve your appeal anatomy, continued

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Use triggers. Bob Hacker and Axel Andersson called them key copy drivers, and there are seven: fear, greed, guilt, anger, fear, exclusivity, salvation and flattery. But fundraising legend Mal Warwick posited that there are unique philanthropic drivers too. I use them often. Such as: Hope. Faith. Love. Duty. Compassion. Awe. Joy. Sorrow. Triumph. Shame. Justice. Gratitude. You should also harness a donor's universal truths like the desire to change the world, give back for all you've been given, leave a legacy, etc. Remember, it's about emotion. People give because you touch their hearts.

Avoid taboo words and phrases. One example: animal welfare organizations must never use copy that objectifies pets. Why? Animal lovers see

their pets as people. So it's always, "pets *who*" or "dogs *who*." Never "pets *that*." Are there no-no words and phrases in your nonprofit? Avoid them. Do you use a Style Guide? Make sure you refer to it.

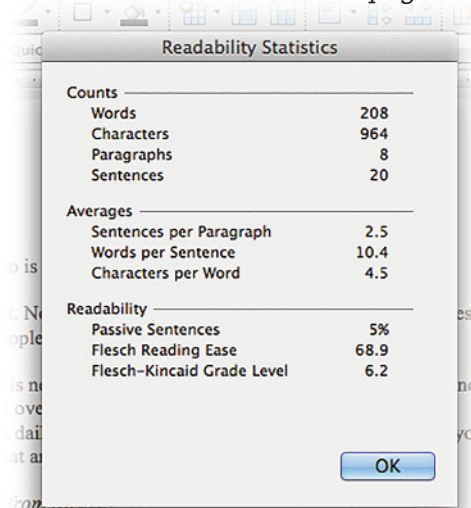
Turn on Flesch-Kincaid. Studies show that even highly educated people read – and recall – more at about a 7th grade reading level. The Flesch Kincaid Readability Test gives you that level automatically. (Note stats for one of my fundraising letters at right, including the 6.2 grade level.) Here's how to turn it on:

- In Word, go to *Tools. Click Spelling and Grammar. Click Options.* Select Show readability statistics. Click *OK.* You're done.
- Option: try hemingway app.com, into which you can paste text and have it evaluated instantly.

Pacing: chop long paragraphs. Aim for 6-7 lines for your longest paragraph. And don't make them all long (or all super-short): mix it up.

Cross channels. In e-news, refer to your magazine or website. In direct mail letters, refer to a great new resource on your website. On your direct mail reply device (or even on the outer envelope), direct people to your website to give as well.

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Nana Murphy's Fundraising Playbook: From Ireland with Love

Play #8: Improve your appeal anatomy, continued

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- Break unevenly.** If your letters are more than one page long, break the pages in mid-sentence, so reader has to turn the page to finish the thought.
- Speak plainly.** Choose small words over big, straightforward over cute. Give grandiloquence the heave-ho. Avoid institutional jargon. (But insider jargon to the right audience, faith-based for example, is a good thing.)
- Beware the voice of despair.** If you get all nitty-gritty with your readers, they *will not get past the horror* of your story to enjoy (much less act upon) the rest of what you tell them. Like the old song goes, “accentuate the positive.”
- Get to the point.** In that first draft, your lead is seldom where it should be... more often you’ll find it buried in the middle. To spot the real lead, some writers I know literally cover the first paragraph with their thumb. (I rely on two or three drafts.)
- Don’t leave your reader hanging.** If you start a story, bring it to a logical conclusion... or tell the reader where to find it. Anticipate, then answer, questions.
- “Kill your darlings.”** Oft-quoted, heeded less. If you’re attached to a poetic phrase you’ve written – what the late Joan Throckmorton called “deathless prose” – and your ego can’t let it go, it’s probably time to hit delete.
- Tell the truth.** Your readers and prospects are smart, just like you. They can spot cleverly massaged copy a mile away, just like you. Why not tell it like it is?
- Make yourself clear.** To renew membership... for a holiday fundraiser... to build a clinic. If there’s a specific purpose for writing the letter, say so.
- Give them a reason to give.** Urgency gets better results: “Donate \$75 by November 4th and the ABC Foundation will match your donation” is a whole bunch better than “Donate \$75 today.”
- Ask the Big Three.** When editing your work, keep three questions in mind:
 - So what?
 - Who cares?
 - What’s new?
 - If you can’t answer these, revise.
- Check under the hood.** If the mechanics of your piece aren’t in place, you’ll look sloppy in

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Nana Murphy's Fundraising Playbook: From Ireland with Love

Play #8: Improve your appeal anatomy, continued

continued from page 22

the eyes of your readers.

Always double check:

- Proper date
- Correct closing and signature
- Accuracy of any facts, figures and references
- Accuracy of any hyperlinks noted
- And... use spelling and grammar check!

