

# THE ART OF THE ASK

## *Training Outline*

### Welcome

- **Who this training is for:**
  - Leaders of nonprofits, ministries, and those who speak at fundraising events
  - You have a mission you care deeply about that needs funds to succeed
  - You're in front of people at some kind of fundraising event
- **What we'll cover:**
  - WHY mastering the ASK is so crucial to your mission
  - HOW to plan and prepare for a winning ASK
  - WHAT to say to maximize donations from your ASK
  - BONUS tip- DOUBLE donations
- **By the time we're done:**
  - You'll be confident (and hopefully excited) to deliver your next financial appeal at a fundraising event ... even if it's tomorrow!

### My Experiences

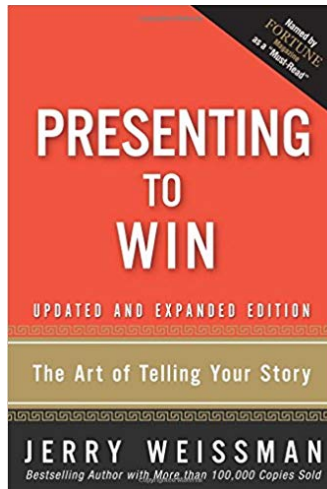
- **Fear and failure**
  - Coalition
    - 1998- joined board
    - Each year- fundraising banquet
      - ~350 attendees
      - ~\$33-37,000
    - 2001- asked to deliver appeal
      - Terrified
      - Didn't know what to say or do
      - Several sleepless nights
      - Got up, hoping for the best
  - Disaster
    - Giving down 20% to lowest level ever

- \$24,350
  - Staff worried, mission at risk
  - I was ready to quit
- Another group's fundraiser
  - Few weeks later
  - Meal, speaker, what they do
  - Closed event without ask
  - Pastor tried to save the day
- Felt called to leave business world to run nonprofit
  - Realized I had to master ASK or it would be short lived
- **ASK breakthroughs**
  - Began working on it
    - First year- from \$24,350 to \$64,150
    - Grew to \$80,000+ over next 2 years
  - Karen Pennell, CCWS
    - New way to do ask
    - Implemented, following step by step script and instructions
    - DOUBLED income
  - My own organization
    - Monday, told staff
      - Scrapped appeal cards, retooled
      - Delivered improved ASK Tuesday
      - DOUBLED- \$167,442
    - Taught 3 EDs who followed
      - Kept growing
      - \$209,133
      - \$236,258
      - \$274,879
      - \$312,964
    - Raise majority of annual budget in 12-14 minutes at fundraising event
- **Teleconference training**
  - 651 organizations
  - \$2 million in reported increases during first year
- **Started 40 Days for Life**
  - First year: missionary support
    - End of year: \$71
    - Hadn't been paid in 10 weeks
  - Wanted a fundraising event

- Couldn't gather everyone in person
- Webcasts
  - \$151,000
  - Continued to grow
  - \$400,000+
  - Majority of budget raised
- **Since then**
  - Speaking, advising, coaching
    - \$60,000,000+
  - Continually bombarded with questions, asked for advice
    - Building several new projects
    - Don't have time to help 1-on-1
  - This training: "pay it forward"
    - *To whom much is given ...*
- **What this can be like for YOU**

