

RAISING YOUR SUPPORT

Welcome to the wonderful world of support raising!

FIRST THINGS FIRST

We want you to feel encouraged and hopeful as you begin the process of asking people to support your trip. We do understand that for lots of people this process is intimidating, so we have a few thoughts and ideas to help.

We know that you prayed about this decision, and we have faith that the process described in Psalm 37:4 was put into motion by your prayers -

“Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart”

If you are seeking (delighting yourself in) Him and you feel a strong desire to go and do the work (not just to see Ireland) - then follow that desire and trust that God is in it. He's called you to Ireland - that's very exciting, and we rejoice with you!

NOW WHAT?

This is where you really begin to see God at work.

First step - pray for God's provision. Ask Him to bring you the resources you need to do this thing He's called you to, and also ask for His help in the support raising process. Ask for joy, confidence, and peace for yourself, and for good ideas about who to ask.

Now, you're ready to start asking. Throw yourself into it with your whole heart and all the enthusiasm you can muster. If you are asking others to participate in this work, they need to see your commitment, your excitement, your vision. Once you commit, don't look back. Stay strong in your faith.

Don't feel bad about asking. Raising support gives others a chance to be a part of reaching Ireland with the light of Jesus. You are giving them the opportunity to be a part of this team, even though they can't go themselves. It's a ministry to them.

Is it Biblical to ask? Paul sets a good example of one who both asked for support and did tent-making (that's Christianese for paying your own way when you do ministry, coming from the fact that Paul made tents for a living, and sometimes paid his own way through that income). This shows us that both ways are valid, so whether you can afford to use your own money to pay for this trip, or you need to ask others to contribute, remember that it's the Lord who truly is providing.

1 Cor 16:1-4, 2 Cor 8&9, 1 Tim 6:17-19

HOW TO ASK

There are lots of ways to ask others for support, and we will give you some tips about some of the most common methods, but first there's an important principle we really want you to know.

The principle is -

The more personal your method of contact is, the greater your likelihood of obtaining support from a person.

In reverse, the more impersonal your method of contact, the less your likelihood of success.

So, with that in mind, here are some common ways of asking for support, listed in order from the least personal to the most personal -

FB wall post

group setting (talking to your church small group at their weekly meeting, for example)

Email

FB Message, etc.

Letter

Phone call

Skype, video call

Face-to-face

As you Begin:

1. Compile a list of names.

Feel free to contact anyone and everyone you can think of. Don't give in to the temptation to decide that some of the people you know won't be able to support you - that's not for you to decide. Sometimes support comes from the unlikeliest places. Go ahead and ask and leave the result to the Lord.

2. Pray for those you are going to contact

Ask God to bless them and that if He is calling them to support you, that He will provide for them to do so.

3. Pray that the Lord will provide everything you need "according to His riches in Glory."

4. Prepare your words.

If you are sending written words, through a letter, email, text, FB message, etc., draft the message carefully, then ask someone you trust to proofread it for mistakes and also to give you their thoughts about how clear it is. (We will be happy to do this for you if you like).

If you're going to be asking them on the phone, via Skype or FaceTime, or best of all in person, prepare for that as well. Have your major points laid out, to make sure your message is clear.

Either way, by written word or by your own voice, make sure you communicate your passion and excitement. This will go farther than anything else to get people on board with you.

Some will say "yes", some will say "no"
Keep in Mind: a "no" can be an obedient answer for them.

And it gets you one step closer to the next "yes"

Do your best not to take it as a personal rejection, it's not about how much they like or love you, it's truly between them and the Lord.

Most important: Always be thankful! Thank the people you ask for their time (and be sure to ask for their prayers if they are unable to give financially), and thank the Lord for being with you.

