



**FORWARD
ACTION**

A **practical guide**: 6 email tactics to make supporters fall in love with your cause

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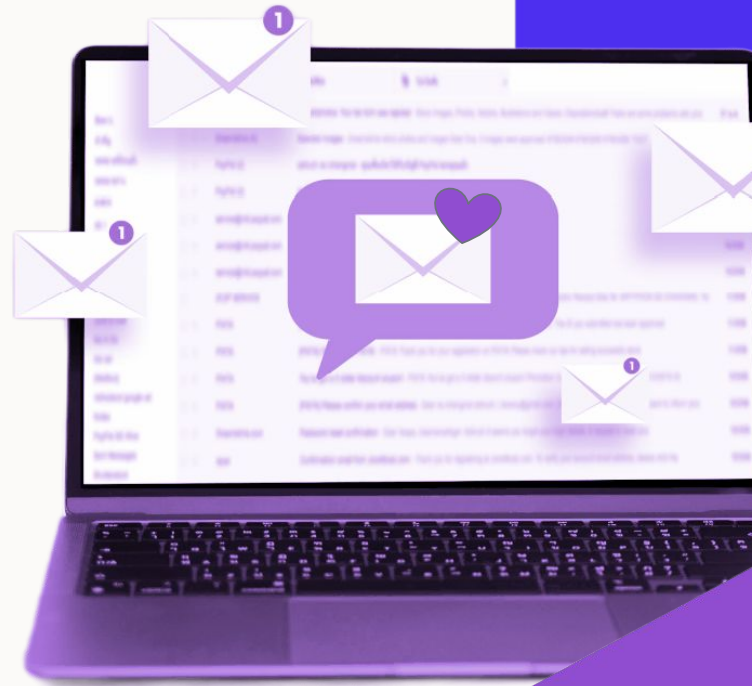
Putting the tactics into action

We hope our session at **Fundraising Everywhere's Digital Fundraising Conference** helped you feel the love for your emails.

To help put our six tactics into action, we've created this **guide filled with practical tips**.

At Forward Action, we **love** working with partners to power-up their email programme - from working to **strengthen your internal processes**, to **helping plan and write compelling emails** that drive action.

Please get in touch if you want to chat more about how we could work together:
hello@forwardaction.uk



1. Every email should
only have (and
only needs)
one call to action



Inspiration for your one CTA

Avoid 'ask overwhelm' by sticking to one CTA per email, but that doesn't mean your ask has to be boring. Here's a list of ask inspiration, including two step journeys, to help you plan your emails:

- **Send a message** of support / hope / encouragement (and send a follow-up email with curated messages too to close the loop)
- **Take a quiz** - fill it with surprising facts and stats to help educate your supporters, with a pivot to a donate ask related to the quiz at the end
- **Answer the poll** - ask a question you genuinely want to know the answer to, and reveal the results to your supporters too in follow-up comms
- **Send a voice note** - a different way to capture stories that feels more personal
- **Take the survey** - a great way to open up a two way conversation, and to include a tailored donate ask at the end
- **Download a free** conversation guide / phone wallpaper / meal planner - give your supporters value and follow up with a donate ask
- **Choose a story** to read - introduce interactivity into your storytelling
- **Donate** - this can be everything from an urgent cash ask, a membership invitation, a multiple email appeal with a target, a parcel ask with tangible prompts

2. Your email lives and dies on the opening hook



Ideas for intriguing hooks

Intriguing subject lines are key to drive email opens and make sure people see your compelling asks. Here are some tactics to test out:

- **Make it personal** - use your supporter's name, location, date they started supporting you to help make it feel really direct.
- **Ask a question** - build intrigue where they can only get the answer by opening the email
- **Make it direct** - use classic email signs like 'Fwd:' 'Re:' 'From:' to make it feel like this is an email from a single person rather than a big mailing list.

The opening lines of your email are the place to bring people into the conversation - these are some of our favourite techniques:

- **Land them straight in the action** - share what you're seeing hearing, tick off all the senses so they feel like they're in it with you
- **A single emotion** - open with 'Devastated.' and go from there to share how you're feeling
- **Straight talk** - 'I'm going to level with you', 'I didn't want to send this email', 'I don't usually get to email our supporters' - honesty is a great opening line

3. A clear, simple theory of change can change everything



Questions to answer

Your theory of change - if you do X, Y will happen, and we can have Z impact - is a good place to make sure you've answered your supporters' questions that stand between them and taking action. Make sure you're ticking these off:

- **Why me?** How can I help make change happen, and am I part of a bigger picture of supporters?
- **Why now?** Why does this have to happen today, what's the urgency and are there any deadlines or other motivating factors to bring in?
- **Why this?** Why are you doing this specific action over others, what was your decision process that got us here?
- **What's the impact?** What difference will this action make to your overall mission and the beneficiaries you serve - how can you make that really clear?

4. Let's be honest, radical honesty cuts through



Engaging ways to be honest

Radical honesty is leading the way to having cut-through and driving action. Bringing humanity into your emails in the age of AI is key, so here are some topics you could be honest about:

- **How you're feeling** - sharing honestly what's on your mind and how you're feeling is a great way to open up, you can ask how supporters are feeling too with a survey to help build a two-way conversation.
- **The fundraising situation** - speaking about missing targets, or grants being cancelled can be a good way to let your supporters know why the need is so great.
- **Your personal connection** - if you're comfortable sharing life outside of the day job and why your work means so much to you, or something that's happened in your personal life that connects back.
- **Any mistakes** - everyone loves a 'woops, sorry' email. Owning up to any errors or things that have gone awry can make you more relatable.
- **Behind the scenes** - sharing content and conversations that happen behind closed doors can be a great way to bring supporters in, e.g. meetings about logistics, a sneak peak into new plans.

5. Make sure your supporters see their role and feel the love



How to show the love

Supporters should know how much you appreciate them, but it's a balance between saying thank you and not making it feel like 'job done'. Here are some ideas for saying thank you and please at the same time.

- **Thank you ahead of an appeal** - send an email to say a big thank you for previous support and make it clear what this has achieved, as well as letting your supporters know that a new appeal is coming and that you need their support once more.
- **Celebrate your existing supporters** - include stories from your existing supporters with their motivations for giving, include a good breadth of age, diversity and experience so people can see themselves in your existing supporters.
- **A target of supporters** - using a target of number of new supporters in an appeal can be a great way to show the power in numbers, and gives you opportunities to celebrate milestones and the people already giving.

6. Make it **timely** - today is the day to act



Creating urgency with meaning

Being timely is key to driving action, but that doesn't mean you need to cry wolf. Here are ways to create a sense of urgency that feel genuine:

- **Responding to the headlines** - an obvious tactic, but one your organisation needs to be set up to do well with the right content creation and sign off processes in place, as well as trust for teams to make the right calls and respond sensitively.
- **Responding to the world around us** - You can also respond to things which aren't breaking news but which are still timely - what's on TV, what's trending on social media, what's the weather, what's a big event upcoming that you can prepare content for.
- **Setting appeal targets and deadlines** - adding targets and deadlines to appeals with reasons why you need the money soon to make an impact is a great way to motivate your supporters. You can use this for non-fundraising asks too, if you have a deadline when you need to get to X signatures on a petition.



Get in touch

For more email inspiration and advice, make sure you're [following us on LinkedIn](#) and [sign up to our mailing list too.](#)

If want to chat more about how we could work together, just drop us a line at [**hello@forwardaction.uk**](mailto:hello@forwardaction.uk)