

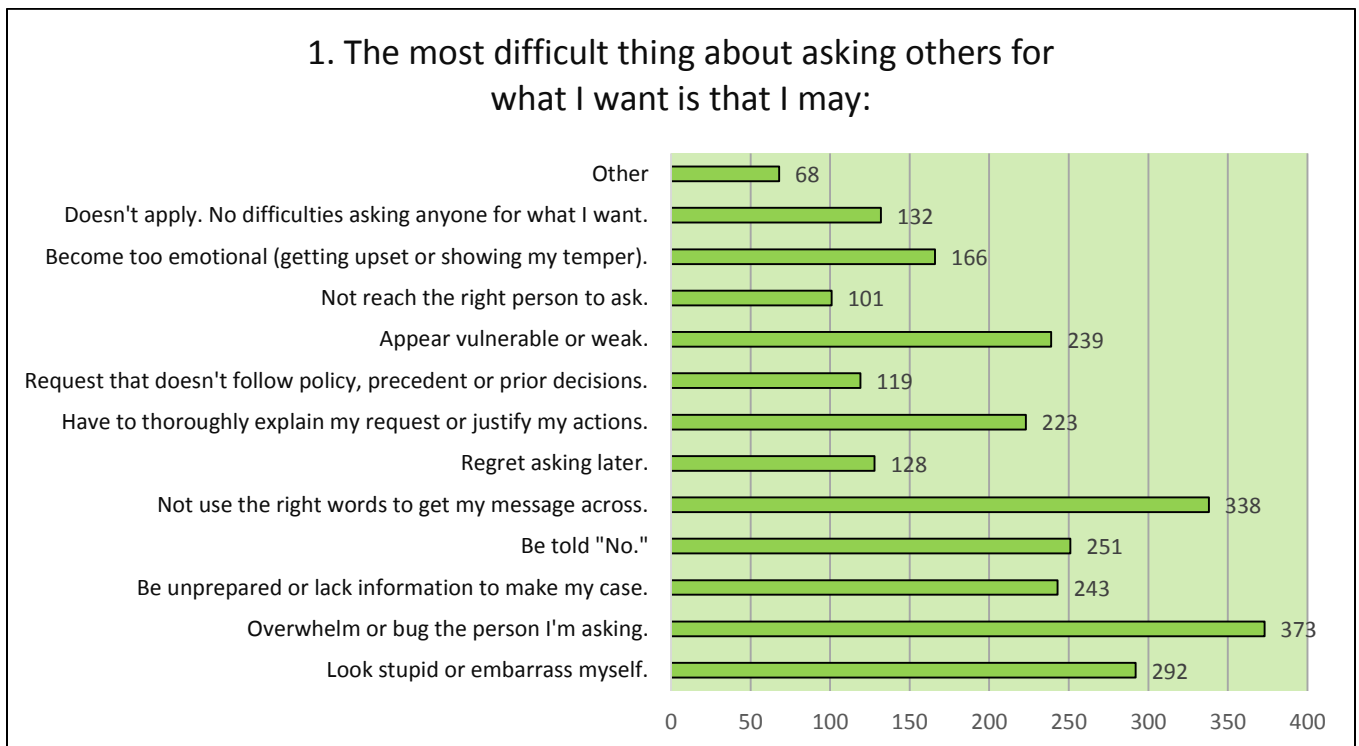
ASK OUTRAGEOUSLY!

REPORT OF SURVEY RESULTS

This report is a summary of the survey results conducted to provide raw data for the book *Ask Outrageously: The Secret to Getting What You Really Want* (Berrett-Koehler, 2017). The survey had 1,163 respondents and was conducted electronically over a four month period in 2016. There were four questions regarding demographic/career information, twelve questions were a mix of single-select and multi-select multiple-choice with optional comments, and there were three open-ended questions.

Questions were asked about what makes it difficult for people to ask for what they want, why people are likely to say “no” to the requests of others, and what helps people feel more confident when asking for what they want. Participants were asked about the difference in asking for what they want in their personal and professional lives and asked to identify specific things that they would be willing to ask for and would never be willing to ask for. Additionally, they were asked how they would encourage someone they cared about to ask for what they want.

The following are the results.