## WHY the Ask is Crucial

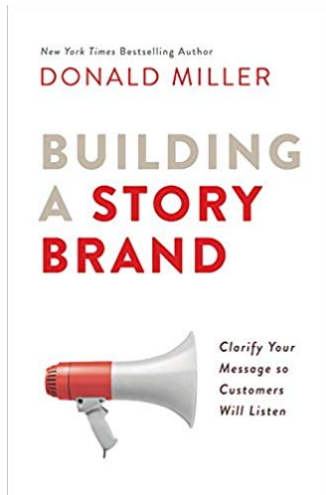
- **#1 greatest challenge to furthering mission:**
  - Shortage of funds
  - Can't change the world if you can't keep the lights on
- **To raise funds, must ASK**
  - Change in my attitude
  - Royal Benson
  - Different people, different roles
- ***"The main thing to remember is to keep the main thing the main thing" -Pat Riley***
  - Single most important part of fundraising event
  - You've invested enormous time, effort to get people here
  - They want to know exactly what's needed, how they can help
- **12-14 minutes can raise MAJOR portion of budget**
  - Don't have to stress as much over fundraising rest of the year
  - The one area that cannot be shortchanged
- **How you deliver the ASK conveys how serious you are about your mission**



- *Effective Management*
- Move people from Point A to Point B
  - Understand
  - Believe
  - Act
- Don't be timid about inviting people to invest
- **Works in many formats**
  - Wherever you get in front of a group of people
  - In-home gathering
  - Community event
  - Church
  - Banquet
  - Golf tournament
  - Walk
  - Webcast
- **Spills over into all other ways you raise funds**

## HOW to Plan & Prepare

- **Fundamentals**
  - Begin with the end in mind
  - Build your event backwards from the appeal
  - Environment conducive to giving
  - Think and communicate ROI
- **Know your audience**



- “Brand Script”
  - A Character
  - Has a Problem
  - And Meets a Guide
  - Who Gives Them a Plan
  - And Calls Them to Action
  - That Ends in Success
  - That Helps Them Avoid Failure
  - Character Transformation
- Be the *guide*, not the hero
- Know their:
  - Interests
  - Values
  - Passions
  - Concerns
  - Burdens
- WIIFM
- **Choose the right person**
  - Someone who:
    - Passionately believes in your mission
    - Can clearly articulate the need
    - Doesn’t apologize for asking
    - Understands two parts of the appeal, and can guide people through clear instructions
    - Personally invests in your work
    - **YOU**
  - Person from your organization vs. a guest speaker

- **Keys**
  - Simplicity
  - Passion
  - Clear direction
  - Allow people to respond
- **Preparation**
  - Prepare your outline / script
  - Practice, practice, practice!
  - Response tools
    - Card(s)
    - Envelopes
    - Pens
    - Collection process
- **Create environment conducive to giving**
  - Throughout
    - Prayerful
    - Purposeful
    - Positive
    - Passionate
    - Persuasive
  - Get out and mingle with people
  - Make clear: this is a fundraising event, opportunities to give
  - Assume nothing
    - Tell your organization story
    - Articulate the mission, and why it's needed
    - Share a bigger vision
    - Give people easy ways to move toward that bigger, better future

## **BONUS: Double the \$**

- **Double dip**
  - One-time gifts
  - Ongoing pledges
- **My experience**
  - Learned from Karen Pennell
  - Went home and applied at my organization
  - Worked year after year
  - Taught hundreds of other organizations

- **Why it's so effective**
  - *"If you chase two rabbits, you will not catch either one."* -Russian Proverb
  - Simplifies decision-making
    - One decision at a time
    - Provides clarity and focus
  - Rather than "either-or" many will respond "both-and"
  - Need both? Then ask for both
    - People who care about your mission want to know your needs, they want to help achieve mission
- **Adds ~5 minutes**
  - Can dramatically increase donations
  - Is it worth that?

## WHAT to Say & Do

- **Steps**
  - In front of people, face-to-face
  - Share your vision, mission, plan
  - Ask for a one-time gift
  - Allow them to respond
  - Ask for an ongoing pledge
  - Allow them to respond
- **Transitioning into ASK**
  - Be ready to take the stage the moment the speaker is done
  - Move confidently into appeal
  - This is why everyone is here
  - Keep people in their seats
- **One-time**
  - This brings us to the most important time of our event
    - Two opportunities to invest in furthering this important mission
    - Please remain seated
    - Maintain prayerful & reflective atmosphere
    - Holy time between you and God
  - I'm honored to do this portion of our event
    - This is an opportunity for each of us to put our faith into action
    - To take the convictions of our head, move them to our heart, then to our hands and feet
  - At this time, please pass around cards that say "one-time gift"
    - And make sure everyone has a pen