Quadruple your proofing

power. A quick read-thru of your letter is not enough. To do it right, you need four separate proofs:

- Read on-screen.
- Print the piece, then read in your head.
- Stand up, walk around, and read it out loud.
- Let the whole thing sit overnight, at least. Read out loud again.
- Author Bob Bly advises a fifth: read the copy backwards, word for word.

- Have a P.S.** People read them. Usually first. So the first rule is to include a postscript in your appeal. And the second rule is to not make it an afterthought: save some of the best stuff for the postscript. Ask again. Repeat the offer. It's prime real estate, so use it.

- Say thank you.** Relationship-building is a two-way street. You can't do what you do without your

donors. Don't they deserve to hear that? Say thank you.

25-1/2. Say thank you. Yes, I said it again. Here's why: in my opinion, it's one reason donor retention rates have been plummeting into the abyss. Listen: when I give to your nonprofit, I'm secretly hoping you'll be the first to treat me like I'm more than an ATM machine. So please, say thank you. Sincerely. Clearly. Promptly. And personally.

[END]



Nana Murphy's Fundraising Playbook: From Ireland with Love

Play #9: Do more with donor newsletters

The no-more-excuses donor newsletter content cheat sheet

“Our cause isn’t sexy,” lamented the hospital foundation vice president. “We don’t have anything exciting to write about in our donor newsletter.” But the truth is, EVERY nonprofit can consistently deliver great newsletter content – to equally great results. Here’s a cheat sheet to arm you with article ideas...

1. **Who-You-Serve:** clients, homeless animals, grateful patients/families, etc., make them a feature story (often).
2. **Campaign Update:** as your current campaign progresses, can include construction-in-progress photos, hardhat tour invitations, etc.
3. **Behind-the-Scenes:** perspective of someone with inside knowledge; staff e.g.; also a look at equipment donors funding and how it is helping, etc.; what’s needed etc.
4. **A Day in the Life...** (of a clinician, therapist, researcher, volunteer, person you’re serving, animal at your shelter, etc.) Who is doing great/interesting work?
5. **Donor or Volunteer or staff profile:** you can even include a personal tidbit or two about them to forge a strong connection
6. **Legacy Donor Story** (feature a donor who’s pledged/left a legacy; could include a sidebar on bequest giving)
7. **Service or program in the spotlight:** inside look at one cool aspect of your work/programs (donor-supported!)
8. **Monthly giving society call-out**
9. **Where are They Now?** (update on a former who-you-serve who’s doing well)
10. **Update** (on program, new project, Xmas raffle, etc.)
11. **An Inside Look at...** (take donors behind the scenes via story and photos of something they support)
12. **Microscopic View** – Focus on a little-known issue/problem (and donor-supported program that is or is about to address it); or a little-known, often overlooked aspect of your work or those you serve. Something

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Nana Murphy's Fundraising Playbook: From Ireland with Love

Play #9: Do more with donor newsletters, continued

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unique you do that others don't – esp. great if donors support it.

13. By the Numbers/Infographics:

here you can inform people quickly with a sidebar or other call-out box entirely of statistics. Projects funded. Demand.

14. Wish List: good call-out box for donors to give gifts-in-kind.

15. And Financial Details:

Include these trust and transparency boosters in tidbits, charts, etc.

16. Post-event photos. You could

feature a picture of the raffle draw or other event update. Or people holding a handwritten thank you sign. [NO GIANT CHECKS!]

17. Organization Board/

Council: interview with someone who's on it, and invitation to join.

18. Artwork, poems, testimonials from clients, students, donors, etc.

19. Guest Expert: bring in someone from your organization, the community, etc. for an interview or article related to your work

20. Q&A Feature: really nice way to introduce readers to staff, etc. Remember a photo!

21. In the Community: ways you give back/educate community/outreach, etc

22. CEO's Corner: CEO's take on a current problem, new development, how you're tackling

23. Donor Mailbox: answer questions for/from your donors

24. Archives: resurrect a classic story

25. Then and Now

Retrospective: write an article on your early days, how your org started, with old photos etc., and its genesis

26. Nostalgia Article: A look back on the beginning, e.g.

27. Timeline: spanning inside spread of newsletter, trace history of your organization in a donor-centric way.

28. Social Scene/More on the Web: share comments from your Facebook or Twitter pages, with a call-to-action to link/friend/follow; guide readers to add'l info on your website

29. In Your Community: how you work in the community, faith-based how what you do perpetuates values and vision

30. Did you know?: these could be call-outs with snippets of little known facts about various conditions or services available at your org, etc

31. Top Signs: topic related to what you do that will make you the expert and give donors something useful; faith-based – show something

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Nana Murphy's Fundraising Playbook: From Ireland with Love

Play #9: Do more with donor newsletters, continued

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unique about what you do and how donors solve a problem/change the future/create good citizens through their gift.

