



✦ **Personalize your fundraising website –**

- add a picture
- add your story
- share it with EVERYONE!

✦ **Write your fundraising letter/email.**

- Reference the samples below and have your AACR staff person look it over to help make sure the best letter goes out!
- Include your personal URL to your fundraising website where family and friends can donate online.
- Email version should be slightly shorter than letter version.
- Make a *huge* email and mailing list.
- Get your holiday card list out and draft a letter to send out all your friends and family.

✦ **Send out Reminder Emails & Thank you's**

- Set a reminder for yourself to send out an email, every other week- every few weeks, updating your email database on your training and fundraising progress!
- People often need to see things over and over again before they actually follow the link and donate. Don't hesitate to send weekly updates and ask for help reaching your goal.

✦ **Plan a Fundraiser**

- Lots of great ideas are out there! See below.

✦ **Become a VIP fundraiser**

- Anyone that raises \$5,000 or more will get VIP treatment on race weekend.

✦ **Start feeling fantastic**

- You are getting into great shape and helping others!

✦ **Get your donations Matched**

- Matching gifts are a great way to raise additional funds for AACR, funds which will aid in advancing the organization's research and awareness efforts

**MATCHING GIFTS**

Matching gifts are donations made from your employer that matches a charitable contribution that you have made. Matching gifts can double or even triple the amount of the original contribution. Many companies have matching gift programs. If you are unsure if your company has a matching gift program, or if you need information on how to apply for a matching gift from your employer, you should visit your company's Human Resources department.

**So how does it work?**

- Many companies will match their employee's donation to AACR.
- You need to have donor contact HR department at their company and ask if they offer matching funds.
- The donor will receive a form and/ or link to go to and complete. They will submit with the donation amount and organization info.
- A verification request will be sent to AACR. We will confirm the gift once received and wait for the easy dollars to arrive.

## CREATE A SUCCESSFUL EMAIL CAMPAIGN

Sending out emails is the easiest way to reach a large amount of people in a short amount of time. This is convenient, but also can make the receiver feel like just another contact that you're asking for money. To help this situation, add personal touches to emails for friends and family, or captivate your audience with a personal story. You have to make their reason to give very concise and meaningful.

### Tips for Success:

- **Grab People's Attention with the Subject Heading:** This is important today because with so many emails, not everything gets read. Intrigue the email recipient with a subject line containing your event and your cause. Example: Help me on my quest to fight cancer as I run the Disney Marathon...That's right, It's happening!
- **Make the email personal:** If you already wrote a short story for your website and/ or letter, include all or parts of it in the email. Make sure you thoroughly explain why you are running and how this challenge/ cause personally affects you. The readers will appreciate this.
- **Bragging Rights:** Include some information on your training regime as well. This can impress your readers as they'll be able to conceptualize just how big of a commitment you are making.
- **Your Cause:** If you don't want to include a personal story for the email, give more information on the cause you're racing for.
- **Include information on AACR:** This will give your readers a resource to see that this is a credible fundraising source and one that has a positive reputation. Including a link to the website will also provide them with more information, as well as an additional way to get to your personal fundraising page.
- **Give information on how to donate:** Include a link to your website and list your fundraising goals and give a "donate by" date, no more than 6 weeks out to create a sense of urgency.
- **Matching Gifts:** Let people know how easy Matching Gifts are and how they can help multiply your donations.
- **Don't forget to say thank you!**



## CREATE A SUCCESSFUL LETTER WRITING CAMPAIGN

Snail Mail is limited these days which means that when people get something in the mail, they pay attention! Emails are quick and easy, but letters are personal, require time and energy, and can't be deleted. We know letters take time and ink, but they are worth it in the long run. Take out the holiday card list and start typing!

### Tips for Success:

- **Include a picture:** Pictures are effective. They imprint an image in people's minds and can show people exactly what you are doing and for whom you are doing it.
- **Make it Personal:** Write a personal story about why you are running/walking and raising money for AACR. Get people invested in your story.
- **Make it Easy:** Include SELF-ADDRESSED stamped envelope so donor doesn't have to find your address to send it back to you.
- **Create Urgency:** Include a date to have donations in by, not a deadline but a date by which you would like to meet your goal. Date should be about 6 weeks out so people have time but not too much time.
- **Bragging Rights:** Include some information on your training regime as well. This can impress your readers as they'll be able to conceptualize just how big of a commitment you are making.
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- **Don’t forget to say thank you!**

## SAMPLE LETTERS

Dear Friends and Family,

I am about to embark on a fantastic journey and I need your help! I will \_\_\_\_\_ (RUN OR WALK) the 13.1/ 26.2 mile race at the \_\_\_\_\_ (EVENT NAME) Half Marathon/Marathon on \_\_\_\_\_ (DATE), to raise funds to help prevent and cure cancer through research, education, communication, and collaboration.

