

Raising Your Support Shortfall Long-Distance from the Field

by Roger Peterson, Director of International Ministries Partnerships, Converge Worldwide / May 2014

It's May 1st, and a new Converge Worldwide fiscal year has begun. And with our new FY comes your new MRP—and with your new MRP comes a new shortfall you need to raise. And you need to raise it all long-distance from the field!

*While everyone's situation is different, this one thing never changes: **face-to-face "asks"** remain the #1 means to raise **monthly** support. Not hints in your personal prayerletter, like "please pray about our finances;" not even a more direct ask in your prayerletter, like "please consider increasing your monthly giving"—this non-personalized pretense of trying to raise more support simply won't get you the timely results of **monthly commitments** you need (maybe a few one-time gifts, yes; but not the **monthly commitments** you need!). **Face-to-face** is what you need to do!*

*So Praise the Lord for Skype and other computer-based video-call software; Skype (or equivalent) will be your long-distance **face-to-face** solution.*

Here are 8 practical steps you can take right now, in order to raise your entire shortfall within the next 90 days:

1. Make a 3-Month Completion Commitment.

With your spouse or other family members or other team members on the field, ask them to hold you accountable to raising your entire shortfall in the next 90 days. Also ask them to hold you accountable to the one or two weeks (see #2 below) you will be making your Skype calls.

2. Do Simple Math.

While this only serves to guide you as a general 3-month planning & completion tool, determine how many \$50 or \$100 or \$200 (etc.) new or increased commitments you need. If your shortfall is \$800/month, you'd need 8 new or increased commitments averaging \$100 each. Since every commitment requires, on average, two face-to-face "asks," in this scenario you'd then need to make 16 Skype calls. Are 16 Skype calls doable in just 3 months? *Yes!* As a matter of fact, *it's doable in just one week* if you'll simply schedule the week to do so! Look at your calendar; talk with your team members; then schedule that week! (allow the following week as a back-up week)

3. Pray through your Entire Supporters List and Your Entire Prayerletter Mailing List.

Ask God to show you which persons to contact; also ask God to give you an amount to ask for—don't try to figure out what that person can afford. That's God's business! Let God put the amount in your heart, and simultaneously in the heart of the persons you will be asking. Remember, you're only asking God for just [16] names to contact.

4. Send Personalized Emails to only those [16] Names.

The purpose of this email is *not* to ask for support—but rather to set up your Skype appointment in order to ask for support face-to-face. Your email text should be personal and honest—no "hinting"! (do *not* send one blast to all [16] names at once!). Each one should be personalized, and read something like this:

Hello Jim and Jane,

Susan and I wanted to drop you a personal note and let you know things continue to go well here in _____. Just last week, [three local men gave their lives to Christ as a result of the work God has called our team to do here!]. Your support has helped make all this possible—Glory to God!

We also need to let you know earlier this month our mission agency, Converge Worldwide, reviewed our financial support package and informed us we need to raise another [\$800] of monthly support in the next 90 days. As we've been praying about this (and yes, we have been praying!), both Susan and I sensed God was putting you on our hearts.

Can we schedule a 20- or 30-minute Skype video call during the first or second week of June? Would you be kind enough to email us back right away, and suggest a couple of dates and times (in your time zone) when we could connect by Skype? We'd love to "see" you that way, and answer any questions about our current ministry and financial goals. Plus it would give us a chance to catch up [on the kids].

Much love in Christ,

Missionaries Bob & Susan

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5. Make your Skype Calls.

If you've asked God for those [16] names, and sent out [16] personalized emails (plus follow-up emails as necessary), you should have at least half [8], but likely all [16] Skype appointments already set up. Make sure you calculate time zone differences; then be prompt and courteous, and make your Skype calls on time (and keep them to the 20- or 30-minutes you promised).

- a. **1st 7-10 Minutes:** *Small talk catch-up; let everyone available show their faces in the camera! (on both ends of the Skype call)*
- b. **2nd 7-10 Minutes:** *"So Jim & Jane, what questions do you have about our ministry or finances?" Then listen completely, and simply answer the questions!*
- c. **Last 7-10 Minutes (the face-to-face "ask"):** *"Jim & Jane, as we mentioned in our email, Converge informed us we need to raise another \$800 of monthly support within the next three months—and actually we're now down to just two months! As Susan and I prayed about this, we want to ask if you can increase your monthly support by \$150/month beginning next month. Would you be willing to do so?"*
 - *Then shut up! Seriously! Just a genuine smile into the camera—don't look away!—just wait for Jim or Jane to answer, however long it may take.*
 - *Be gracious, understanding, and thankful for whatever their answer might be.*
 - *Close out your Skype call with a prayer, praying for any specific needs Jim & Jane might have.*

6. Follow Up Immediately with an Email Thank You.

Within 24 hours (even within one hour), send a personal email thank you to Jim & Jane for their time, and for whatever commitment they did (or did not) give you at this time.

7. Don't Stop When You Reach Your [\$800] Goal!

You may very well achieve your full Goal before you get to the end of your [16] Skype calls. Don't stop! If God put certain people on your heart, with certain amounts to ask for, keep going until you have connected with every person face-to-face. Remember, Converge really wants you at 105% of your total MRP, so let the Lord take care of this as well!

8. Get a copy—and read it word for word!—of "The God Ask" by Steve Shadrach.

This relatively new book (2013) has become our new MPD "bible" at Converge. But don't wait for the book to show up before starting with the first steps above!

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