- 32. XX Common Causes of ...:** medication, life stressors, etc ditto above
- 33. Thought leaders and going the extra mile:** position staff as the knowledgeable folks they are by talking about some of the ways you help give students/campers the tools to lead lives, or little things staff do that donors would never imagine
- 34. Progress and Demand:** articles or charts about things that have improved or things that have new/increasing need.
- 35. Donor Love:** call-out boxes that thank donors for:
- Giving to past appeal or campaign
 - Monthly donors
 - Legacies

- Non-cash donations, etc.
- A little love... means a lot. Special thank you to all donors giving \$25 or below. How it helps.

- 36. Events and invitations,** classes, grouped together if we have many, or as separate per-event call-out boxes, things you can invite donors to – if you don't have these START them
- 37. In the news:** Cover a trend or current issue in the news related to your organization, and relate it to how your work is helping/could help.

38. New program: Have you started something new? Have donors helped? Could they? Feature it. Also a great place to invite donors to visit and learn more.

39. Channel crossers: Are people saying great things about you on twitter? Facebook? Make the quotes a featurette of their own in your newsletter, with user handles as attribution. (Caution: some handles are less than donor-friendly. Choose wisely.)

[END]



Nana Murphy's Fundraising Playbook: From Ireland with Love

Design Secrets



*"Design is thinking
made visual."*

— Saul Bass

Nana Murphy's Fundraising Playbook: From Ireland with Love

Play #10: Make sure they can read what you send

Sandie's donor-driven design checklist for older eyes

Unless you reach for your glasses the minute you bring in your mail, know this: your older donors (and that means most of your donors) don't see your communications, online or offline, like you do. And if they can't read what you send, they won't give. This checklist, vetted from MQI's proven results over more than half a decade, will help you design for older eyes —

- Select a serif font.** Serif fonts have “tails” that complete the stroke of a letter, serving to guide the eye and distinguish one letter from the next. Sans serif fonts, literally “without serif,” do not. Numerous sources, from Colin Wheildon's landmark [Type & Layout](#) to the [National Institute on Aging](#), support serif over sans serif for print.
- Use 12 point or larger (depending on the font).** Not all fonts are created equal: so while you might use 12pt for Georgia, a font with a wider set, you'd be looking at 14pt for Times New Roman, a font with a narrower set.
- Be liberal with leading.** The space between lines of type is called leading (like the metal, pronounced with a soft 'e'). Like font, leading is measured in points (pts). Most sources recommend 1½ - 2 pts. At Merchants Quay Ireland, we use 5 points between lines.
- Visually group ideas,** both by size of type and font (bold, italics, and sparingly, sans serif), for things like:
 - Headlines
 - Decks
 - Main text (or body copy)
 - Quotes
 - Bulleted points
 - Charts
- Keep your styles consistent.** This means all (or the vast majority) of headlines have the same formatting, as do decks, main text, subheads, and quotes.

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Play #10: Make sure they can read what you send, continued

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- Curb all caps, italics, and underlining.** At MQI, this doesn't mean we never use italics or underlining. But we do limit their use. (And in general we avoid all caps – even in headlines. For these – another good design guideline for older eyes – we use upper and lower case.)
- Avoid breaking words to a second line,** i.e., hyphenating.
- Unite your numbers and qualifiers.** For example: if you write “32 meals,” try to keep “32” and “meals” on the same line.
- Flush left and rag right.** Flush left aligns non-indented type along the left margin, leaving a ragged (or uneven) right margin. Unlike justified text, rag right doesn't create artificial spaces between words on the same line, but instead

leaves them uniform: this makes for more natural reading.

- Use normal letter spacing, or “tracking.”** This means avoid spacing individual letters too close together or too far apart.
- Limit line length.** Really wide “measures” – or line lengths – tire the eye. Aim for a line lengths of 50-65 characters, max.
- Take care with color and contrast.** Older eyes don't process colors like younger eyes do. And that means:
 - Watch pale yellow – older eyes, which take on a yellow 'cast,' may simply perceive it as white
 - Avoid using blue and green together – older eyes have trouble telling them apart
 - Keep contrast strong – dark type, white background

- Limit funky type and layout tricks.** Such as:
 - Avoid large blocks of reverse type (i.e., white font, dark background).
 - Avoid using type over photos
 - Keep layout simple
- Be picky about paper.** Your review team might think glossy paper looks jazzy for your donor newsletter, but older donors are sensitive to glare. So if you want them to read it, do this instead:
 - Choose matte (non-glossy) paper
 - Choose a paper with no see-through

[END]



Nana Murphy's Fundraising Playbook: From Ireland with Love

Play #11: Say it stronger, with pictures

Fundraising photography tips: dos, don'ts, and do-insteads

Let's face it: the right photographs can add emotion to your donor newsletter or appeal, while fuzzy, low-quality, or poorly chosen photographs only serve to detract. If you really want to say it with pictures, use these tips...

