

RESILIENT FAMILIES



This issue builds resilience in...

Communication

Behaviour Management

Want more help? Try **Sticky Strategies**

You don't have to be a 'nag' to get results...

How many times do you catch yourself asking for something over and over again? "I've asked you ten times to..." and it's still not done. Frustrating! Why don't people just listen and do as you ask? People around the world are asking themselves this exact same question. So, what are we doing that leads to such unwanted outcomes?

How we say it makes a difference ...

Here are some **common mistakes** made when asking for something.

1. Repeating the request. If you are **asking for something more than once**, a) you're wasting valuable time, b) the person you asked assumes you didn't mean it the first time or you wouldn't need to repeat it, c) you probably have a set limit of repeats that you'll go to before you get cranky (most people use 3). The people closest to you will have worked this out and will count down, "1, 2, 3..." (*Okay now you mean it, better do something*)" and lastly, d) each time you repeat the request, you're gradually eroding the esteem of the other person by suggesting you don't trust them to be responsible, which can make them less likely to want to co-operate.

2. Asking with words like, "**You should/n't...**" **triggers defensive reactions** rather than cooperation. Using commands like; "*Pick up your clothes from the floor!*" sounds dictatorial and strong and lacks oomph to get things done because it's often **vague** and has **no clear consequences**. The other person may think, "*When do you want me to pick them up?*", "*Where do you want me to put them?*", "*What will happen if I don't do it?*" and "*How important is it?*".

Think carefully before speaking...

To be a 'master asker' requires some essential skills. 1. Be very **clear** and **specific** in your own mind first about

what you want someone to do. 2. Check, is it **realistic** for them to do it? They may need instruction. 3. Ask unambiguously and be sure to include both a **positive consequence** when it's done (gratitude etc.) and a **clear and logical consequence if it isn't done**. (e.g. If the dishes aren't washed you won't be making lunches in the morning.) 4. Ask once and then follow through with the consequences as forewarned. 5. Use words that express your desires, such as "*I would like you to...*" "*I need you to...*" "*I want ...*". ("*I*" being the critical word) People are more likely to want to help when you ask this way, even small children. The more **specific** you are, the **less times you ask** and the more you provide **feedback through consequence**, the faster the nagging will stop and the respect will grow.

- ✓ The most common mistakes when asking are: being vague, asking repeatedly and not following through with consequence.
- ✓ Check that your expectations are realistic.
- ✓ Use words like "*I need you to...*" or "*I want you to...*" or "*I would like...*"

"The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place"

George Bernard Shaw