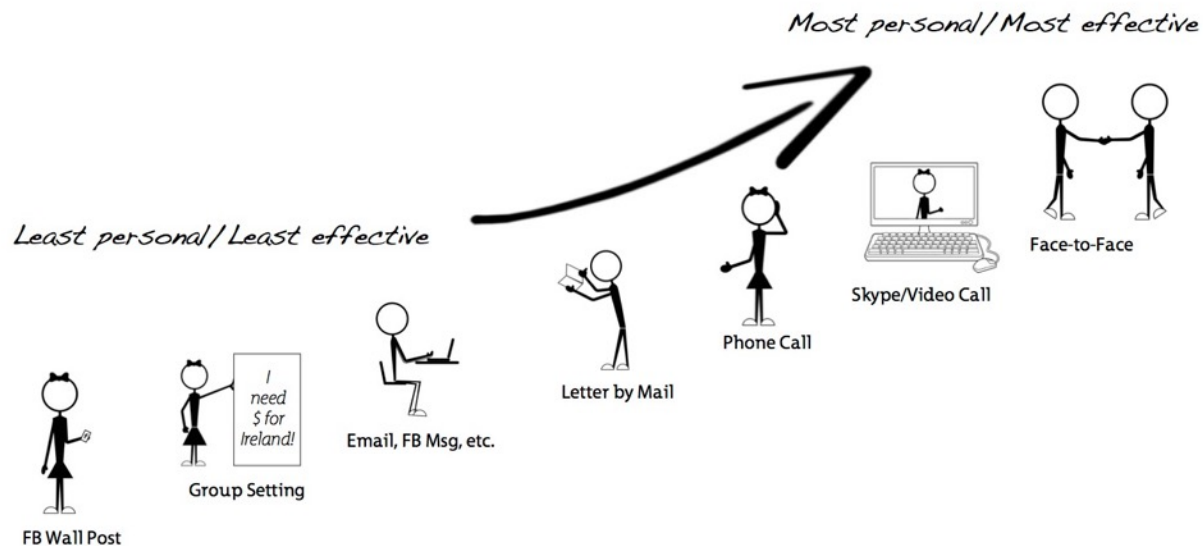
For the people who do support you financially, be sure to send each one a hand written thank you note.

5. Think about other ways you might get support

You might want to consider a fund raising event, like a bake sale, pancake supper, car wash, etc. Feel free to ask your family and friends to help with this. Get creative - we know someone who organized a huge yard sale, got lots of people to donate items they were glad to get rid of, and raised her support from the proceeds.

TIPS FOR DIFFERENT ASKING METHODS

You can choose to use just one of these methods, or any combination of them. Remember, though, that the least personal methods are less likely to get you results, so while it's ok to start with a post on your Facebook wall, you're probably going to want to follow that up with other methods.



FB wall post/Instagram, etc. -

Even though this is the least personal way to ask, it does offer the greatest potential for reaching a larger number of people. If you're active on Facebook or other social media, a general post about your trip, along with an invitation to contribute, might reach people you wouldn't think of contacting individually. Also, an image to go along with your post will help catch people's attention. A quick Google search for free-use images of Dublin will yield lots of possibilities. As people "like" or comment on your post, take that opportunity to contact them directly to ask them for support.

Talking to a group -

If you have the opportunity to make a presentation to a small group or Sunday School class, you probably don't need more than five or ten minutes to get your story across. This is a great opportunity to speak simply about how God called you, and what the trip means to you personally. Create an outline to keep yourself on track, but speak from your heart. For those who don't immediately give, you can still follow up later with an individual contact.

Email/Private message on social media -

This is much like writing a letter to mail (below), but the number one principle to keep in mind here is to be as brief as possible while relating all the information. Write the body of your message and then go back through several times and look for phrases that can be said with fewer words or sentences that are unnecessary. Keep the tone personal and casual.

Letter by mail-

If you choose to send letters in the mail, it's fine to print it from your computer, but sign each one by hand, and address the envelope by hand as well. And even though you will most likely want to write the body of your letter to copy and paste into each letter you are sending, it also will help to personalize the greeting and add a short personal introduction, like, "I hope you, Mary and the kids are doing well." This is going to give you a much better chance of your letter being read.

To make it easier to read, use paragraph breaks, and keep the paragraphs as short as possible.

Phone call/Skype/FaceTime -

When you talk to the person you're going to be asking for support, the principles are the same - communicating what the trip is about, the call you feel to be a part of it, and what your financial needs are. Have these points thought out ahead of time - write yourself a script, and practice.

Be pleasant and friendly in your conversation, but don't take too long to get your message across. Once you've told about the trip and asked for a contribution, be quiet and let the person respond. This is surprisingly hard to do, but don't be afraid of that moment of silence. If they say they aren't able to give, thank them for their time and ask if they will pray for you.

If they say they need to think about it, ask them if you can call them back in a couple of days to ask for their decision, and then make sure that you do so.

If they say yes, great! Give them the details of how to give, and thank them for being part of your support team.

Face to Face -

If you have an opportunity to ask someone in person, take it. Maybe you could drop by their house, talk to them for a minute before or after church, or meet them for coffee. Whatever the setting, a face to face talk is the most personal, and the most effective way to ask for support.

The conversation guidelines for an in-person meeting are just the same as for a phone call.

So don't be scared, trust the Lord, make your requests and watch what happens!