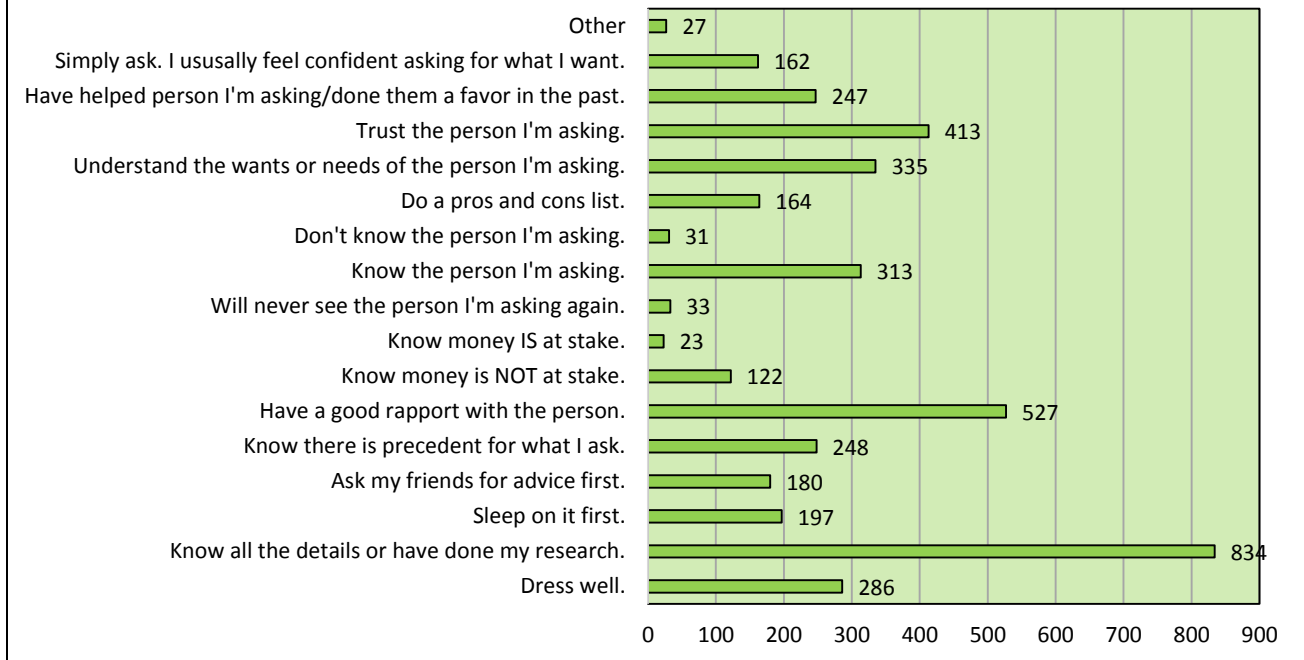
Ranked in order, the most difficult thing for people when asking for what they want is:

1. I may overwhelm or bug the person I'm asking
2. I may not use the right words to get my message across
3. I may look stupid or embarrass myself

Responses in the “Other” category include:

- I don't like to inconvenience others.
- The other person might think less of me or my skills.
- I might appear prideful or self-absorbed.
- It could compromise my position.

2. When I ask for something, I feel more confident when I ...



The top 3 reasons that people feel more confident asking for something are when they:

