



## What is the purpose of an open letter?

An open letter is a way of directly outlining your campaign's main talking points and making your argument clearly.

As its name suggests, open letters are intended to be read by a wide audience rather than a single person. Open letters are often directed at a single person (such as a politician or policymaker) but are then published more widely (either through the media or on a website).


By directing your open letter to an individual, you can outline the specific actions that they can take to support your campaign.

Take time to identify who you want to write to. This should be someone who has the power and authority to take action on this issue. The open letter should outline exactly what it is they can do and why they are the right person to be involved in this campaign.

Open letters can come from individuals, but have more impact if you can show a group of people have come together to campaign on a single issue.

## How to write an open letter

- **Explain who you are.** Show knowledge and experience you have to demonstrate credibility.
- **Explain the problem.** Keep this simple - even if the person you are writing to understands the technical details of encryption, the letter's wider audience may not be familiar with the issue.
- **Explain the solution.** Show the specific actions you want the recipient of the letter to take and explain how this will help solve the problem. Describe the impact that they could have.

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- **Sign your letter.** Open letters have more impact if they have a wide range of signatories. It shows there is widespread support for your campaign, especially if you are able to gather a diverse group of signatories with relevant experience in the field. Share the letter with your networks and encourage people to sign it before publishing the letter. Approach other like-minded organizations and ask them to sign the letter - building a coalition is a good way of demonstrating that lots of people care about the issue.
  - **Share the open letter.** Post the letter on your website. You may also want to send a copy of it to media. They may also put the letter on their site or put out a news story about the letter.

## Important things to remember

- **Be polite.** You are trying to convince the recipient to take action on your behalf. You want to make friends not enemies.
- **Be succinct.** Keep the letter short but make sure that all relevant information is included.
- **Offer solutions.** Make it clear that the recipient of the letter has the power to change things and to solve the problem.



## Open letter example

Dear [name of recipient]

We, the undersigned, are a group of Internet advocates [explain who you are and your background].

We are extremely concerned about [outline the problem].

This comes at a time when governments around the world are trying to weaken encryption by [give relevant details to provide wider context].

We ask you to [explain the specific actions you want the recipient to take and how this will solve the problem].

Yours sincerely,

[List of signatories]