



## Request Granted: How to Improve the Odds of Getting What You Need

### Description

Quite often managers ask for things: more staff, new equipment, implementation of a new process or procedure that they believe will improve the performance of the department. Asking for things that the manager feels are needed is a good thing. At times the manager can't understand why the request was not approved. The answer could be how the request was presented.

From my personal experience, it's clear that those individuals who have the skill to present requests in an effective manner are the ones who will garner the most support. This does not mean a person will *always* receive what they request. It does mean they will receive what they request *more often*.

In healthcare, I provide training sessions for managers on how to ask for things. Why? I was frequently hearing statements like, "I told my leader I needed more staff but was told no," or "I need new equipment but can't get it." Sometimes managers were blaming another department for not being able to get their needs met. At times, requests had not even been made, yet I would hear statements such as, "\_\_\_\_\_ (name of leader) will say no," or "We can't get that here. It is not in the budget."

When I dug into these situations, I found a key issue was the skill of the person making the request. The manager did not know how to make the request in a way to meet their supervisor's needs. It was not a will issue but a skill issue. This is an area in which it took me a while to learn the best way to submit requests.

Here are some tips for requesters:

**Have a one-on-one with your supervisor.** Before completing the request, share with your supervisor what you have in mind. Ask what the supervisor needs to evaluate the request.

**Keep your pitch simple.** The easier it is to understand why you're making the request and how the company will benefit, the more likely you are to get a yes. Start with the outcome that will be gained.

**Think about potential obstacles ahead of time and explain how they might be addressed.** For example, if you're asking for support from a different department, acknowledge the stress this could

place on *them* and suggest how it might be alleviated. If you're asking for a big-ticket item that you know is too much for the current budget, you might suggest the purchase be split up over time. The easier it is to implement your suggestion, the better.

**Put the request in writing.** Very rarely will a request for something significant be agreed to based on a verbal conversation. Try not to be flustered when asked for more information. Often there will need to be some adjustments to the request based on questions received. If your request is time-sensitive, let your supervisor know why.

**If you consistently get told no, hold up the mirror.** It can be tempting to blame other people or adopt a victim mentality. Instead, ask yourself if you need to do something differently.

If you get "noes," answer these questions:

1. Did you discuss with your supervisor to gauge their support?
2. Did you ask your supervisor what specifics they will need to make a decision?
3. Did you put the request in writing and identify the impact if it is approved? Impact if not approved?
4. Did you identify any time-sensitive issues?

A key leadership skill is being able to make well-thought-out requests in a written manner.

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