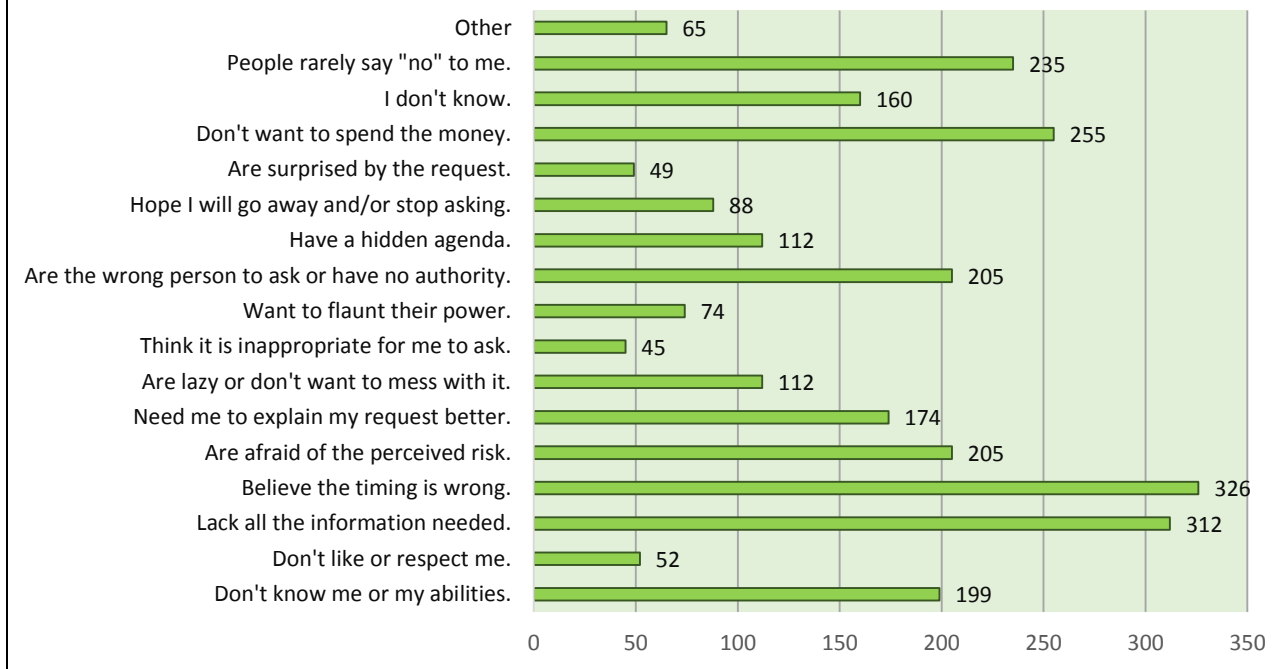
1. Know all the details or have done their research
2. Have a good rapport with the person
3. Trust the person they are asking

As a note, 25% feel more confident when they dress well.

Brief analysis:

The #2 reason people report being afraid to ask for something is that they may not use the right words to get their message across (question 1). This coincides with the fact that people report being more confident about asking when they know all the details and have done their research (question 2).

3. When people say "no" to what I ask (personally or professionally), it is usually because they:



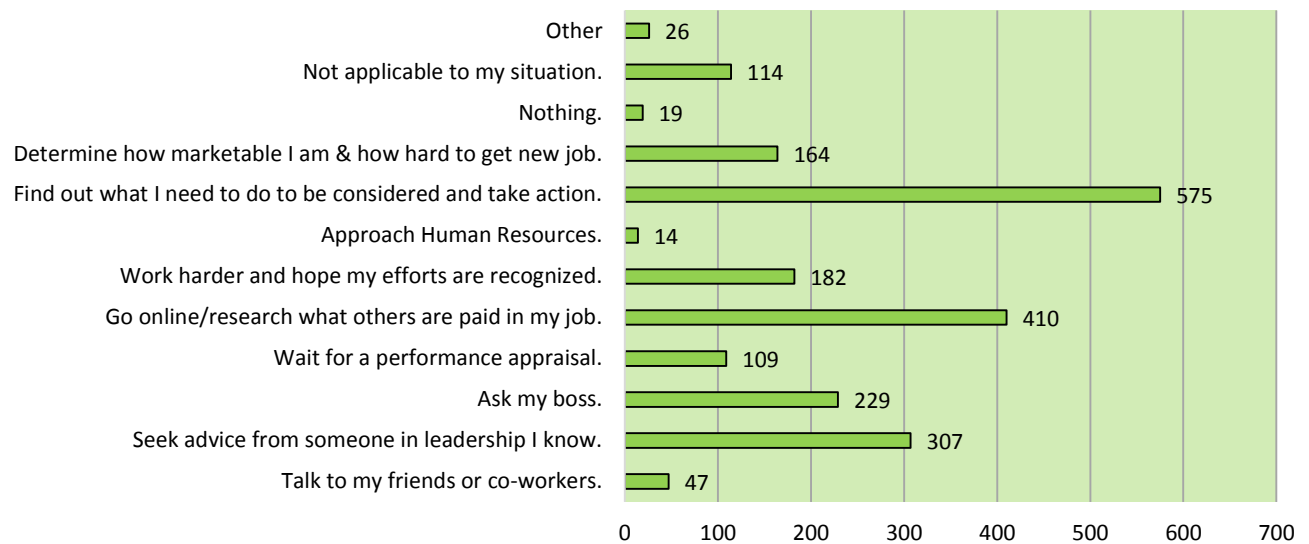
Ranked in order, people report that when people say “no” to what they ask, it is usually because the person they are asking:

1. Believes the timing is wrong.
2. Lacks all the information needed.
3. Doesn't want to spend the money.

Responses in the “Other” category include:

- The other person has information I don't have.
- It has always been done this way.
- They don't see the value or it wasn't budgeted.
- If I ask I will give the other person a way out so they can “save face.”

