



Practical Resources for Community Groups

CHECKLIST 1

Writing a Successful Sponsorship Letter

Make sure you...

- Have phoned and spoken to your potential sponsor first. Unsolicited sponsorship letters are rarely successful, particularly if you are seeking significant sponsorship dollars.
- Address the letter with a person's name, not just their job title. This signifies you already have a relationship with your potential sponsor, and minimises the risk of your letter being opened and discarded by their secretary or personal assistant.
- Start your letter with 'as per our phone conversation on...', so that your potential sponsor can immediately recognise your letter as a follow up, and not just another cold call from an unknown organisation.
- Give specific details about your event or project, including when it is, where it is, and how many people will be involved. If your event or project is catering for a specific demographic, let your potential sponsor know what that is.
- Frame the letter in a positive manner. Potential sponsors want to know how successful your organisation is, not how desperate you are to find support.
- Present the sponsorship as an opportunity for the business, rather than something you are trying to 'sell'.
- Enclose a list of sponsorship options so that your potential sponsor can start thinking about what opportunity is the best fit for them. You can briefly outline these in the letter itself if you wish, but it is more effective to attach the sponsorship benefits as a separate document.
- End the letter by confirming details of when you are meeting your potential sponsor to discuss the opportunity further. If you have not already arranged an appointment, state when you will be phoning the sponsor to follow up. *See Checklist 12 – Managing a Sponsorship Appointment.*
- Sign the letter and give yourself a position description such as Event Co-ordinator or Sponsorship Manager. Your potential sponsor wants to know they are dealing with one person who is in charge, not an entire 'Fundraising Committee'.
- Include contact phone number where you can be reached for more information.

This checklist has been written by Kerri Tilby-Price. Kerri is the author of 'The Seriously Good Guide to Fundraising' and the CEO of Exult Ltd, one of New Zealand's leading training providers for the non-profit sector. Kerri is also the editor of Tonic Magazine – a publication providing practical information and advice for grass-roots community organisations. For more information visit www.exult.co.nz