



MULTIPLY 417

Passion: The Bridge between People and Purpose

Development Skills - The Phone Part 4 - Responding to Maybe

With apologies from me!

Rick,

So what can I say, my bad.

#1 I did not intend for this email to go out without my editor seeing it. It did and it makes me cringe to see the errors. So let me turn it into a tip. ALWAYS HAVE SOMEONE ELSE EDIT YOUR STUFF or it will look like...yeah, enough said.

#2 Maybe even worse, if that's possible. I didn't really finish the point of this tip. What do I finally, finally do when all my other options have failed?

So here's the conclusion to the tip about handling maybe's and some edits to the original tip.

I want to be gracious, and grace filled. I want to be kind and considerate. In general they owe me nothing, except at this point they kind of do only as it relates to giving me a decision, because they agreed to make a decision and now it appears they can't or won't.

At this juncture the decision of how you move forward needs to start shifting more to your time, effort and efficiency in your role. If you agree with me on that point, then you can't keep trying to follow up someone in perpetuity, but you really do need to lovingly attempt to speak to (words like challenge or confront, seemed heavy here, but may actually be spot on) their lack of decision making capacity. Not because they didn't give you a gift! But because they couldn't tell you NO, which is most likely (99%) what they want to do, but can't seem to find the words or the will to do so.

So here's my script of what most the time would be my final follow up attempt. I hope you can find the exact right place and space for you in handling this challenging experience.

"Hey Bill, just wanted to leave you another message about your consideration of partnering with me and (my ministry). Several times now we've talked about when you thought you would have a decision and each of these dates has now come and gone. Just a couple of things I want to assure you of as it relates to fundraising. I love the opportunity to share my passion and ministry, but I ultimately must know that God is my sole provider. He will move folks and their hearts to make the decisions He has for them. If you have found other areas of God's Kingdom where your passion really shines, I think that's wonderful and I would heartily encourage you to pour yourself into those ministry realms. If you haven't, please actively pursue those causes. If it never involves (your ministry) that's okay. As I've said God will easily sort that out.

Because I am so confident of this, I'm really pretty good with the yes's and the no's that

come my way. I can fully rely on God and that makes it easy for me to handle whatever decisions I encounter. But at some point, as a matter of faithful stewardship of my time, I have to equate not getting any answer is the same as getting a no and move on. I'd love for you to partner with me and my team. But for now, it seems like that's not what God is going to do and I don't want to become a pest. Thanks again for letting me share. If anything changes in the future and you do decide you'd like to financially participate, please track me down. I will continue to send you our newsletter (or whatever would be appropriate here for you or your org.) unless you let us know you would prefer to not receive it.

Again, thank you and Blessings,

Rick"

If you're just joining us, you need to go to my website www.multiply417.com/blog and catch up on the first three tips for phone call skills. This last tip may be helpful, but lacking some context provided in parts one through three.

Okay, to repeat. You've done some good engagement work and made a meaningful connection. You've shared about future vision or need, and now you are asking for the appointment and they come back with...

- Not right now
- Not sure, I'll have to get back to you
- Or, they've actually agreed to a decision date, only to waive you off (again), saying they still haven't decided

Oh yes, boys and girls, you may have just entered the eternal land of maybe.

****NOTE We are talking about three potential responses on a phone call, primarily focused on trying to set up an ask appointment. But the three answers and 99% of my tip ideas would be identical if you were already at the appointment and had already asked for a gift, waiting for a live response.***

To be totally fair, there are lots of straight up legitimate reasons for maybe, or not now responses. Plus, since we fundamentally know God is our provider and He provides all, we can rest in any answer a partner gives us. But...when it appears the "maybe" is simply a delay tactic, intentional or otherwise, we do have to consider two aspects as it relates to our responsibilities.

1. How much time and energy do we spend repeatedly asking for and/or waiting on an answer?
2. If I believe I have a ministry role in this person's life (Please read Henry Nouwen's - Spirituality of Fundraising), then I believe I have a responsibility to call them on this. You'll need to decide how you feel about that and respond accordingly.

Here's how I ultimately handle the long-term maybe's. Please understand this is just how I decided to proceed and honestly I felt like for me, it was a Holy Spirit blessed response. You will have to chart your own course. Maybe you want to follow my plan, maybe not. My plan is not GOD's WAY, as in a singular path. It's just how Rick Fritzscheier felt lead to respond. But for me, WHEN, I felt the partner or prospective partner was not being fully honest with me or themselves, here's how I handled it.

I always gave an individual at least 3 or 4 opportunities to finally make a decision and in some instances even more (every situation is fluid).

"Hey, My Quagmire, it's me again. Yes how are you doing? Great. Hey as I mentioned before I still need to follow up and see if you decided if you are interested in meeting to hear more about (my ministry) and our current need of \$XXX. When we talked last, you and I agreed I'd call you back now to see what you've decided to do? I'm hoping you have been able to reach a decision. Have you?"

That script probably represents my third attempt in assisting them to come to a conclusion. It's moderately aggressive, extremely clear, and leans in the direction of insisting on an answer. It is definitely intended to get them off of their maybe, later, not right now, response.

See the last two sentences. I remind them, albeit softly, they agreed I would call them back now. There shouldn't be any surprise in their tone. Then (as you always should) we couple that with the last sentence, Which leaves no room for confusion, HAVE YOU REACHED A DECISION? Critical at this point, as many of you already now, lies a major skill you must invoke, immediately after asking the question. Shut up!

Don't help them, don't avoid the potential uncomfortable silence where nanoseconds seem like decades, do not bail them out by stepping back in with words.

And maybe your thinking that sounds mean, or vicious, or aggressive. I suppose that could be someone's intention, but it's not mine. Mine is because I want them to honest with themselves about the decision they've already made (in their head), perhaps how they got there, and then as lovingly as possible, strongly encourage them to own their decision and verbalize it.

See this is the great blessing of knowing God is our provider and provision. It fully frees us up to minister to these folks without having a conflict of interest over needing their money. We don't! We get to have a small slice of ministering to them in this moment. Oh they may not take us up on it. They may not appreciate it. But our intention is clear "I seek the fruit that would be added to your increase".

RECAP

So, how many attempts to follow up? Probably 3 to 4 times per any unusual or unique circumstances and you'll need to slightly up the ante/pressure/tension with each attempt.

Be ever increasingly clear about the decision you are asking them to consider and appropriately use legitimate deadlines that you need to meet, hence the "real" reason for the further "pressure" on them to respond.

Keep in mind, we don't feel anxious or pressured for their yes. God is our provision. We feel "pressured" to keep moving forward, to help move them to a place of clarity. Maybe is not clarity, nor is it honestly seeking clarity after more than a few weeks of delays.

If you can find the right open door, help them to see their uncertainty (when you are ready to call it that) as a gauge for finding their Kingdom inspired passion. If it's not with your ministry, that's okay, but what is it?

Everything I just said is solid advice, but it will not be true 100% of the time. There are always exceptions. Pursue a life of fundraising and you will encounter them. Listen well. Discern even better.

So, there you go. Critical phone skills for you or any of your staff involved in partner development.

Blessings,

Rick



Next: Statistics you may be interested in. I.E. - If you share about QCD's in your newsletter or other communication pieces 3x yearly, you can expect to see your QCD gifts grow by ___?

P.S. Have a question or development topic you'd like to read about? Just let me know. I spend a considerable amount of time each week in reading and research on the latest and most relevant of development issues. I'd love to hunt down some answers for you if that's what's needed. Please [contact me or email me.](#)

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