- **Do invest in the right equipment.** Look for a good digital camera, at least 5 megapixel. (Avoid cellphones and tablets because the quality isn't as good.)
- **Do set your camera to highest resolution or largest picture size,** which will produce the sharpest images. Lower resolution photos, on the other hand, appear soft or pixelated.
- **Don't take photos directly from the Internet.** Photos from 'search images' and other websites are typically low resolution, which you don't want. Also keep in mind that even though images are on the Internet, there are copyright issues: you can't simply use them without permission.
- **Do get close... but not too close!** When taking a photo get close to your subject, but not so close that you'll be left unable to crop the picture to fit your format.
- **Do beware background.** Before you snap the picture, check: is there anything in the background that would be inappropriate? Taking a photo of a person with a pole or a plant in the background that looks like it's growing out of their head – or a background that's busy – is distracting. When in doubt, use a plain background.
- **Do avoid taking large groups of people.** Especially since newsletter photos won't be as big as full-size photograph, aim for smaller groups instead.
- **Don't take mug shots.** Avoid taking photos of people standing against the wall, mug shot style. Instead, do this: have them step slightly away from the wall, angle their body to the side, and turn their head towards the camera.

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Play #11: Say it stronger, with pictures, continued

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- **Do remember eyes and teeth.**

Eyes looking directly into the camera, genuine smiles that show teeth, appropriate and authentic emotion and expression: this is your goal!

- **Don't take only one.** Instead, do this: take several pictures of your subject at different angles and poses.

- **Do remove the rejects.** Before sending photos to your designer, remove the ones you don't want to use. This also means checking for closed eyes, and awkward poses.

- **Don't let them look off your page.** When you use an image of a person who is looking off in another direction, make sure that it's *into* the page of your letter or newsletter... not off it. A subtle difference, but worth it.

- **Do your research.** Spend some time perusing photostock houses, magazines, and successful newsletters to help determine what works for format and photo composition.

- **Do get signed, written permission.** And get it from everyone: including employees, clients, the public – whoever you feature.

[END]



Nana Murphy's Fundraising Playbook: From Ireland with Love

Play #12: Get more from your graphics

23 field-tested donor newsletter design basics

With response rates that consistently hit double-digits and generate seven euro in donations for every euro spent on production and creative, Merchants Quay Ireland's proven donor newsletter design basics will help you get more from your graphics —

- 1. Guide the reader – through the newsletter itself, through the page, through the article.** This means:
 - Headlines – instead of being cute, tell part of the story
 - Deck – tells a little more of the story
 - Jump heads – appear where an article continues to another page, includes a piece of the original headline
 - Eyebrows (pre-headlines), dingbats, and drop caps (see #9)
 - Subheads – within the article itself
 - Photo captions
- 2. Keep headlines** for main articles the same font and size, in most cases.
- 3. Make your decks** (the short and snappy summary beneath the headline) the same size and a larger font than the main text (but smaller than the headline).
- 4. Don't hide your thank yous.** Put gratitude on every page – in the heads, in the eyebrow headlines above the heads, in the closing, everywhere.
- 5. Put a URL** to your website on every page.
- 6. Number your pages.**
- 7. Have a table of contents.**
- 8. Keep the layout clean** (not cluttered).
- 9. Make beginnings and endings clear.** This means using elements like:
 - Drop caps (a large and sometimes fancy capital letter) to start an article;
 - Colored box or boxed rules to separate stories;
 - Dingbats (a typographical symbol) to signify the end of an article.
- 10. Be careful with clip-art.** Aim for refined and clear, not tacky.
- 11. Align your text** across all columns for greater readability and column-to-column tracking.

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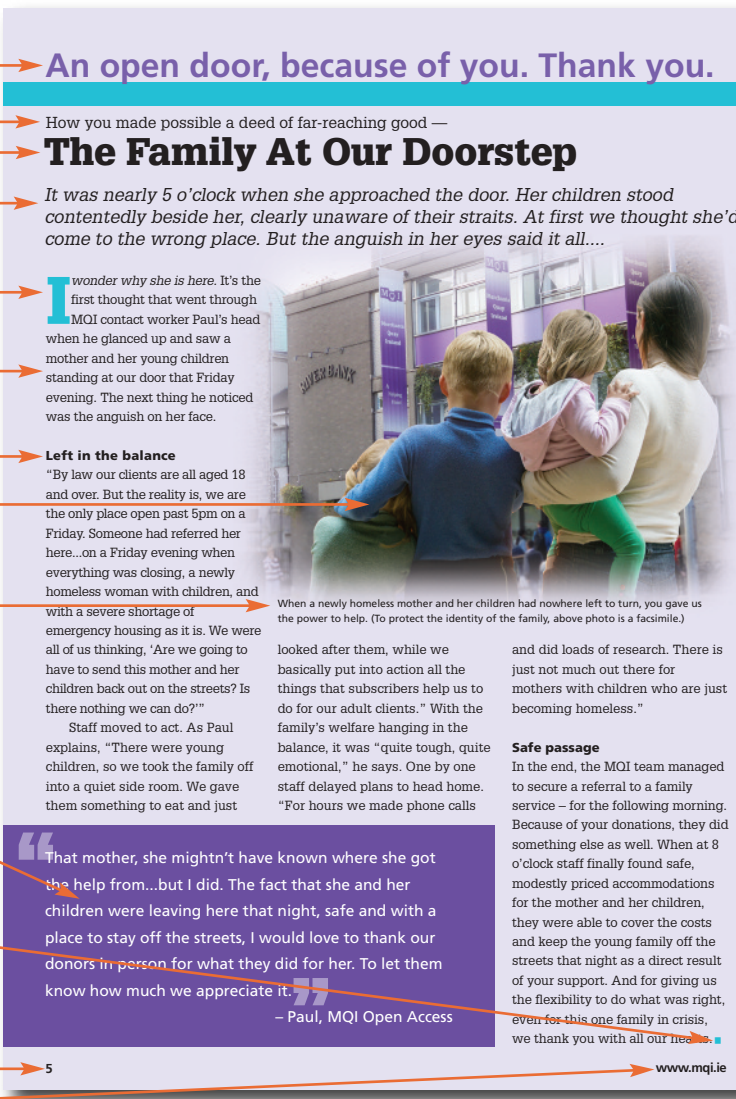
Nana Murphy's Fundraising Playbook: From Ireland with Love