This fight is far from over. Despite extraordinary advances in cancer research, it is projected that nearly 600,000 Americans will die from one of the more than 200 types of cancer in 2016. The American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) Foundation seeks to close this gap, providing researchers with the necessary funds to continue their vital work. Your contribution will enable researchers to continue discovering and innovating on behalf of patients.

(ENTER A MORE PERSONAL PARAGRAPH HERE)

Together, we can make a difference! As a member of Runners for Research, I have teammates to support me. I have committed to a tough training schedule, and I've committed to raise \$\_\_\_\_\_ (fundraising goal) in donations to American Association for Cancer Research. I am motivated! I am committed!! I will do it!!! (Watch your mail for my post-event news update.)

By now I hope you agree with me about the importance of this cause. Please help support me by visiting my webpage at \_\_\_\_\_ (WEBPAGE LINK GIVEN TO YOU BY TEAM MANAGER) to donate online or mail your donation directly to me at \_\_\_\_\_. (YOUR MAILING ADDRESS). Eighty-eight cents per dollar raised by AACR goes directly to research and patient support, and your contribution is tax deductible to the extent of the law. If your company matches charitable contributions, please include matching forms with your donation. Of course, your good wishes and positive vibes to sustain me in my training and as I cross the finish line will also be graciously accepted.

With my sincere thanks,

\_\_\_\_\_ (YOUR NAME)

\_\_\_\_\_ (LINK TO YOUR FUNDRAISING PAGE)

LINK TO RUNNERS FOR RESEARCH

**What Happens in Vegas? ... << Include picture of you and person you are running in honor of>>**

Dear Friends and Family,

This may come as a surprise to many of you, but believe it or not, on December 4<sup>th</sup>, I will be running in my very first half marathon (13.miles)/ Marathon (26.2 miles) in Las Vegas with Runners for Research to help support the mission of the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR). Attempting to run or even walk a marathon never crossed my mind (not really a fan of endurance exercise!). However, when my close friend, brought this event to my attention last month I realized that this was something I needed to do and can do. After only 1 week of training, I have already completed 5 miles and am now certain that 13.1/ 26.2 is possible.

You may think that I am crazy for signing up for this marathon, but knowing what my sister Vicky has been through, nothing seems crazy about it. Vicky was diagnosed with cancer 5 years ago, at age 4, and I had to watch my sister go in and out of the hospital, receive home schooling, and miss out on years of just being a kid. She has had to endure countless medical tests, ups and downs with various drugs, and multiple hospitalizations. Running 13.1 / 26.2 miles may not be easy, but being a young child like Vicky dealing with this disease is a lot harder. This is why I am running, to find a cure and get Vicky better...for good!

Vicky is one of 1.66 million Americans diagnosed with Cancer. The funds raised by Runners for Research will directly benefit AACR in support of its mission to find a cure. Eighty-eight cents of every dollar raised goes directly toward research, education and support services.

I have two goals to achieve with this challenge. The first is to actually train for & cross the finish line of this 13.1/26.2 mile race! The second goal I can only achieve with your help & generosity and that is to raise \$2000 by September 30<sup>th</sup> for AACR. I hope that you will help me by making a donation. There is no amount too small, or too big for this cause. Any contribution will be greatly appreciated by me and by all those who struggle with these diseases. **If your company has a matching gifts program or may be interested in a corporate sponsorship, please contact the AACR at [together@aacrfoundation.org](mailto:together@aacrfoundation.org).**

**You may donate by either (1) writing a check to the American Association for Cancer Research & sending it to me in the enclosed envelope, (2) Going online to my**

**fundraising website at: [www.xyz.com](http://www.xyz.com) to donate by credit card or (3) donating by cash and giving it to me in person.**

With your support I can promise you that, “**What Happens in Vegas on Dec. 4<sup>th</sup> ... Won’t Stay in Vegas**” because I will want you to know every detail about my 1<sup>st</sup> half marathon/ marathon experience! Thank you in advance for your help in finding a cure.

Warmest regards,

## **FOLLOW UP EMAILS/ LETTERS/ POSTCARDS**

**Fundraising Updates:** These are a good idea to inform your donors on the progress you are making both athletically and with your fundraising goals as well as reminders to donate and updates on upcoming fundraising events. These can be sent to donors approximately every three weeks, and to those who you are trying to recruit but have not yet donated every two weeks.

