

Words that Work

Money for Ministry's Top Marketing Tips

Our number one rule for great donor communication is to ***lead with inspiration and follow with information***. When you speak the language of “faith and family” over “tips and techniques,” you’ll more easily connect with the heart of your donor.

Donors support you because they feel a personal connection to your mission or cause. They already care about you and are willing to listen and respond, but they also want to know you value them! Make sure your communication always provides practical value and actionable relevance to their lives.

Many people are intimidated by the tools and legal jargon around legacy giving, so you should always position your messaging in a way that’s appealing, compelling, relevant and sincere. **Before you send anything, make sure you consider the following questions:**

- Is this clear?
- Is this relevant?
- Is this necessary?
- Is this compelling or helpful?
- Is this the best medium/place to communicate/ask this information?
- How would I feel if I received this?
- Does this help the donor feel valued and connected to the organization?
- Does it reinforce your gratitude and commitment for their partnership?

We recently conducted an internal review of our top ten most-requested messaging bulletins. We were looking for patterns regarding which words/phrases consistently incited donors to take action. Here are the top titles and our key takeaways:

1. One Giant Leap in the Journey of Faith
2. 5 Secrets to a Flourishing Life
3. How to Keep Peace in the Family
4. How to Say Yes to God’s Call
5. Live Well in 2 Simple Steps
6. How to Avoid a Family Landmine
7. Transform Excess into Impact
8. Crucial Keys to Living a Life of Purpose
9. Impact Lives Through the “Power of Broke”
10. 4 Ways to be Happier Today



Key Takeaways

- **Titles including a number are effective.** Bulleted lists are naturally easy to digest when reviewing a document, and numbers in a heading invite a reader to feel inquisitive. They also know the read isn't going to be a huge commitment. They'll get in, get what they're looking for, and get out. For instance: *4 Ways to be Happier Today, Live Well in 2 Simple Steps, 5 Secrets to a Flourishing Life.*
- **Personal growth is appealing.** In addition to the "numbered" titles mentioned in the previous bullet, you may have noticed another similarity between those three titles: they all promise to deliver actionable steps you can take to live better now. People value self-improvement and meaningful living.
- **Encouragement is a motivator, but sometimes you need a new angle.** We always position our messaging in an encouraging and positive light. However, sometimes it's also effective to address a common fear people feel – then deliver a solution. We *never* want to make a reader feel coerced by guilt, fear, or manipulation, but we can name concerns people naturally relate to. *How to Avoid a Family Landmine* is a great example because people want to avoid familial strife and division. This title provides assurance they're about to discover a way toward peace.
- **Family matters.** When you talk about someone's family, you go straight to their heart. Everyone wants to experience peace in their homes and strong relationships with loved ones. Examples: *How to Keep Peace in the Family, How to Avoid a Family Landmine.*
- **Faith is personal.** Just as people value family relationships, many of your donors are seeking to strengthen their relationship with the Lord and be inspired to grow their faith. *One Giant Leap in the Journey of Faith, How to Say Yes to God's Call, Crucial Keys to Living a Life of Purpose.*

Crafting Your Call to Action

In closing, **one of the most important parts of planned giving messaging is to remember to "ask."** Many people don't consider legacy giving because they think their estate is too small, or because they've simply never had someone put the concept on their radar. In our estimation, the only reason not to ask is if it's too *soon*. (No one wants a marriage proposal on the first date!)

When you're actively cultivating an on-going dialogue with your donors, they feel seen, heard, valued, and connected. You've created the most natural and proper environment to ask. Take a good look at your calls to action. Are they clear? Does your donor know what you want them to do, or how you can help? Always provide a simple way to respond.

To discover how you can position yourself for maximum planned giving impact, contact Money for Ministry. We'll help you create a comprehensive plan to speak straight to your donor's heart.