Play #12: Get more from your graphics, continued

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- 12. If you place type on photos,** make sure it can be clearly read.
- 13. Watch reverse font.** If you use it, keep it short – and use chunky font if possible, with a dark background.
- 14. Use upper and lower case** vs. all caps.
- 15. Use fancy fonts sometimes.** Handwritten font can add a personal touch. But make sure it's large enough with plenty of line spacing. And never use for long passages of text.
- 16. Aim for slab serif body copy,** font with chunkier, blocky "tails" on each letter, also called serifs. (For more see Design Checklist for Older Eyes, page 28.) Need to support it? Studies have shown that serif typefaces guide the eye along the line and increase readability.

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Thank you → An open door, because of you. Thank you.

Eyebrow → How you made possible a deed of far-reaching good —

Headline → **The Family At Our Doorstep**

Deck → *It was nearly 5 o'clock when she approached the door. Her children stood contentedly beside her, clearly unaware of their straits. At first we thought she'd come to the wrong place. But the anguish in her eyes said it all...*

Drop Cap → **I**wonder why she is here. It's the first thought that went through MQI contact worker Paul's head when he glanced up and saw a mother and her young children standing at our door that Friday evening. The next thing he noticed was the anguish on her face.

Main Text →

Subhead → **Left in the balance**

Photo →

Caption → When a newly homeless mother and her children had nowhere left to turn, you gave us the power to help. (To protect the identity of the family, above photo is a facsimile.)

Pull Quote → “That mother, she mightn't have known where she got the help from...but I did. The fact that she and her children were leaving here that night, safe and with a place to stay off the streets, I would love to thank our donors *in person* for what they did for her. To let them know how much we appreciate it.”

End of article dingbat →

Page number → 5

URL → www.mqi.ie

Nana Murphy's Fundraising Playbook: From Ireland with Love

Play #12: Get more from your graphics, continued

continued from page 33

17. Use sans as an accent. Sans serif (like Arial, for example), doesn't have the serif tails. Because *sans* is less donor-friendly than serif fonts, at MQI we limit sans serif by using it as an accent – in things like captions, charts, subheads.

- **Branding Tip!** Now that you know serif is more readable, especially for your older donors, don't let branding gurus sweet-talk you into some trendy sans serif font as your "house," or main, print font. This eliminates it from the bulk of your donor communications.

18. Have a Contact Us section. At MQI we list phone numbers, head office address, confidentiality disclaimer, and a social media call-out in a boxed section at the end of every newsletter.

How to choose and use images and graphics for your newsletter:

19. Keep images and graphics simple for greater impact and readability.

20. Mind exposure: if a photo looks too dark or too light, it will print that way.

21. Do try photos that don't show faces, if they have emotion and depict your story. For example: at MQI we've used photos of a homeless client's hands holding a sandwich.



PHOTO: © MERCHANTS QUAY IRELAND

22. But do choose imagery that connects to your work and the slant of your story. At MQI we often use black and white pictures to evoke urgency and raw emotion. See the photo below: its starkness is more powerful because it isn't in color. This was an intentional choice.

- 23. If confidentiality is an issue, try some of these effective MQI strategies:**
- Use stock photos and a disclaimer (but remember to check licensing restrictions – esp for 'editorial use only' photos);
 - Feature photos of staff vs. clients;
 - Use photos of actual clients but so you can't see who they are; for example a photo taken from behind of someone looking off into the distance;
 - And for non-stock always have signed release.

[END]


INTERNATIONAL FUNDRAISING CONFERENCE

BOSTON, MA

MARCH 20 - 22, 2016

Nana Murphy's Fundraising Playbook: From Ireland with Love

Creative samples appendix



Merchants Quay Ireland
A hot meal. A helping hand. A fresh start.