**Thank you notes:** A thank you email should be sent within 24 hours of the donation. A personal letter or post card follow up can be a really nice gesture after the race. It will require extra effort, but can go a long way in keeping that person as a donor for the future and you never know, it may bring in additional donations!

### **Sample Follow Up/ Reminder Postcard:**

**<<Insert Training Picture >>**

Hi Friends,

I am happy to report that since beginning this adventure in January, I can run 9 miles and have raised over \$1000 for the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR). I am more than halfway there and am committed to make it to the finish line on July 17<sup>th</sup>!

I feel GREAT (mostly!) and appreciate the support of my family, friends, and even strangers as I strive to cross the finish line and make a difference for a cause that is so close to my heart.

I promise to run the 13.1/ 26.2 miles, but can't do it without YOUR help to reach my fundraising goal of \$2000 by June 30th. Please make a donation TODAY at:

<http://www.xyz.com>

### **SAMPLE THANK YOU- POST EVENT**

Dear Friends and Family,

Guess what? I crossed the finish line in Madrid and even have a picture to prove it (see attached)! Over the past few months I have trained, I have fundraised, and I have helped the efforts to find a cure for the 1.66 million Americans diagnosed with cancer.

<<INSERT PERSONAL STORY HERE>>

Thank you for your support over the past 14 weeks while I have been training and fundraising for a cure. With your help I have raised **XXX** which AACR will use toward much needed research and patient services. My season with Runners for Research may have ended, but there still is no cure. There is still time to donate to my fundraising efforts and I encourage you to think about participating in a future AACR, as Madrid was wonderful!

Thank you,

**YOUR NAME**

## SOCIAL MEDIA

The Twitter logo, featuring the word "twitter" in a light blue, lowercase, sans-serif font with a subtle drop shadow.The Facebook logo, consisting of the word "facebook" in white, lowercase, sans-serif font, centered within a solid dark blue rectangular background.

Social media is a great tool for connecting with friends, family, co-workers, and neighbors. Post about your fundraising campaign regularly to keep it in the minds of your online friends and inspire them to donate. You may be amazed with some of the donations you receive from people you would never expect.

### **Social media tips:**

- Consistently update your status with training milestones and fundraising goals.
- Include a link to the donation page each time.
- Tag your friends who have donated to thank them publicly
- Try to Tweet weekly about your fundraising total and training progress.
- Include the link to your website so people can follow you.
- Follow your contacts on twitter and message them with fundraising information.
- Mention friends in tweets to thank them for donations.

## HOW TO PLAN A SUCCESSFUL FUNDRAISING EVENT

A fundraising event is a great opportunity to raise additional funds (could be several hundred dollars or more!) and even get donations from those who may have already donated online, create awareness for AACR within your community, and an opportunity to involve strangers in your fundraising campaign – you never know who might have a connection with cancer. Your big \$500 donor could randomly be at the event location.

### 10 Steps to a Successful Fundraising Event

#### Step 1 – Determine the type of event

- You are only limited by your creativity! Almost everything can be turned into a fundraising event....*bar night, silent auction, wine tasting, pet event, movie night, parents' night out, dinner party, the options are endless.* Choose something that you like/are interested in, but also event your contacts will want to come to.

**Step 2 – Set a \$\$\$ Goal & ticket price-** Set a (*realistic*) goal amount. How much do you plan to make from this event (you can plan more than one).Your goal amount will help you determine:

- How many people you need to attend to reach your goal
- Ticket pricing, expected revenue from raffle sales, etc...
- How are you going to collect donations? Ticket sales, auction items, raffle items?

#### Step 3 - Location, Location, Location!

- Make a list of 2-3 locations you like that will fit your estimated amount of people & the type of event.
- Make sure the location is somewhere your expected attendees will want to come to!
- Chose a venue that is usually busy, and is willing to help promote your event. You want to try to bring additional people (*outside of your connections*) to your event
- Do your research on your preferred venue to see if they have done fundraisers before (*if you cannot find anything online, it doesn't mean they will say no*)...but this is helpful to know
- Consider any cost to your event's attendees....parking, cover charge, etc...
- Use your connections if possible – look through your contacts (*and those of close friends/family*)
- Before you make your ask, consider what the business will gain from the event (recognition for aligning with a great cause, added customers that you will bring in, possible tax deduction for donated goods or services). If you approach a venue with how a fundraiser can help them, you are more likely to get a yes.