4. If I wanted a raise or a promotion, the FIRST thing(s) I would do is...

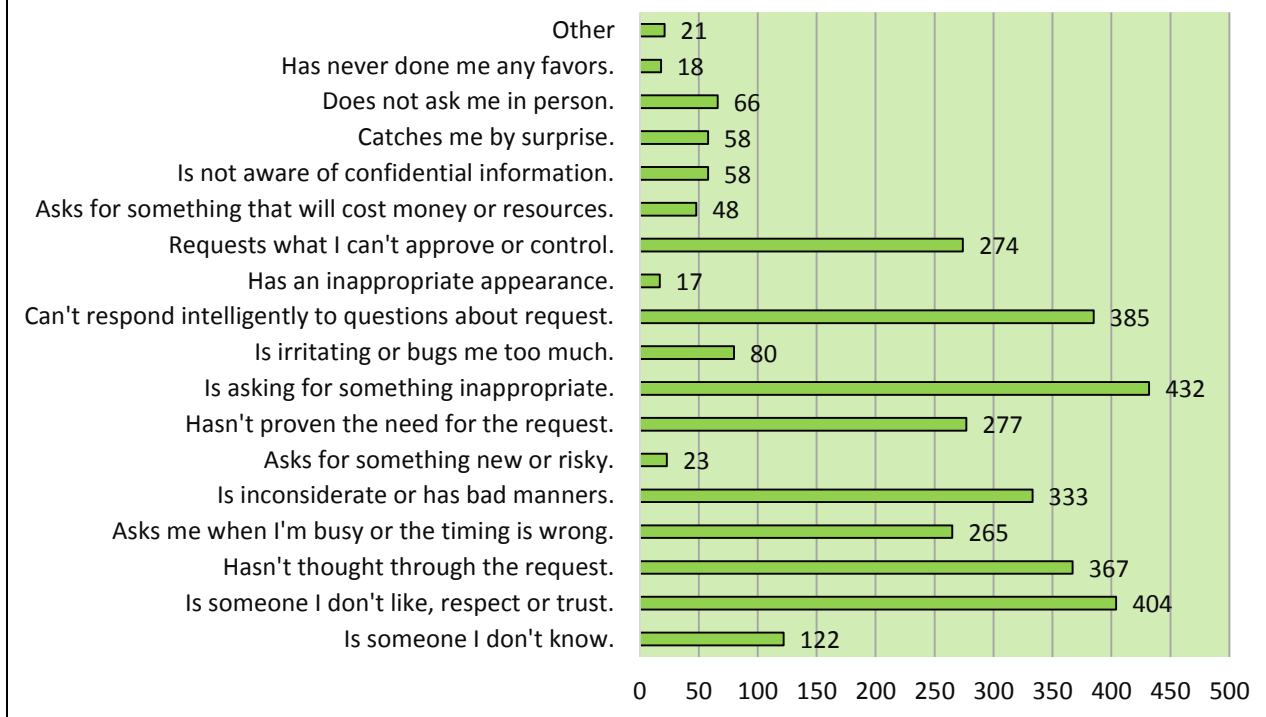


The #1 thing people would do if they wanted a raise or promotion is (50% ranked it as one of their top choices): Find out what they need to do to be considered and take action.

Responses in the "Other" category include:

- Writing up one's strengths.
- Documenting one's accomplishments and achievements.
- Showing what they've done for the company.
- Letting their work speak for itself.