Postal Address
P.O. Box 11950,
Dublin 8

Location
28 Winstanera Street,
Dublin 8

Contact
tel: +353 1 524 0169 email: info@mqi.ie
fax: +353 1 524 0946 web: www.mqi.ie

<<Name>>
<<Sample Address1>>
<<Sample Address2>>
<<Sample Estate>>
<<Sample Town>>
<<Co. Sample>>

3 September 2012

Dear <Title Surname,>

I'm taking a chance today by writing to you about a difficult matter.

I do so because in giving to MQI, you have shown compassion and understanding for those who struggle not only to survive, but to rebuild their lives in the face of overwhelming odds. Hunger. Homelessness. Addiction.

It is in honour of your remarkable commitment that I speak openly now.

You see, in addition to homelessness, extreme social isolation, and past abuse, one of the overwhelming odds faced by many clients is mental illness.

And if you have ever known sadness or loss or loneliness in your own life, you know how tough it can be to overcome. How hopeless, how small, you feel. Even with the supports of a family and a roof over your head.

The men and women I write you about have none of those home comforts.

In a moment I'll share what they confront daily. I'll also describe how MQI have reached out with help and hospitality on an informal basis for years.

But recently a donor like yourself gave us a chance to do much more...

MQI have received funds to cover half of the first three years of a pilot project for a drop-in mental health nurse for our clients. To my knowledge the project will be the first of its kind in Ireland. Because there is no other funding, the other half must come from supporter donations. This year's goal is €25,000.

We have less than fifty days. And that's where I need your help.

Funds must be in place by 31st October or it cannot get off the ground. Because you trust Merchants Quay to use your gifts as intended, I make you this guarantee: whatever amount you send today to support MQI's mental health project will be 100% refunded should we fail to reach our target.

As you read about what they go through, will you please consider a gift of €XXXX, €XXXX, or €XXXX? (Please read on)

Bernie Murphy, an MQI counsellor, has seen firsthand what our homeless clients with mental illness endure on a regular basis.

"If you haven't got your own place to go back transportation, no food, your mental health getting to appointments. People pull back. But most services are appointment based. There are long waiting lists. There are just no services for them, so nobody has time to hear their story. They're told, 'There's nothing I can do for you.' They are turned away."



"I feel like a cycle with no end... but not at Merchants Quay."

"MQI we find there is plenty you can do for your clients. Matter where they're at. If they had the support of a nurse to see clients on a drop-in basis, it would be an hour they can talk to somebody. It will be the start of it – and it's a relief."

"Over and over, these are the men and women that are told, 'We can't help you, we can't do anything for you.' At Merchants Quay Ireland, we say 'Come in...'"
— Bernie Murphy, MQI Counsellor

promise you that, for those who are alone on the streets and suffering from mental illness, there will be any quick fixes or miracle cures.

promise you that your kind donation to fund MQI's mental health pilot project will be hope. It means there will be a place that will never turn away anyone from Merchants Quay Ireland.

help now, MQI can be the one place that says "Come in."

find a moment to read my letter today. Thank you for the help you bring to Ireland's homeless and hungry.

CEO
Ireland

my letter we are already halfway there in funding a mental health project at MQI, the first of its kind in Ireland. But without your help the project cannot get off the ground. If we fall short of our goal, we guarantee that 100% of your donation today will be refunded to you – so you will have the enduring gratitude of so many of Ireland's homeless men and women who are suffering from mental illness right now.

MQI, Ireland, Charity No. 10011 / Incorporated Social Justice Organisation Ltd, Regd. Company No: 30073, Regd. Charity No. 00000000, 5th Floor Malvern, 107 Joseph Medeiros Drive, New Haven, CT 06511, Regd. Charity No. 00000000, 5th Floor Malvern, 107 Joseph Medeiros Drive, New Haven, CT 06511, Regd. Charity No. 00000000.

Mental Health Appeal: Two page letter

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INTERNATIONAL FUNDRAISING CONFERENCE

BOSTON, MA

MARCH 20 - 22, 2016

Nana Murphy's Fundraising Playbook: From Ireland with Love

Creative Samples Appendix, continued

At the Coalface, page 2 | National Housing Crisis, page 3 | Christmas Gratitude Concert, page 4 | The Family at Our Door, page 5

Quay Times

The Newsletter for Supporters of Merchants Quay Ireland

Unbroken

"I put so much work in to lose it all like that, it nearly killed me it did..."

Micheál was drug free at last and accepted into college when Ireland's housing crisis pulled his new life out from under him – and into the abyss of relapse. See how, nearly three years later, you are helping him to make a comeback...

Most nothing about Micheál would hint at the life he's lived these past three years. Apart from a few small scars on his face he is groomed, well dressed, and confident. Those years, though, tested his resolve in ways that few people will ever face. Fewer still emerge unbroken.

