

A WORKING TOOL

# The Trust Audit

*Auditing the receipts your organization is and is not issuing*

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Companion to *Show Me the Receipts*

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## BEFORE YOU BEGIN

This worksheet asks you to look hard at your organization. It is best completed in one or two focused sittings (45 to 90 minutes total), with the *Show Me the Receipts* reference card in front of you.

This is not a performance review. The audit is yours. No one else needs to see it. The receipts argument depends on you doing the work — honestly.

*What you will produce: one specific receipt to upgrade in the next thirty days, with the upstream architecture identified, and a witness named.*

## Your Organization in 90 Seconds

*Quick context. Don't overthink. These answers ground the audit; they don't determine it.*

### The organization

*Organization name (or "my org" if you prefer)*

*Mission, in one sentence — in your own words, not from the website*

*Approximate annual fundraising volume (rough range is fine)*

### Your role

*Title and primary responsibility*

*Where you have authority — what decisions are yours to make*

*Where you have influence but not authority — what you can push for but cannot decide*

**Right now**

*What is your biggest fundraising concern today? Be specific.*

*If a donor stopped giving in the last 12 months, what reason did they give? What reason do you suspect was the actual cause?*



Donor email and address kept current (NCOA, returns processed)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Donor preferences for contact frequency honored	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Donor opt-outs from mailing lists honored	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Privacy and confidentiality protected as DBR specifies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Donor questions answered promptly and truthfully	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Gift processing meets stated turnaround under normal load	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Designation tracking shows where each gift went, annually	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Acknowledgment generation is automated where appropriate and reviewed where it matters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Year-end giving and tax substantiation are delivered on schedule	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internal calendars (planning, board, audit) align with donor-facing commitments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**MISSION AND MONEY**

<b>THE PROMISE</b>	<b>RELIABLY</b>	<b>SOMETIMES</b>	<b>NOT YET</b>
Funds spent as designated, with variance authorized in writing if changed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Functional expense allocation reviewed for accuracy, not just compliance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Investment in programs matches what the case for support promised	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Restricted fund balances reviewed quarterly with development input	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If a program is discontinued, designated donors are notified and offered redirect	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**COMMUNITY AND BENEFICIARY**

<b>THE PROMISE</b>	<b>RELIABLY</b>	<b>SOMETIMES</b>	<b>NOT YET</b>
The people the gifts are meant to serve are actually served	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Beneficiary voices are present in reporting back to donors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community partners are kept informed and credited as agreed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Power dynamics within the organization are addressed honestly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The mission is alive in how the organization treats its own people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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**PERSONAL RECEIPTS YOU ISSUE (FRONT-FACING)**

<b>THE PROMISE</b>	<b>RELIABLY</b>	<b>SOMETIMES</b>	<b>NOT YET</b>
"I'll get back to you by Friday" — returned by Friday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Calendar holds and meeting confirmations honored	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Promises made in a donor's living room recorded so they survive your departure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Follow-up after every donor meeting delivered as committed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information shared in confidence stays in confidence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Trace One Failure Upstream

*Pick one specific visible failure your organization has experienced in the last year. Trace it upstream. The receipts argument says: the cause is rarely where the symptom shows.*

### The visible failure

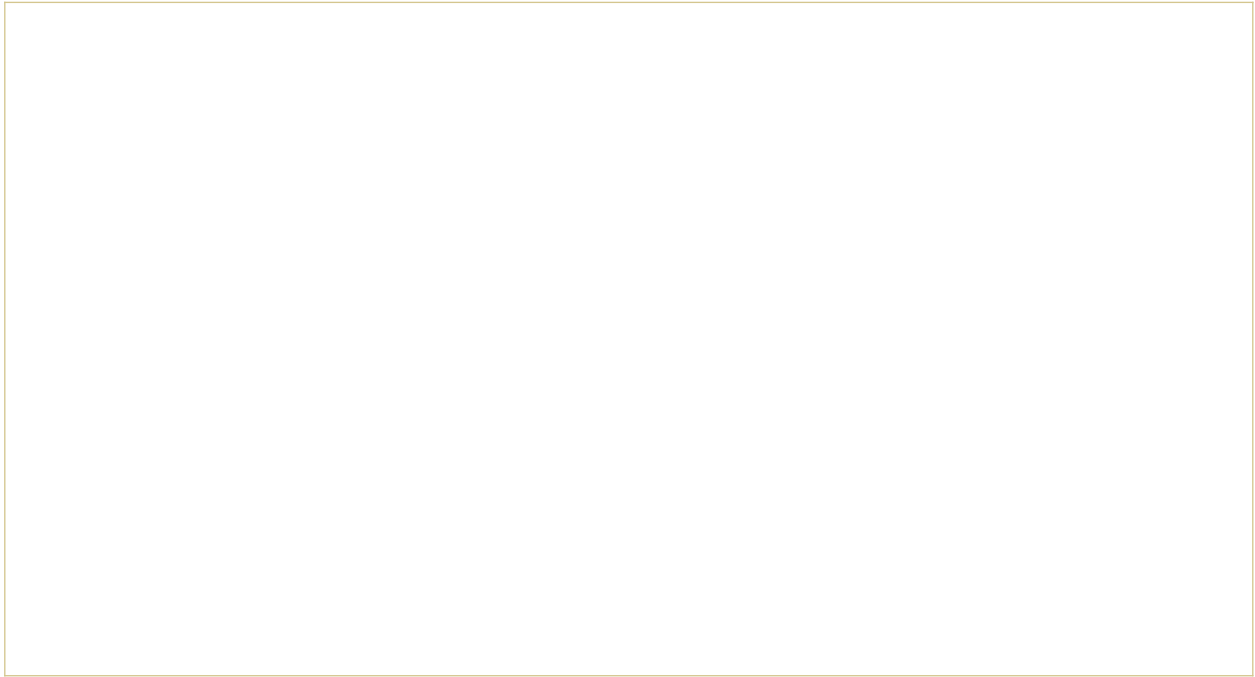
*What did the donor (or community member, or beneficiary) actually experience? Be specific. What did they see, hear, or not hear?*