5. I am more likely to say "no" to someone's request if the other person:



The top 3 reasons people report that they are likely to say “no” to someone’s request is if the other person:

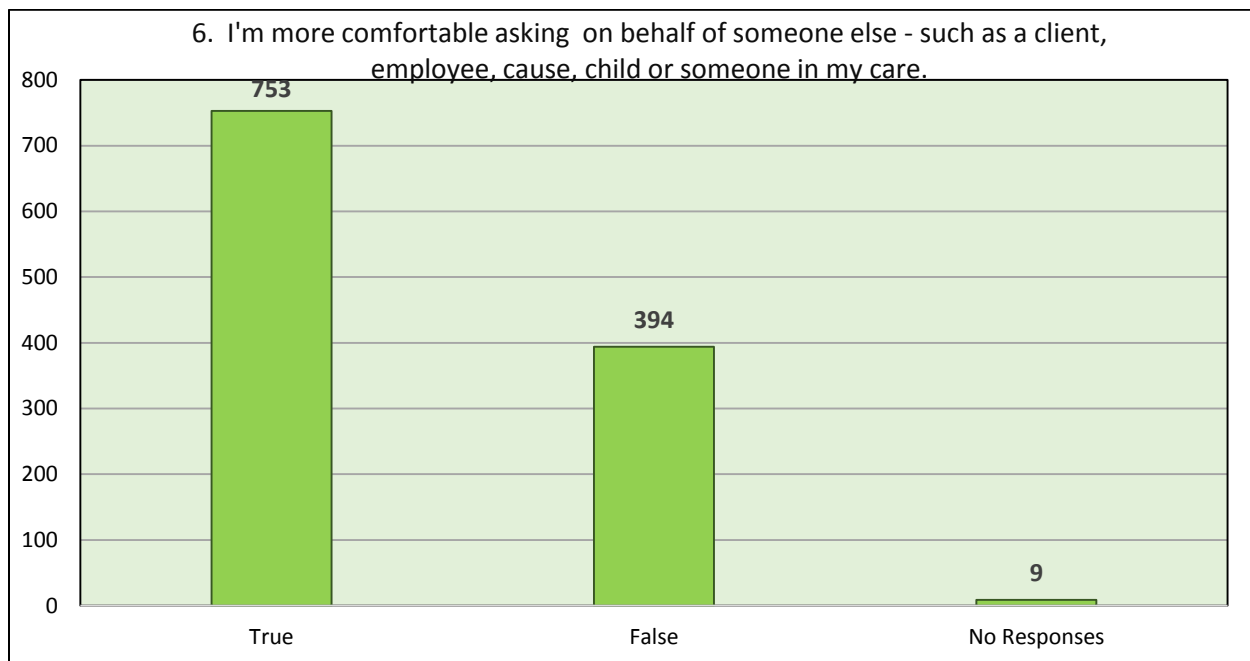
1. Is asking for something inappropriate.
2. Is someone I don’t like, respect or trust.
3. Can’t respond intelligently to questions about their request.

Brief analysis:

As shown above, the #1 reason **people report that they say “No” to someone’s request** is when they believe the person is asking for something inappropriate (37% of participants rank it in their top reasons). The #2 reason is when the person asking is someone they don’t like, respect or trust.

Conversely, when asked why **people believe they are told “No” when making a request** the answer “because it’s inappropriate to ask” is the LEAST popular response – with only 4% of participants ranking it as a reason (question 3). Additionally, “because they don’t like or respect me” also received a low ranking with just over 4% noting it as a reason (question 3). Additionally, only 5% report “Catches me by surprise” as a reason they are likely to say no to someone’s request (question 5) while “Believe the timing is wrong” is the #1 reason people believe they are told “No” (question 3).

Discussion: The *top* reasons respondents say “No” to others are the *lowest ranked* reasons identified when people explain why they are told “No” to their requests. In other words, people are preparing for and concerned about the wrong objections. First, they do not understand the key reason their requests are denied. Worse, only 4% of the respondents identify those reasons.



The additional comments were extensive on this question, with 30% of participants weighing in.

