

MAKING THE CASE



“We’ve got to develop a strategy of changing our organization’s direction without giving the appearance of changing our mission that won’t seem to diminish our concern and compassion for those we serve and won’t be dismissed as cosmetic and opportunistic, and at the same time, meet all program objectives and give us a positive bottom line that will satisfy the board, make donors passionate about our work, keep the community and our constituencies happy, and tell our story in a dramatic way that will galvanize our prospective givers to our cause. We’d better call in someone to write a Case Statement.”

Notes

A Case Statement is a vision with a dollar sign. But it's not about money

- ✓ Know Who You Are
- ✓ Say who You Are
- ✓ Do What You Say

It explains why your organization is uniquely positioned for the program.

Donors want to know why these folks deserve my support — you need to answer that question.

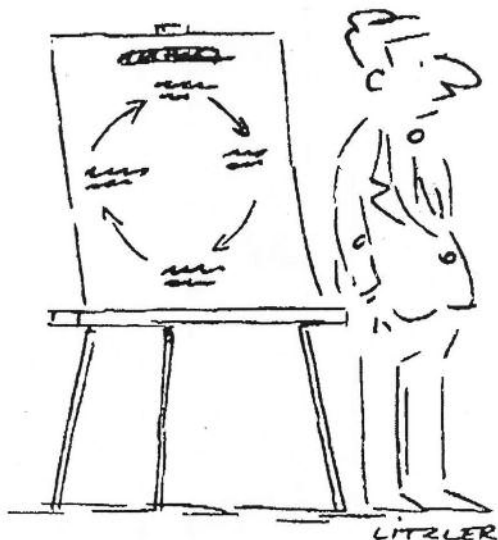
They want to know what their gift will accomplish.

1. Passion and Energy
2. Conviction and Zeal
3. As if the Stars had been blown out of the sky
4. How Long

*“Leave out all the parts that people skip.”
— Elmore Leonard*



“I’m willing to give to you if I’m properly motivated by a Case Statement that demonstrates relevancy, has high dramatic and emotional impact, and express a sense of urgency.”



"There are four stages to the donor-cultivation cycle: Ask. Plead. Cajole. Beg."

Notes

The Eight Elements Essential to your Case

1. The title develops the theme and tone. It connects everything to everything. You want the title to say there's something very special going on here.

It becomes a dance of intrigue neither you nor the reader can escape the other's embrace.

- History's Handful
 - Scholarship on Fire
 - For Christ's Sake
2. Grabbing the reader— the first few introductory paragraphs. If you lose the reader here, you'll never get them back
3. The irrefutable case— bigger than the institution.
4. Your unique position. How you are uncommonly able to meet the need head on.

Not statistics — Anne Frank

5. Waving the Flag— history and Mission Statement. "We improve the performance of society by enriching, inspiring, invigorating, and educating our diverse communities. We are a trusted voice, providing compelling information through a living partnership with our readers, advertisers, employees, and shareholders. We excel by investing in our people in a dynamic work environment thriving on integrity, mutual trust, innovation, creativity, and teamwork."

Six Reasons People give to your Organization

1. They believe in your work
2. Gift will change or save lives
3. Want to make a difference
4. There is philanthropic intent
5. They want to join others in a worthy cause
6. You asked them to make an investment

Members of a committee that review someone’s Case Statement are comparable to people who go into the streets after a battle and shoot the wounded.

The first draft you get everything down. The second draft is the updraft— you fix it up.

Preposition — This is the sort of English which I will not put up with:

- Split infinitives
- And/but
- Single word sentences and paragraphs
- Contractions
- That

Review your copy to see if you can expunge the thats. In an earlier chapter, I first wrote: “Flaubert said that he wanted the writing to be so exciting that you could . . .” When I revised the sentence, I deleted the thats. Note how much stronger it is: “Flaubert said he wanted the writing to be so exciting you could . . .”

Notes



“I think we should organize a campaign to raise money for air conditioning. But first we need to write a Case Statement.”

Semicolon

Present Tense

Make the verbs sweat

Is it *who*? Or *whom*?

Fess up. Do you have trouble with this. I do. I confess this to you only because I know you would understand.

Take this sentence for instance: “There are hundreds of men and women *who* we must embrace in our program.” Or is it: “There are hundreds of men and women *whom* we must embrace in our program.”

Fowler, the grammarian potentate, has four pages, single-spaced, devoted to this question. Read it. Read it again. You will still be confused. On the one hand, if it is the predicate of the subject followed by a transitive verb, it’s *who*. On the other hand . . . oh, never mind.

Here’s what I find. Try it yourself and see how it works for you. Simply leave out the word *who* or *whom*. In most cases you can. It actually makes the sentence stronger. “There are hundreds of men and women we must embrace in our program.” And it takes the curse off trying to determine *who* or *whom*.

Bullet/numbers

Write as if you were sending a letter to your favorite Aunt

Dear Aunt Mary: I only today realized how desperate the need is in our community for a center for the homeless. I was walking home the other night and it was bitterly cold. You know how desperate it can get in Minneapolis in February. There were dozens— yes dozens— of homeless curled up in cardboard boxes. I simply couldn’t believe it. I was all bundled up in a muffler and heavy coat and I was still shivering with cold. I don’t know how these folks can survive. And it wasn’t only men. Mary, I saw women and children. It broke my heart . . .

Notes

Serif One Syllable

“I saw that the race is not to the swift, or the battle to the strong, nor bread to the wise, or riches to the intelligent, nor favor to the men of skill; but time and chance happen to them all.”

Orwell’s version goes:

“Objective consideration of contemporary phenomena compels the conclusion that success or failure in competitive activities exhibits no tendency to be commensurate with innate capacity, but that a considerable element of the unpredictable must invariably be taken into account.”

Here’s one way of putting it. Our unambiguous mission is to become the international leader in the space industry through a maximum team-centered innovation and strategically targeted aerospace initiative.

John F. Kennedy said simply: “We need to put a man on the moon and return him safely by the end of the decade.” (19 words— 16 one syllable)

Take a lesson from Lincoln’s powerful Second Inaugural Address. No one with a pulse can read it without boundless passion and awe.

“Fondly do we hope fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may pass away...with malice toward none, and charity for all.” And the most eloquent of all, only four single-syllable words long: And the war came.”

It was a marvel of economy with only 701 words. There were 505 words of one syllable and 12 of two syllables.

“We shall not flag nor fail. We shall go on to the end. We shall fight in France and on the seas and oceans. We shall fight with strength in the air. We shall defend our island whatever the cost may be. We shall fight on the beaches, in the fields, in the streets, and on the hills. We shall never give up.”

– Churchill’s speech after the fall of France –World War II (63 words— 58 one syllable)

Notes



"I've got the revisions and suggestions to the first draft."

