

Get What You Want!

By Shawna Schuh



People want information in order to become effective, engaging and successful. There are countless ways to get information. The only secret is that you have to ask for what you want. It's really that simple. Most of us just don't know how to ask, what to ask for, or how to help people help us. Mostly, we want what we want and we want it now!

However, never forget that information is just as easy for your competition to obtain. If your competition does a better job of getting the information, helping people to help them, and building relationships then not only will they have an advantage, but they'll have it now!

Following are several points to keep in mind that should raise your awareness, increase your professional presence and improve your business performance. Use them to your advantage or let your competitor do it, like most everything, it's up to you.

When dealing with people that you want information from:

1. **Start with a salutation.** To begin any exchange with a blunt request appears rough and selfish and is less likely to endear you to the person you are asking for help from. If you don't know the individuals name begin by saying, "Hello, I was hoping I'm at the

right place/address to ask a request." Begin by being courteous; it sets the tone.

2. **Be specific.** General questions can be answered in many ways. Asking general questions will force someone to reply with additional questions or give a generic answer that may or may not help you. The more specific you are with your questions the more effective someone can be in their answer, and the greater chance you have of getting exactly what you need. This is especially important when corresponding via email. I get questions all the time about business finesse, and the broader the question the more difficult it is to answer. Ask specific questions and you'll get specific answers.
3. **Thank the person.** When you thank someone in advance you are more likely to get an expedient response. Also, you've shown that you understand that it takes time and effort to help you. Example: "I would really appreciate it if you could direct me to...". Also, never forget to thank them again for helping you at the end. I am asked for information constantly and I'm happy to help, but when the person doesn't even bother thank me, it leaves a negative impression that can last a long time.
4. **Sign your email or say your name.** Another important part of requesting information is letting the person you're asking know that you are real and have a need they can fill. People like to feel important and helpful to others. Give them that feeling by letting them know who you are and maybe why you need the request. You will receive a more personal answer if you give someone your name.
5. **Follow up!** After you receive your reply, in person or over the internet, send a follow up note with a thank you and perhaps a brief description of how you

intend to use the information, or what you have accomplished with their help.

These days, especially with the convenience of the reply button with email, it reflects incredibly poor manners not to thank someone who has done something for you. In person it's unheard of. Don't be remembered by your bad manners. Say "thank you" in person, and depending on how much work the person had to do for you, send a note of thanks or even a small gift.

Note: Too few people actually take the time to write a thank you note. You can really set yourself apart by adopting this habit. Moreover, you never know when you may need help from this person again. A special note from you is sure to pave the road to a successful future relationship.

Let's review how you can get the help that you need:

- ◆ A friendly salutation;
- ◆ Be specific with your request for help;
- ◆ Thank them for their time;
- ◆ Let them know who you are, and why you need them;
- ◆ Follow up with a thank you.

By practicing these tips you will be building something even more important than your knowledge base; you'll be building a reputation for graciousness and professionalism, a combination that is very hard to beat!

Conquer Apathy and Erase Rudeness as you follow proven, fun and beneficial information by Shawna Schuh, CSP. Specializing in communication, professionalism, service & business finesse. Shawna helps you bring your best self to the work you do for maximum results. To book Shawna to speak or for article reprinting contact Sandy McCready at 503-280-1946 or visit www.ShawnaSchuh.com.