

Asking for what you need isn't a favour — *it's a skill*

A RESOURCE BY
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For anyone weighing up asking for something they need, and unsure whether they should.

The story



"Shall we grab a coffee?" That's how I called my old boss. Out of the blue, no plan. I wanted to move back to work in Spain and couldn't think of anything smarter than to ask. And yes: my voice was shaking.

Four months later, the phone rang.

*Asking is awkward for three seconds.
Not asking, sometimes for years.*

From Self-confidence is overrated. I didn't have a brilliant plan. I just asked.

Why it's hard



If you don't ask, you already have the no: you've spent years collecting noes no one ever gave you.

Why? Almost always one of three: you think you don't deserve it, you feel embarrassed, or you take the answer for granted. None is a fact — they're assumptions.

Change the question:
not "will they give it to me?",
but "what is it costing me not to ask?".

How to frame it



- **To someone who can say yes.** Go to who decides, not who just listens.
- **Ask for the conversation.** "Have you got 20 minutes? I'd like to run something by you." Booking the moment already says it's serious.
- **Examples, not apologies.** No "sorry to bother you": start with what you've contributed.
- **Their side of the table too.** Explain what the other party gains; helping them say yes is half the conversation.
- **Use the feedback in your favour.** "You delegate too little", "you lack visibility": your request answers exactly that.
- **And if it's no, open it.** "What would it take for it to be a yes?" A no with conditions is a "not yet".

Powerful questions



- Why have I been valued recently, and what does it say about my potential?
- What exactly am I asking for? *(If it doesn't fit in one sentence, you're not clear yet.)*
- What real problem does this solve — for me and for whoever decides?
- How do I make it easy for whoever has to approve it?
- What's the real cost of not asking?

They're not for the other person: they're for you, before you go in. If you can answer them, you walk in with the conversation half-won.

The outcome of the conversation isn't what matters most. *What matters is having the courage to ask.*

Next time you hesitate, remember a coffee asked for out of the blue, and a phone that rang four months later.

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