### The receipt that failed

*What was the specific promise that was not kept? Was it written or spoken? Where was it documented — if anywhere?*

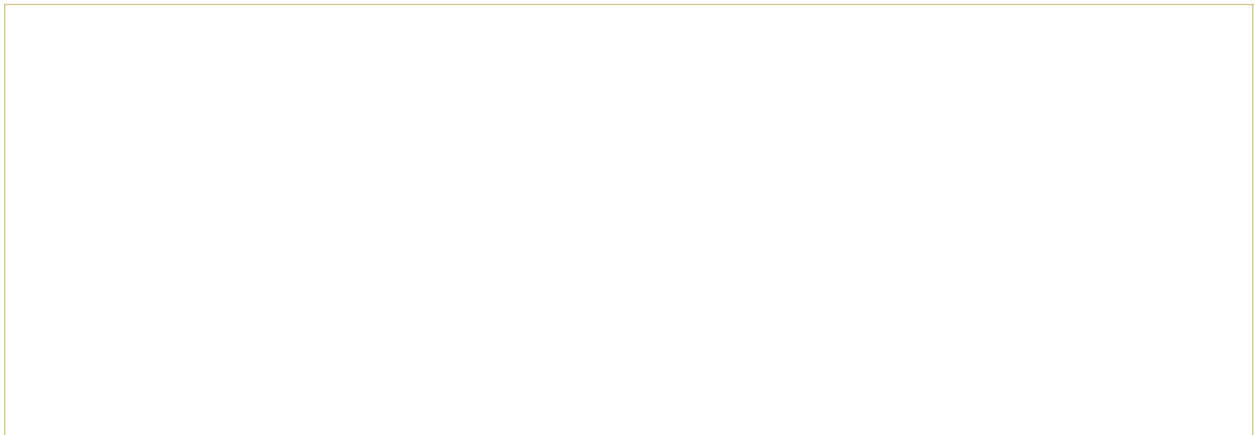
### **The upstream architecture**

*What invisible receipts had to fail for this visible failure to happen? List at least three. Trace them backwards through the categories in Section 3.*



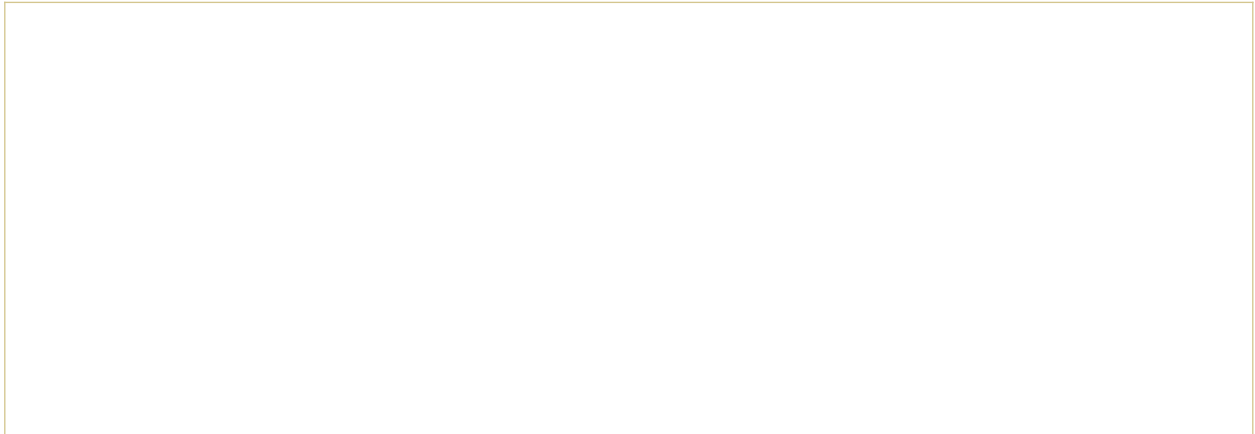
### **Whose receipts**

*Which roles or departments touched this chain? You do not need to assign blame. You do need to see where the architecture broke.*



**What would have caught it**

*If one specific receipt had been issued reliably — if one specific handoff had landed cleanly — would the visible failure have happened? Which receipt?*



## Identify One Receipt to Upgrade

Now translate the audit into action. The frame is that durable trust is built one kept promise at a time. The point of this section is to choose which promise.

