

'Making the Ask' - 3 Small Steps to Communicating the Need

Jesus said, "You do not have because you do not ask". Of course, He was speaking of presenting our requests to God first and receiving divine intervention. The principle of asking and receiving from others is no different and these 3 Small Steps will focus your requests.

Step 1. Know your listeners. The best communicators alter their language to suit their audience. Whom are you addressing? There is a huge difference between a regular church member and a potential supporter from your wider community. Your language shouldn't be too 'churchy' for the visitor as it will seem exclusive, nor too desperate or demanding. Draw people in. Do you remember the Kitchener campaign, "Your Country Needs You"? Using 'your church' instead of 'our church' makes people feel valued and included. Also keep in mind that your first aim should always be to give something before getting anything back.

Step 2. Paint a Picture. We often talk in terms of outputs not outcomes. What's the difference? An output is simply what you are currently doing or what you want to do. For example, "We want to set up a youth group / memory café / mothers and toddlers". The outcome is what effect that will have: "We want to bring hope and purpose / support the vulnerable / give the isolated a family". Martin Luther King in his historic speech shared his vision by saying, "I see...". What do you see? Those who empathise with your vision will invest in it.

Step 3. Be clear and specific. "We need to raise some money!" doesn't tell anyone anything. In fact, far from attracting gifts, it can have the opposite effect as the desperate tone can raise unanswered questions for the potential donor: "What's it for? How have they got to this state? What are they doing with their money now? Are they wise stewards?" I'm not suggesting a copy of the church accounts be left on display, simply that facts are needed which inspire trust and confidence. Show that you are already as committed to the project as you are asking someone else to be.

We have seen some fantastic, thoughtful messaging in Cornish churches recently and we trust these excerpts will inspire you to write your own.

- ❖ *We are delighted that you are able to share this special place with us. We hope that you find peace, quiet and closeness to God within these walls, something that generations of worshippers before us have done.*
- ❖ *The cost of maintaining this building and supporting local charities is met by our small congregation. If you would like to help us in this task and allow future generations to worship and meet in this place your donation would be invaluable.*
- ❖ *We thank you for visiting this ancient church and may we take this opportunity to ask for your help in maintaining this beautiful building.*
- ❖ *You can give directly to this church by using this QR code. All monies raised go to ensure we can keep our service in the community going.*
- ❖ *Contactless giving to support this church in its Mission and Ministry: We hope you have enjoyed your visit to our lovely church. You can now donate towards its work and upkeep by using our contactless donation machine.*