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## Love Thy Reader | About Donor Communications | *from Tom Ahern*



If you had more money ... you *could* do more good.  
If you do better communications ... you *will* have more money.

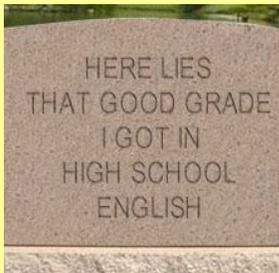
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Just for fun....

### "Tombstone generator"

Type in [your own saying](#) and download a JPEG of a custom tombstone.



Stare into my eyes....

### 6 ways to influence donors with brain science

This [posting](#) from John Haydon lays out and explains six tactics you can reliably use to drive up giving. I put these sweetheart ideas right to work. Thanks to [Jeff Brooks](#) for the tip!

"Friends?" Are they really?

### Getting a clear idea of what Facebook does for your org

Another super-useful [posting](#) by John Haydon walks you through Facebook's new analytical tool, called "Insights." In a 10-minute video, John

*The room stilled. Sean picked up the microphone....*

# Aussie "big brain" speaks

*Reprinted without asking permission*

Sean Triner, co-founder of [Pareto](#), Australia's largest (and arguably best) direct-mail-fundraising-and-telephone operation, is known as "Big Brain" by his friends and admiring colleagues Down Under. (He's also a certified "dangerous snake handler." Watch the YouTube [video](#) of him in training. The snake wins.)

Sean is a terrific direct mail "language mechanic." I watched him rewrite an appeal letter by cell phone as we walked along a white-flour Aussie beach. Waves crashing. Coconuts thumping. Turquoise skies. Dolphins serving drinks. Sean on phone: "Move that phrase to the front of the paragraph. Better. OK, let's go over the ask again...." It was a long call. I went body-surfing.

Recently, Sean, in his [blog](#) or somewhere, shared his personal checklist for direct mail SUCCESS. It's worth having his checklist handy, next time you pick up your pen to tenderly ask for help.

takes you behind the numbers to see if you're really connecting. Thanks to Ireland's [Conor Byrne](#) for the tip!

From the very good folks at [Network for Good...](#)

#### 4 tips for email subject lines that work (better)

"On average, at least 100 emails flood your constituents' inboxes every single day. That's a lot of digital noise to shout over, which is why your email subject lines need as much TLC as the content inside. Here's a [simple, four-step makeover](#) to help transform your subject lines from ho-hum to 'Oh, wow!'"

Capital campaign video

#### Brilliant, but...

King's College London issued a smart, thought-provoking, relevant, surprising, charming, visually satisfying, & deceptively simple [video](#) for its **World questions|King's answers Campaign**, to raise £500 million by 2015. Someone asked my opinion of it. Was the video persuasive as donorcomms? In my view, no. Why? My stopwatch told me so. The first 3 minutes are about King's College. The last few seconds are about the donor. That's out of balance. I prefer a 50/50 mix at a minimum: 50% of the time (at least), the donor's getting the credit. King's video is a "we are great" onslaught.

TRUE CONFESSIONS: I admire [Kivi Leroux Miller...](#)

#### She is out there, exposed, online

In April, Kivi, Edgar (her husband), the cocktail waitress ("Welcome to my office...") and I shared a view of the setting (never quite) midnight sun in Anchorage, AK, atop a hotel. "You're such a natural!" I praised Kivi. "It's all learned behavior, my friend," she insisted.

## Here's Sean...

Now, for you fundraisers - some great tips for your next appeal...

- Personalise. *Dear Sean* is good, but go beyond. Thank me for my specific actions and give me credit for everything you achieved.
- Tell me a beautiful story, with a beginning, a middle and an end -and don't leave me feeling it is now fixed. There must be a need at the end.
- Don't worry about how long it takes to tell me that story AND the points below:
- Make sure there are frequent and very specific asks. The specific ask should be the right amount for me, not a generic ask amount.
- Take personal responsibility. Write the letter in first person singular. Don't "we" on your copy. Remove every 'we' replace with 'you', 'my colleagues and I' or whatever makes sense.
- Repeat the specific ask.
- Have a deadline. This is very important. Find a reason, overcome barriers - but get one.

## Every. Single. Time.

- Repeat the specific ask.
- Build urgency.
- Repeat the specific ask.
- "Witness" the story (i.e., "I spoke to Bob today and he said...")
- Repeat the specific ask.
- Have a target.
- Repeat the specific ask.
- Summarise in a PS.
- Repeat the specific ask.
- SHOW me the need; not all nice fixed stuff - there has to be something that would be bad if I didn't give.
- Repeat the specific ask in the PS, and spell it out - fill in the form with your details, put in the envelope and send to me by...
- Don't worry about the length of the letter, as long as it is good, engaging and emotional. It is hard to get everything in without using at least 3.5 pages (including shorter first page with all the header stuff) in point 12 serif font. [TA: make that point 14, for eyes over 60.]

Now: KIVI HAS A TELL-ALL BLOG, called [How Kivi Does It](#). It's about running your own business. Being a mom. Being in love. Being on the road. Working "for good." If you've ever wondered about "consulting for a living," read THIS. You might find Kivi inspiring!

## Joinme?

**Linked In:** 898 connections

**Twitter:** 788 followers  
Twitter name: thattomahern

**E-news:** 7,075 subscribers

**Facebook:** 175 friends

What's new on [SOFII](#)?

### Need a good idea RIGHT NOW?

Then review this freshly updated [list](#) of SOFII's latest exhibits. SOFII stands for the *Showcase of Fundraising Innovation and Inspiration*. This big-hearted, mostly volunteer, London-based nonprofit collects and annotates examples of **SUCCESSFUL** donor communications from around the world ... and then gives you **FREE** access. I'm there often.

Could they take the heat? Well, they came into my kitchen...

### Enter a GALLERY of FRANK critiques ... solely for your error-avoiding, idea-stealing pleasure

Brave people send me samples of their donor comms, for a **free, nitty-gritty** - and **public** - critique. Find out exactly what they did wrong or right, and learn from their mistakes or victories.

Available as [downloadable PDFs](#)

with pop-up comments. I won't be critiquing for awhile in 2013, due to other commitments.

### Joyaux Associates

International expertise at down-to-earth prices. Fund development, board development, strategic

# Sean

Back issues of this newsletter? [Here...](#)

## New designs all the time....



## Wear your heart on/near your sleeve

*Writer-wear*®. *Advice-wear*®. *Reminder-wear*™.

**Photos illustrate the message. PICK your very OWN colors, sizes and styles!** Statement T-shirts

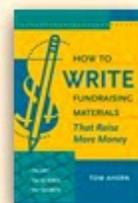
(and the occasional iPhone sleeve) for the wordy wise.

[Click here to see for yourself!](#)



## How to write a case for support. Read the Kool-Aid.

See what Amazon reviewers say...



## How to write fundraising materials your donors will love.

See what Amazon reviewers say...

planning. [Lots of free resources](#), too!

### Where will Tom speak next?

Check upcoming events on Tom's international [speaking CALENDAR!](#)



[Ourhouseinfrance.com](http://Ourhouseinfrance.com)

[My blog](#)

[My website](#)

**100  
DONORS**  
in **90 DAYS**

Takes the  
Guesswork  
out of  
Finding new  
Donors

*click here*



Tom goes  
**HOLLYWOOD**  
Check out his  
NEW DVD series  
[click here](#)

'Til next time...  
donor communications  
true believers!

