



Causes Best Practices: Start Your Cause

The following is a list of suggestions for starting a cause. Think about your cause as a community of people who want to make an impact. You have the resources, information, and programs to educate, engage and motivate this group of activists, volunteers, donors, and supporters. In this initial phase, you should focus on making a clear and compelling case for your cause's importance. Remember, your first challenge will be to recruit a group of supporters.

Here are a few pointers for building a compelling cause:

Title

- Refer to a specific issue or active campaign
- Use action verbs, such as save, help, cure, support, stop, or create
- Keep it short and attention-grabbing
- Avoid using your nonprofit's name, unless that name is action-oriented and specific to your cause goals (e.g. "Heal the Bay")

Mission

- Treat the mission as a subtitle in which you explain your call to action in one sentence
- Convey a sense of urgency to your supporters

Positions

- Make the case for your cause in three or fewer points
- Positions are often core beliefs, key facts/statistics or major goals

Description

- Provide relevant background: what have you done, what are you trying to do, and what is at stake
- Make it concise – no more than three short paragraphs
- Include links to websites or other sources of information

Photo

- Post a photo that captures the meaning or purpose of your cause
- Make it evocative, eye-catching, high resolution and easy to understand
- Your nonprofit name and logo will already be displayed as the nonprofit beneficiary, so choose a compelling picture or photo rather than your logo

Remember:

- You can change the name, beneficiary or content of your cause **at any time** to make your cause more persuasive (click "Edit Cause")
- Once you've started the cause, post informative or interesting videos, photos, and articles that give people another way to understand why you created your cause and how they might get involved
- An up to date cause will keep people active and engaged!