Cruel irony

After two treatment centres, massive personal effort, and six months in a recovery house with another agency, the hope was that Micheál could find a place he could afford, or get help from the local Council. He applied and was accepted to college pending good grades. But the shortage of houses would sweep it all away like

"If you are talking housing nearby, the rent allowance, it's just not enough. And then you are single, you are a male, you know. It is a combination of everything. I'm looking everyday, anywhere I might be able to rent a place and it's the same story. You are either priced out of the market or they won't accept rent allowance."
– Micheál, MOI client

continued on page 2

Victorious in Homeless Football League!

An inspiring story of the community spirit that you foster at MOI...

Each week something wonderful happens on an astro turf field in Dublin City Centre. Homeless men get together for the love of the sport, and play football. And this year, Merchants Quay clients have won the Homeless Football League Cup!

Gravin, who works daily with rough sleepers as part of MOI's street outreach programme, offered to organise a Merchants Quay team after clients came to him with the idea. The chaotic nature of their lives, he reported, makes scheduling practices a balancing act. With no promise of a roof over their heads, clients can spend hours on the phone with the local authority simply to try and get a bed for the night. But they kept at it, and since the big win, the team are looking forward to defending the cup next year... a goal made all the more remarkable by what they overcome. *Congratulations!*

www.mqi.ie

Dignity. Humanity. Hope. You.

WINTER Wish List

With icy winds and lashing rain, can you spare any of the following this winter?

- silver foil rescue blankets
- gloves, and scarves
- gloves, ponchos, overwear
- macs, ponchos, shoes
- wool wellies for men (sizes 4-13)
- commercial (Big wish! €1,500)

in person to MOI at between 9:30am and 5pm. If you live in Dublin and you would be delighted to call to request a photo album and cards – ring Emma on 01 524 0139. Thank you!

Now Available: MOI's Annual Review for 2014

Just published, Merchants Quay Ireland's 2014 Annual Review is now available online at www.mqi.ie, or in print with our compliments via post. To request your copy, ring Aislinn or Martina on 01 524 0139.

From your heart to their hands, forever loved... **The Legacy You Leave**

Through a simple bequest in your will to MOI – of any amount you decide – you can make a tremendous difference to the lives of people with nowhere left to turn. And for your great kindness, we will hand-etch your initials onto a beautiful oak bench overlooking St. Francis Farm... forever a part of Merchants Quay.

For details on how you can remember Ireland's most vulnerable through a gift in your will, or to let us know that you've done so, please contact Emma Murphy on 01 524 0965 or emma.murphy@mqi.ie.

To make your gift by phone: please ring us on 01 524 0139.

Head Office: 01 524 0160
Fundraising: 01 524 0139
Volunteering: 01 524 0128
Email: info@mqi.ie

At MOI we respect everyone who comes to us for help – and many are working toward a fresh start in life. So while their stories are true, client names and images may have been changed to protect their privacy. Thank you for understanding.

Facebook: visit us for news and client interviews!

www.mqi.ie


MOI's Donor Newsletter: [Click here](#) to see full issue.

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INTERNATIONAL
FUNDR^A**ISING**
 CONFERENCE BOSTON, MA
 MARCH 20 - 22, 2016

Nana Murphy's Fundraising Playbook: From Ireland with Love

Creative Samples Appendix, continued

 <p>Merchants Quay Ireland A hot meal. A helping hand. A fresh start.</p>	Postal Address P.O. Box 11950, Dublin 8	Location 24 Merchants Quay, Dublin 8	Contact tel: +353 1 524 0139 email: info@mqi.ie fax: +353 1 524 0945 web: www.mqi.ie
	<p><<Name>> <<Sample Address1>> <<Sample Address2>> <<Sample Estate>> <<Sample Town>> <<Co. Sample>></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>If you have the words, there's always a chance that you'll find the way. — Seamus Heaney</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Date</p> <p>Dear <<Salutation>>,</p> <p>Thank you. Two powerful words – two words from the heart.</p> <p>Today at Merchants Quay Ireland, your donation of <<€GIFTAMOUNT>> has brought forth a bounty of “thank yous,” from staff who will be able to dispense that many more meals... that much more cold weather gear... that much more help and healing.</p> <p>Because of you, “thank you” will be heard as well this autumn among our men and women who are homeless – and hungry.</p> <p>From their lips these words will be spoken with relief and a gratitude that springs from a place so deep in their hearts, you would know in an instant the power of your donation to provide something as basic as a pair of shoes, a safe place off the streets and a roof over their heads, or a cup of tea and a chat.</p> <p>Thank you.</p> <p>We are truly grateful to have received your kind donation, and – if you've chosen to receive it – we look forward to sharing stories of how your recent gift is helping, in the Winter issue of <i>Quay Times</i>.</p> <p>With sincere thanks,</p> <p>[SIGNATURE]</p> <p>Tony Geoghegan CEO, Merchants Quay Ireland</p> <p>P.S. The last Coffee Morning of 2015 will be held on 12th December at 10:30am, during one of the only windows when our Riverbank homeless centre is closed for a few hours. It's a lovely, private time for MQI staff to show you around this fantastic resource that is here as direct result of your grace and generosity, and they very much enjoy welcoming donors like yourself. Would you like to attend? Ring us on 01 524 0139. New friends and old, we'll be delighted to see you. Good wishes to you this autumn.</p> <p><small>Merchants Quay Project Ltd, Regd. Company No. 176421, Regd. Charity No. 10511 / Foundation Social Justice Initiatives Ltd, Regd. Company No. 286573, Regd. Charity No. 118209 / Board of Directors - Chairman: Ms Maida Pádraic, Rev. Xavien Chazin OPM, Dr. Joanne Furlong, Mr. Sam Langan, Mr. Marcus Seana. Et. Patrick Lally OPM, Rev. Hugh McKeown OPM, Ms. Eileen McKeough, Rev. Joe Walsh OPM</small></p>		