#### **Step 4 – Set your Date & Time**

- Consider Paydates...people are going to be more generous towards the beginning of the month & right after paydays (*usually Fridays*).
- Consider your audience, and pick a time that will work best for the majority (*hold a kid friendly event earlier, hold a party themed event later, etc...*)
- Keep in mind traffic and work & school schedules

#### **Step 5 – Promote, Promote, Promote!**

- Make an event flyer (*ask if you need help*).
- Make copies & post them around your neighborhood, work, the venue where the fundraiser is being held...everywhere you can!
- Email the flyer out to all of your contacts
- Post flyer on all social media outlets (*facebook, twitter, etc...*). If it is open to the general public, there are a TON of free calendar listings online.
- Recruit family & friends to help you promote!

***You can have the best event planned, but if no one shows up, you will not raise much money!***

#### **Step 6 – Additional Revenue**

- Think about adding a raffle or silent auction to your event
- Possibly sell drink tickets for donated beer/liquor to boost donations
- Always put donations jars around your venue, on the bar, near the door, stage, etc...

#### **Step 7 – Confirm all of the details!**

- Recruit helpers & assign Roles – in advance. You are going to want to be able to mingle with the crowd & host the event...if you can, have helpers on-site to make sure everything goes smoothly.
- You should be communicating with your main contact at your venue throughout the process, but make sure to confirm all of the final details at least one week before your event (*& the day before if needed*)

#### **Step 8 – Make a packing list**

- Make yourself a packing list of everything you need, or might need, for the event!
  - Tape/Tacks (*to hang signs*)
  - Cash for change (*if needed*)
  - Cash box or money bag
  - Donation jars (*starting out with a few bills in a donation jar often helps encourage others to donate*)
  - Informational Signage (*drink specials, details of the fundraiser/cause, directional signs, etc...*)
  - AACR Banners, signs & brochures (*get from your Team Manager*)

- Raffle tickets *(if needed)*
- Tables & table covers- OR confirm that the venue will have for you to use
- Credit card slips *(and possible computer/tablet to take online donations)*
- Decorations – if you need balloons for your fundraiser, most Party City locations will donate up to 2 dozen the day before
- Anything other supplies specific to your fundraiser that you might need *(when in doubt, pack it)*

### **Step 9 – Day of the Event**

- Get there earlier than you think you need to...it is better to be ready early than to be rushing!
- Take photos *(will help with Step 10)*
- Recruit helpers – especially if there is a lot of set-up to be done *(i.e. silent auction)*
- If your event is in a public space, see if there is any way to make announcements *(or have informational signage)* about your fundraiser
- Bring it back to the mission – Make sure you let your fundraisers know why they are there! People are going to be more willing to give if they know their money is being spent well & going towards a great cause!
- Communicate with your helpers and the staff at the venue that you can take cash, credit cards & checks for donations.
- **Have fun!** You have done the planning, now is the time to execute your plan, have fun & raise money for a great cause!

### **Step 10 – Thank You & follow up !**

- Make sure to thank the venue, your donors *(the ones you can)*, helpers, and any companies that donated items to your fundraiser.
- For in-kind donations *(donated goods & services)* – ask AACR for an ‘**in kind form**’ *(needed for tax purposes)*
- Post to Facebook & other social media outlets – people who could not make it may still want to donate. Include photos if possible!

## NOW YOU ARE READY TO RAISE \$2,000

The thought of raising \$2,000 may seem intimidating, but it is actually easier than you think. All you need is use your personal network and follow the tips and steps we provided. Before you know it, you will pass \$2,000, accomplish yet another goal that you never thought possible and bring the American Association for Cancer Research dollars and miles closer to a cure!

1. Sponsor Yourself! It all begins with your own commitment \$100
2. Send 50 letters out to friends and family. 25 donors donate \$25= \$625
3. 4 donors give \$100! = \$400
3. Ask 4 family members to donate \$75 each- \$300
4. Ask 3 people to get their donations matched (\$50 matched becomes \$100)= \$300
5. Update your Facebook status and ask people to donate \$2/ mile for your Half Marathon (13.1 miles) or \$1/ mile for your Full Marathon (26.1 miles)= \$26.20
5. Send an email and post card reminder. Get another 10 people to donate. \$100
6. Plan a fundraising event= \$200
7. Host a Bake Sale at work= \$50

TOTAL \$2,101.20

Awesome job not only reaching, but surpassing your goal of \$2,000! When it is broken down like that, it doesn't seem like such a daunting task.

Recruit your family and friends to help you spread the word and send letters/emails to their contacts, hold a canning event outside of a store or hold another event. The options are endless! Get started today and see just how easy it is.

***Good luck, Enjoy the journey, and on behalf of team at AACR and Runners for Research, thank you for helping us accelerate progress in the conquest of cancer by providing financial support for scientific research, education, and communication!***