With 65% of people reporting they are more comfortable asking on behalf of someone else, the most common comments include:

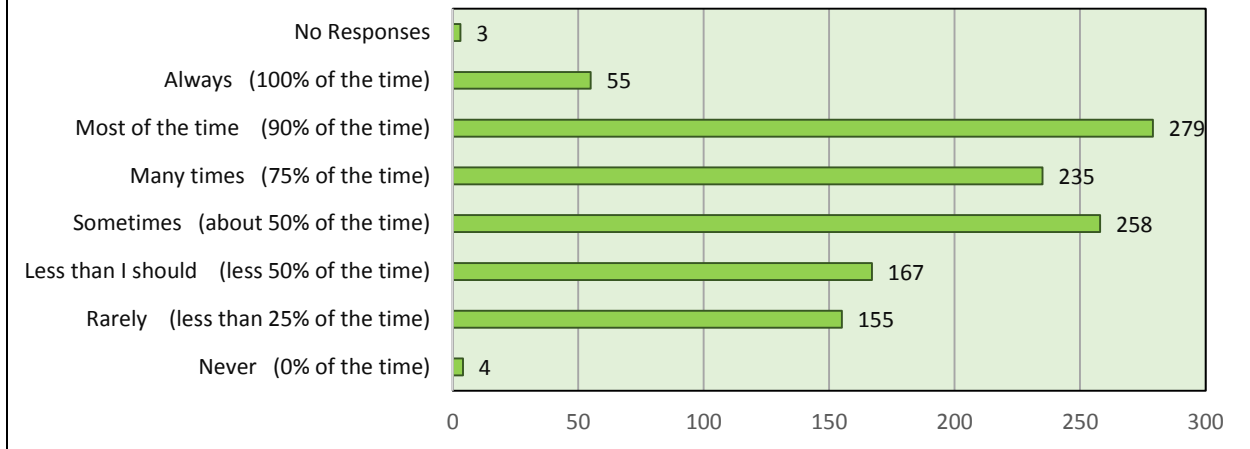
- The stakes are lower and it's less risky asking on behalf of someone else.
- Easier to advocate for someone else than myself.
- It's less personal to ask for someone else.
- I'm not worried about looking stupid or being embarrassed when I ask for someone else.

7. If someone I care about needs to ask for something (at work, at home, from friends, socially, etc.) but is reluctant or uncomfortable, I would encourage him or her by:

*This open-ended question had 904 responses with responses falling into the following categories:

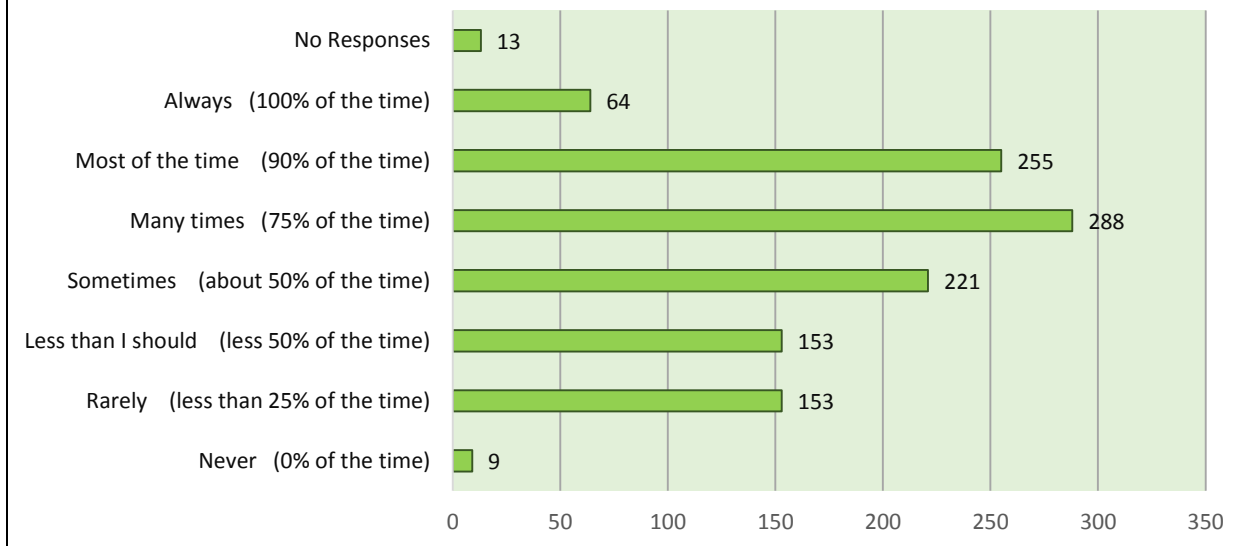
- Listening and encouraging/giving them a pep talk.
- Researching, gathering facts, and determining pros and cons of asking.
- Role playing on what to say.
- Sharing personal advice of my success.
- Coaching them through the process.
- Offering to ask for them.
- Offering to help.
- Advising them to write down their reasons for asking and what they want to say.
- Telling them to "Just Ask" and "Go for it." You'll never get a "Yes" if you don't ask.
- Using the logic of what is the worst that can happen? You have nothing to lose by asking.
- Praying.