Autumn Newsletter: Thank you letter

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Nana Murphy's Fundraising Playbook: From Ireland with Love

Creative Samples Appendix, continued

MQI
 Merchants Quay Ireland
 A hot meal. A helping hand. A fresh start.

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 P.O. Box 11950,
 Dublin 8

Location
 24 Merchants Quay,
 Dublin 8

Contact
 tel: +353 1 524 0159 email: info@mqi.ie
 fax: +353 1 524 0965 web: www.mqi.ie

Production Schedule for March 2016 Appeal

08 Jan	Project kick-off (MQI & Lisa)
19 Jan	All background material due to writer (Lisa)
19-27 Jan	Writing (Lisa)
20 Jan	Creative with Lisa and Sandie print spec sheet for printer (Sandie)
28-29 Jan	Client review, revision of copy and graphic concept (MQI)
29 Jan	Client approved copy and photos send to designer (Sandie)
30 Jan - 15 Feb	Design and Layout (Sandie)
15 Feb	PDF mock-ups to client (MQI)
16-17 Feb	Client review and revision of mock-ups (MQI)
17 Feb	Approve files send to printer
17-22 Feb	Printer shows proofs
23 Feb	MQI reviews proofs
24-09 Feb	Printer prints and prepare for mailing
09 March	Mail drop date

Appeal Production Schedule

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Nana Murphy's Fundraising Playbook: From Ireland with Love

Creative Samples Appendix, continued

Results: Another view...

APPEALS

Year	Appeal	Rsp Rate	Avg. Gift	ROI
2010	AP1210	36.30%	€140	31.5
2011	AP0611	13.51%	€125	12.5
2011	AP1011	11.11%	€90	8.7
2011	AP1211	41.75%	€152	30.6
2012	AP0312M	12.18%	€66	6.9
2012	AP0512	14.73%	€81	9.2
2012	AP0912	15.24%	€71	6.7
2012	AP1112	45.30%	€163	22.8
2013	AP0213M	12.19%	€69	6.0
2013	AP0513	14.46%	€77	7.1
2013	AP0913	21.21%	€109	14.7
2013	AP1113	42.23%	€139	26.5
2014	AP0314	11.42%	€93	8.3
2014	AP0614	16.12%	€81	10.1
2014	AP0914	10.88%	€76	6.7
2014	AP1114	45.79%	€138	28.8
2015	AP0315	14.2%	€107	10.7
2015	AP0515	14.2%	€84	9.8
2015	AP0915	13.2%	€66	7.0
2015	AP1115	46.4%	€150	29.0

NEWSLETTERS

Year	Newsletter	Rsp Rate	Avg. Gift	ROI
2010	NL0710	2.7%	€115	3.1
2011	NL0311	7.76%	€126	
2011	NL0811	6.8%	€95	5.9
2011	NL1011	8.5%	€104	8.9
2012	NL0412	7.4%	€166	12.9
2012	NL0812	7.73%	€86	7.0
2012	NL1012	12.08%	€99	9.9
2013	NL0313	9.90%	€81	8.4
2013	NL0713	12.38%	€65	8.4
2013	NL1013	12.73%	€94	10.1
2014	NL0214	10.94%	€77	5.6
2014	NL0414	13.5%	€70	6.4
2014	NL0814	14.65%	€70	7.7
2014	NL1014	10.79%	€91	7.8
2015	NL0215	13.42%	€77	9.5
2015	NL0415	11.02%	€64	6.9
2015	NL0715	12.97%	€76	6.5
2015	NL1015	13.54%	€80	8.6

INTERNATIONAL
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MARCH 20 - 22, 2016

Nana Murphy's Fundraising Playbook: From Ireland with Love

Nana Murphy's Fundraising Playbook and "From Ireland With Love" were brought to you with passion, grit, and creativity by:



Denisa Casement



Merchants Quay Ireland
Homeless & Drugs Services

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*Secret Superpower: Shelter savant
(Handsew a teepee from scratch)*



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*Secret Superpower: Lady of the
lake (Slalom waterskier)*



Sandra Collette

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*Secret Superpower: Real-life ninja
(5th degree Tae Kwon Do black belt)*

*Thank you for giving a damn about great
creative... great fundraising... and great donor care!*

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