- As you get your card, it's important to follow some simple instructions
  - Go ahead and fill in your contact information, so we can keep you up to date on our ongoing progress
  - Please don't yet fill out any other part
  - We'll wait until we have a chance to pray over this together
- As we prepare to make a ONE-TIME gift, let me put your investment into perspective ...
  - For \$\_\_\_\_, can ... (RESULT)
  - For \$\_\_\_\_, can ... (RESULT)
  - For \$\_\_\_\_, can ... (RESULT)
- Some here may be called to play a larger role
  - (Mention higher giving levels on card)
  - No gift too small... or too LARGE
- Investment will determine
  - How many (RESULT)
  - How many (RESULT)
  - How many (RESULT)
- Before we respond, can I admit something very embarrassing?
  - (PERSONALIZE STORY)
  - When I used to come to events like this, on the drive there, my wife and I would come up with the amount we wanted to give
  - We were effectively shutting God out of the decision!
  - We were trying to put Him in our tiny, human-sized box
  - We weren't leaving ourselves open to what He wanted to place on our hearts, what He wanted us to do
  - So, if anyone here came with a pre-determined number in your head
  - Don't try to put God in a box
  - Can we pray, ask God to erase our number and show us what He would ask us to invest
- This event is already paid for
  - 100% goes to mission
  - Tax deductible!
- What could be more important
  - Than (RESULT)?
- PRAY TOGETHER...
- Now, on your card
  - Go ahead and check the box
  - Or write the number God has placed on your heart
  - Write check or include credit card information



- ALLOW TIME TO RESPOND
- Now, can someone pass around the large envelope on your table
  - Place your card in its envelope with check or credit card info, seal it
  - Drop it in the big envelope
  - Then we have one more thing to do, so please stay seated
- **Ongoing pledge**
  - Please remain seated
    - To maintain this prayerful environment
    - And to allow God to continue speaking to our hearts
  - I would like to thank those who have been monthly donors
    - Fundraising events like this are very important for one-time gifts
    - But 3 months, 6 months, 9 months from now, there are ongoing needs
    - Monthly support is the lifeblood of advancing this mission through the entire year
    - It enables us to plan and implement our mission with confidence
  - Here's a question my wife and I had to ask ourselves ...
    - (PERSONALIZE STORY)
    - If God is truly Master of our lives
    - Are we willing to entrust our finances to Him?
    - Are we willing to give up some of the things we want
    - To do what HE wants?
  - Monthly support is not always easy but it's worth it
    - "Emotional Hook"
    - (PERSONAL STORY THAT BRIEFLY ILLUSTRATES MISSION IN ACTION)
  - Now, please pass around the cards that say "Ongoing Pledge"
    - Just fill in contact info for now
    - After we pray, you'll have an opportunity to indicate your monthly pledge by checking a box, or writing whatever number God places on your heart
  - PRAY TOGETHER ...
  - Now, go ahead and check the box or write the number of the monthly pledge you wish to invest in this work
    - (GIVE INSTRUCTIONS OF HOW THIS WILL BE FULFILLED)
  - ALLOW TIME TO RESPOND
  - Please pass the large envelope around one more time
    - Place your card in its envelope with check or credit card info, seal it

- Drop it in the big envelope
- Thank you for generously investing in this work
  - (PAINT QUICK PICTURE OF MISSION SUCCESS)
- FINAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR COLLECTING CARDS

## Conclusion

- **The power of an ASK**



- **Next steps**
  - Why
  - How
  - What
  - *Just do it!*
- **Favor**
  - Feedback
    - This training
    - Other kinds of training
  - Later- how your next ask goes
- **Implementation Guide**
- **Count on my prayers**