



Dr. Cindy's

10 Steps for Overcoming Your Fear of the "Ask"



Dr. Cindy

1

Realize you're not alone.

Nobody does this life alone, which means everybody needs help every now and then. The person you're asking for help has had to ask others for help, too—plenty of times. So go ahead and ask.

2

Change your mindset.

Asking someone for help is a compliment. When you trust someone with your request, it shows how much you respect and value the other person's guidance. Most people feel valued when someone asks for their advice or assistance. Don't think of your request as a burden on the other person. Think of it as a mutual opportunity.

3

Know your own value.

You deserve to have what you want and need in this life. So it's absolutely OK to ask others to help you get that.

4

Expect to hear a "yes."

Studies have shown that most people would much rather say "yes" to a request for help than to run the risk of offending you or hurting your feelings. Especially if the person has said "no" to you in the past, you've got a really good chance of getting what you ask for.

5

Think it through.

Before you ask anyone for anything, determine exactly what you need help with. If you can present your request in a logical, practical way—without a lot of emotion—your "ask" will seem far less complicated to the other person than it might seem in your head. And it will feel less overwhelming to this person you ask if you ask for something specific.

6

Offer some solutions.

If you would like to ask someone to help you solve a problem, don't just dump your dilemma on him or her. Instead, communicate that you would like to problem-solve, and then ask for feedback rather than help. Come up with a few scenarios of what a solution might look like. This portrays your commitment to teamwork and that you value the other person's wisdom.

7

Ask the right person.

Before you approach anyone, figure out who is in a position to help you. Consider whether the person you're asking has the time, the resources, the authority and the knowledge to do what you're asking. And choose someone who's a good listener. People who listen well are more likely to understand what you're asking for and why.

8

Be reasonable.

Avoid asking for favors that will cost another person too much time, money or effort. Reserve your "asks" for those things that you really do need help with and can't figure out on your own. Don't take advantage of the kindness of others. Ask for help when you need it, and offer help when you can.

9

Be humble.

Realize that nobody has to help you. The people who say "yes" do so because they care about you or your project, because it makes them feel good to do for others, or because helping you might, in turn, help them somehow. Ask with that in mind when you make your requests. Never demand, badger or bully.

10

Be thankful.

Even before you ask, take a moment to feel grateful that you have someone in your life or at your job who will take the time to consider your request for help. And if the answer is "yes," show that gratitude again and again by returning the favor when you can and by doing everything you said you would do when you made the request. Saying "thank you" out loud is nice, but a note—and maybe even some flowers—goes a long way.



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