### Three candidates

Look back at Sections 2, 3, and 4. Identify three receipts your organization is issuing unreliably or not at all. List them. Don't filter yet — just name them.

Candidate 1

Candidate 2

Candidate 3

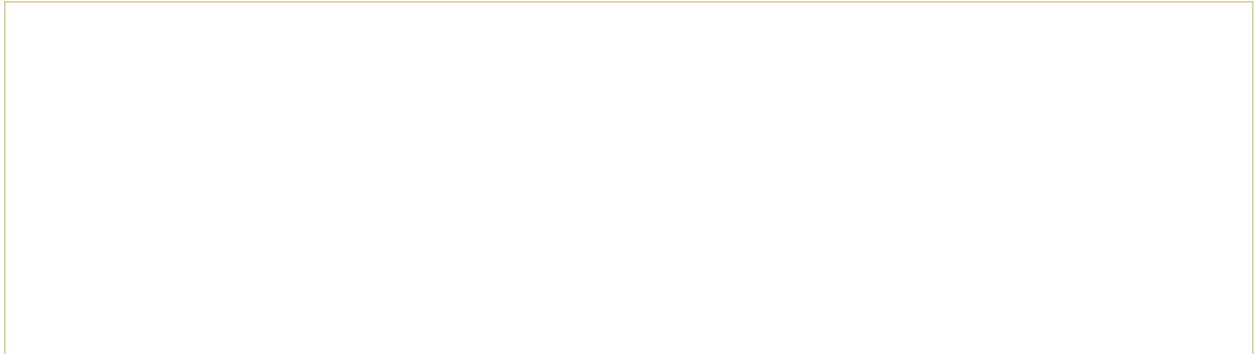
### Pick one

Which of the three meets all of these criteria?

- You have authority or influence to act on it within thirty days

- Upgrading it would be visible to someone — a donor, a colleague, a beneficiary
- You can describe what “upgraded” looks like in concrete terms
- It is not the easiest one on the list — it is the one the audit pointed at

*The receipt I will upgrade in the next thirty days:*



## Design the Upgrade

*The session's closing exercise asked you to commit, out loud, to one specific thirty-day promise. This section turns that promise into a working plan.*

### **The current state**

*Describe what your organization is doing now with this receipt. Be honest about how reliably it gets issued, by whom, and on what schedule.*

### **The upgraded state**

*Describe what "upgraded" looks like in operational terms. Who issues the receipt? When? How is it verified? What does the donor (or affected party) experience?*

## Upstream architecture

What has to happen upstream for the upgraded receipt to be issued reliably? Whose work has to change? What information has to move?

## Specific actions in the next thirty days

Three to five concrete steps. Each one should be something you (or someone you can ask) can actually do.

Action 1 (by when)

Action 2 (by when)

Action 3 (by when)

Action 4 (optional)

Action 5 (optional)

**Verification**

*How will you know the upgrade actually happened, at the end of thirty days? What specifically will you check?*

## Name the Witness

*The witness is what turns intention into a kept promise. If you completed the session, you have already named witnesses at your table. Name one more here — someone at your organization, or in your network, who will know whether you followed through.*

### Your witness

*Who is the witness for this commitment? Name them.*

*Why this person? What gives them standing to ask whether you kept the promise?*

### How they'll know

*How will you tell them — in what format, with what specificity? "I told them at coffee" is too vague. "I emailed them on June 18 with the specific commitment" is concrete.*

## Check-in

When will you check back with them? Schedule a specific date. Put it on a calendar before you finish this worksheet.

## The commitment statement

Write your commitment in the form the session used. Read it aloud once. Put a copy somewhere you will see it weekly.

*In the next thirty days, my organization will:*

*You will know it happened because:*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_ Check-in date: \_\_\_\_\_

## What to do with this worksheet

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### Keep it

This worksheet is yours. It is not for your supervisor, your board, or your AFP chapter. The honesty of the audit depends on no one else needing to read it.

### Schedule the check-in

If you named a check-in date in Section 7, put it on your calendar now — before you close this document. The witness conversation is the work.

### Revisit in six months

The audit is a snapshot. Organizations move. Receipts that were issuing reliably can drift; receipts that were broken can be repaired. Plan to do this audit again in six months. The categories that were strong will tell you whether they stayed strong. The categories that were weak will tell you whether the upgrade actually traveled.

### If you want more

The session companion resources live at [ShowMeReceipts.org](https://ShowMeReceipts.org) — the Reference Card with the full 190-item inventory, the Glossary, the AI as Witness page for Socratic prompts to extend this audit with structured AI partnership.

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*Make a promise. Keep it. Make another. Keep it.  
Trust is what the receipts add up to.*