



MULTIPLY 417

Passion: The Bridge between People and Purpose

Dear Rick,

What is Social Proofing?

Social proofing is a term that was created by Robert Cialdini in 1984. In his book *Influence* he states that social proofing is both a psychological and social phenomenon wherein people follow the actions of others because it feels safe. Well, actually it is more that it seems to have a lower risk (not quite the same as safe). It also can generate a sense of joining or belonging.

Can we use it? Should we use it?

Well only you can decide the answer to that, but I maintain that you already do in some areas of your ministry. Say, what? That's right, because while there are other intentions involved, the use of a testimony in certain situations is in fact the idea behind Social Proofing.

As with many of our behaviors in fundraising, the behavior in and of itself, isn't necessarily good, bad, or evil (yes, there are definitely some things that are just simply wrong or bad). But lots of the time it really comes down to the intentions. If you can use social proofing or just smart testimonials to help partners or prospective partners consider a gift, a new gift, or an increased gift and still honor your commitment to effective, relational, and Biblical based engagement, then yes, proceed.

So where do I use it?

Really the question is, where wouldn't you use it? Which of course you still have to decide, but you can (strategically and with balance) use it almost anywhere.

- Email's
- Letters
- Brochures
- Websites - Website GIVING PAGES

Here's two examples:

Social Proofing for a Monthly giving request

Social Proofing for a Legacy giving campaign or request.

Need more ideas or some help? **Call or email me.** I'd love to help.

One Last Word

At the end of the day, social proofing can be very effective because it empowers partners to tell your story to other potential partners.



Take the Poll - Enter the drawing

Has your Board of Directors been trained for fundraising?

Yes

Answer the poll and I'll enter you in a drawing for a \$10 Starbucks Card.

No

Sort of

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