



THE POWER OF AN ASK

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RECRUITING TO CONFERENCES AND RETREATS

“I’m not going...”

I remember sitting down with a student leader in St. Louis. He told me about what God had been teaching him recently and how he was becoming more burdened for the spiritual state of the campus. He also told me that he thought our Campus Crusade for Christ group needed to be challenged more. I asked him if he was planning on going to the upcoming conference. He told me that he had other plans.

He had not made the connection between his desires for the campus and his personal decision to come to the conference. I asked him to reconsider. Right then, he decided that he would go. While we were at the conference I counted six students that were there, in part, because this student decided to go. It occurred to me that it was easy for me to have assumed that he was going to go. After all, he knew about it and was the type of person who would go. At that moment, I realized how important it is to ask students one-on-one to come with us to conferences.

Students come to conferences for many different reasons, and there are many methods that can be used to help students make the decision to come. We need to use a combination of effective strategies. However, no strategy is important as the one-on-one ask. People ultimately come because someone asks them.

When we want someone to do something important, we personally ask them. If we want someone to cover a shift for us at work, we ask him or her. If we want a friend to go with us to the movie we have been waiting to see, we ask. When I proposed to my wife, Aubrey,

I asked her. Why is this the case? Asking one-on-one is personal, intentional, sincere, and relational; and, therefore, it is effective.

WHY WE ASK

Conferences and retreats are a great resource for reaching students and building movements. God uses them to impact students lives.

There are many reasons why conferences are worth asking students to join us:

- Students hear more clearly from the Lord when they get away from the noise of life.
- People accept Christ and make life-changing decisions to serve the Lord.
- It is a fun time of fellowship. Students have a chance to bond with people they like. Friendships will be formed that will be important throughout college and beyond. This helps to build transformational community.
- Momentum is created that will get the students involved in your movement headed towards the same vision. New students will learn what Campus Crusade for Christ is about, and other students will become more aligned to the vision of reaching the campus.

As a leader, you need to take responsibility to equip others to invite as many students as possible to your next conference or retreat. Asking is not always easy; it takes effort. There are several things that we allow to prevent us from asking as much as we should.

WHY WE DON'T ASK MORE OFTEN

Unfortunately, a significant obstacle to asking is



apathy. We forget all of the reasons why it is important to get students to come.

Here are some obstacles to asking one-on-one more often:

- Other strategies are easier. Announcements, power point slides, and testimonies can take less time and energy.
- Students already committed to going do not always see the necessity of asking others to come. Challenge and encourage involved students to be proactive in not only going, but also taking people with them.
- Sometimes we do not feel like we have a strong enough relationship to make asking worthwhile. We need to ask anyway; we should not rule anyone out. Don't make the decision for them. Let them decide. You never know how God is working in the lives of others.
- We think someone else has already asked them. This is a bad assumption. List all the students that could possibly be asked. Divide the names among your leadership team. Update the list as leaders meet new people. However, keep asking students regardless of whether they are on the list.
- We assume people will come if they know about the retreat and are interested. This is often not true, and can cause us to miss the chance to help students overcome obstacles.

HOW TO ASK ONE-ON-ONE

What do we do when it comes to sitting down with someone in the student union? Here are some guiding principles to making a good one-on-one ask:

- Diligently pray for those you are inviting.
- Ask students to pray about going. Help students to making Christ-centered, spiritual decisions. It is important to help people understand that not making a decision is actually a "no."
- How well you know the person you are asking is important. The stronger the relationship; the stronger the ask. This makes building relationships during the first six weeks of the school year even more critical. Diligently trying to get people to a place where God might change their lives is truly an act of love. The stronger the relationship the better, but do not forget to also ask those who we do not know well.
- Demonstrate the potential for life change. People

want to be more like Jesus. People want to know, "What difference will this make in my life?"

- You must have passion. Communicate with genuine enthusiasm about what God will do as a result of them attending the weekend retreat.
- Remember to be loving, tactful, and concerned about people's welfare (that is why you are asking them to come to the retreat in the first place.)
- Make sure there is follow-through by getting a definite "yes" or "no" from each student.
- Be intentional to ask key people. Certain people will cause many other students to come. Ask key people to invite friends to come along with them.

Have a good conversation instead of simply saying, "You should go." A good conversation might include questions like:

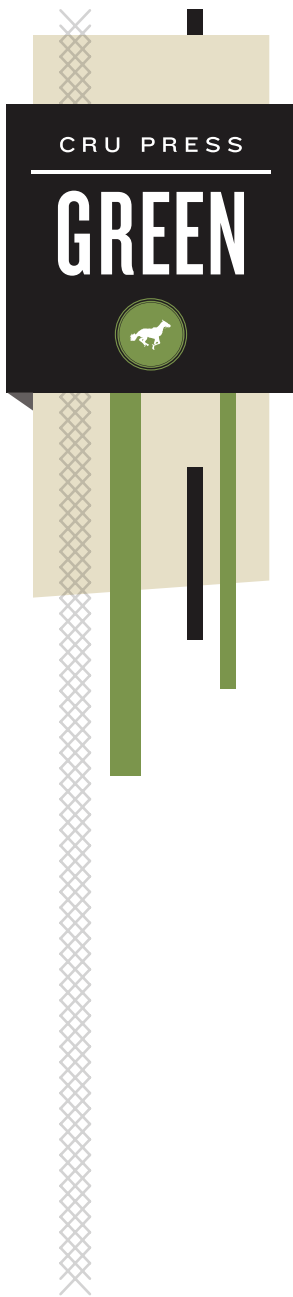
- "How has your life been spiritually?"
- "What would you like to see the Lord do in your life?"
- "Are there any areas in your life you would like to see developed right now?"
- "Would you like to go?"
- "Would you pray about it this week and ask God if He wants you to go?"
- "Can you think of anything that would keep you from going?"
- "Who would you want to go with you?"

Listen for what his or her decision is hinging on. Be sensitive to objections. Talk through them with students that you ask.

DEALING WITH OBJECTIONS

Use obstacles as opportunities to build a student's faith. We need to be responsible to help students overcome objections. Here are some common objections you might hear:

- "*I don't have the money.*" Communicate that God can supply; He is not short on resources. Possible solutions may include 1) seeking support 2) saving a certain amount each of the first six weeks of the school year 3) pursuing scholarship money for student organizations through your student activities office 4) working odd jobs (mowing, babysitting, etc.) 5) not wasting money on less important stuff.
- "*I have to work.*" Most bosses will give time off, especially if the student is willing to get others to cover their shifts. Sometimes it just takes



courage to ask. Remember, asking students early gives them more time to make arrangements.

- *“I don’t know anyone.”* Point out that they know you and that you will introduce them to others. This is one of the easiest ways to meet people and to feel more comfortable in a good community.
- *“I don’t want to go.”* There may be no good reason, but you must respect the person. Avoid judging a person’s worth based on whether or not he or she goes to the conference.