Basic Appeal Letter Template

1. **Consider a bold 18-24 pt font headline at the top:**

What does music mean to you?[1]

FirstName LastName
StreetAddress
City, State Zip

> Times New Roman, 12 to 14 point font (depending on the age of your donors) is best.

> **"Zero Tolerance"** for approvals and reviews. The fundraiser has the final word.
> Tom Ahern

Dear FirstName (never "Dear Friend"),

2. **Opening sentence/headline/paragraph**

> Indent your paragraphs for readability.

==Hook your reader, right from the start==.
Samples: "Could you picture, for a moment, a woman on the brink of making the hardest decision of her life.[2]"

> Keep it conversational. **Remember, you're writing to a friend.**

Ask early, ask often!

3. **Your Story**

Remember, your story should focus on **ONE individual** and should convey emotion.
What's the one hook detail? *How is your donor the hero of this picture?*

> What's the most important word? **You.**

4. **Your Offer**

Here's where you'll share your donor's impact. Be succinct. Remember, **statistics don't sell!** Ooze donor love.

> *Sample transition sentences:* "Today, more than ever.[3]"
> "It's only possible with the help of support like yours...[4]"

5. **The Ask** Have you conveyed a sense of urgency?

6. **Reinforce the ask and close**

> *Samples:* "A child's future is in your hands."
> "To make it easier for you, visit our website..."
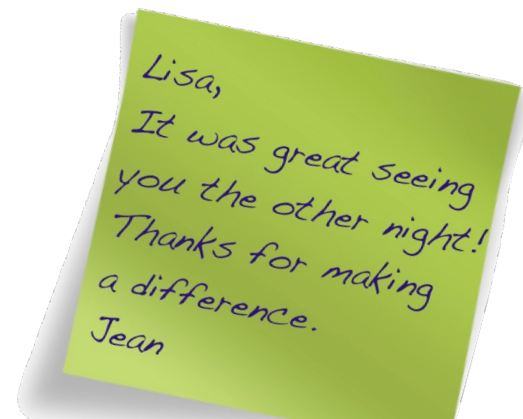> "Thank you for being the power behind this work."

> Lisa,
> It was great seeing you the other night! Thanks for making a difference.
> Jean

7. **Sincerely,**

> "Yours for the children,"
> "With deepest gratitude,"
> *(live signature in blue ink)*

> Say yes to personalized *Post-It* notes

8. **PS: Reinforce your call to action. Add a deadline.**

> "Your gift of $___ makes ___ possible."

> **Graphic enhancements work!**
> Bullets, underlining, **boldfaced text**, handwriting in the margin, highlighting. Ugly is good.

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[1] Concord Conservatory of Music

[2] Jules Brown. Women's Aid fundraising letter.

[3] How to Write Successful Fundraising Letters. Mal Warwick.

[4] Merchants Quay Ireland. July 2014.