

hopeFound's Before Version: Comments from Lisa

1.) Overall length: This letter keeps things short, which is fine for a thank-you. hopeFound could actually even add copy – not something I often get to suggest for a thank you letter – and you'll see how I handled that in the After version.

2.) Font and type size: For best readability, the 'old school' rule on font choice is serif for print and sanserif – or sans serif – online. (It's OK to mix sparingly, and I do.) And whenever possible, keep to at least a 12 pt type size.

3.) Postscript: The P.S. in your letter is prime real estate, even in a thank-you. (Professor Siegfried Vögele's famed 'eye-tracking' studies found that 9 in 10 people who read your letter will read the P.S. first.) So I suggest adding a postscript. **(Comments continued below)**

(2) → Date

Name
Address
City, State Zip

Dear XXXX:

(6) → Thank you so much for your gift of \$XX. Your generosity will help hundreds of men and women reclaim their lives and find recovery, employment, housing and hope.

(1) → We invite you to visit our website at www.hopeFoundboston.org to learn more about programs and services offered annually to more than 3000 men and women who are homeless as well volunteer programs, giving opportunities and upcoming events. ← (5)

Thank you for making a difference in the lives of men and women we serve.

Sincerely,

Mary Nee
Executive Director

← (4)

→ (3)

(7) → Since you received no goods or services in exchange for this gift, it may be considered a charitable contribution to the extent allowed by IRS regulations.

hopeFound's Before Version: Comments from Lisa

4.) Signatory: Excellent that hopeFound uses the ED as their signer; CEO or president are also good choices. Thank-yous should come from the top.

5.) Call to action: Also excellent idea to include an invitation to visit hopeFound's website; nice example of multi-channel thinking.

6.) Results: As this is a thank-you for hopeFound's annual fund, the fact that they talk about what donor's gift *will do*, vs. what it has already done, can work – though here it's a tiny bit vague. But they will need to update donor on results via a newsletter or some other communication soon after.

7.) Tax language: Most 'tax language' is mandated by legal or other powers-that-be. So getting it below the ED's signature is a good choice: the stuffy phrasing sucks the life out of a thank-you. Another option is to turn it into a positive, by referencing it directly. I offer an example in the After version.