8. In my personal life, I ask for what I want...



In their personal lives, approximately 29% of people ask for what they want at least most of the time while only 13% report that they rarely or never ask for what they want. In their personal lives, 71% ask for what they want at least 50% of the time.

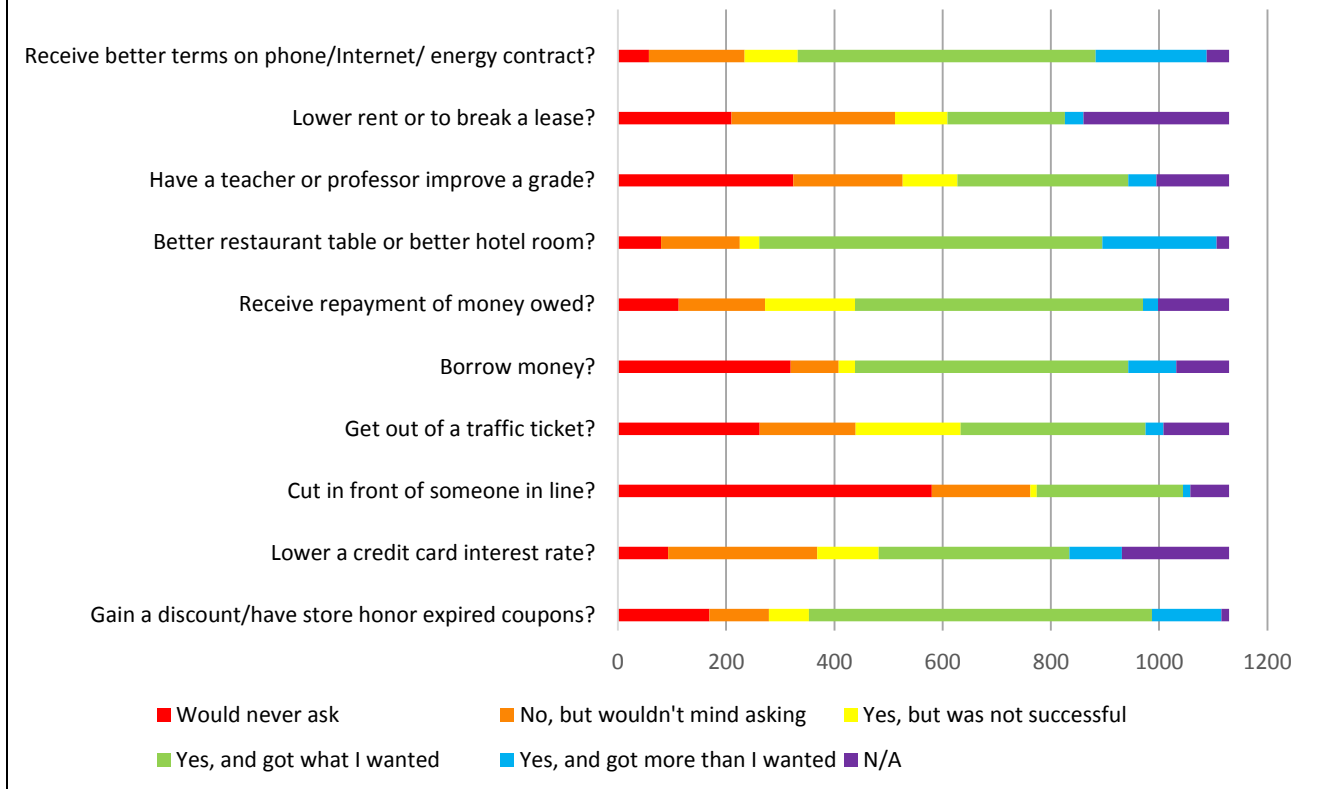
9. In my work/professional life, I ask for what I want...



In their work/professional lives, approximately 22% of people ask for what they want most of the time while only 13% report that they rarely ask for what they want. In their professional lives, 72% ask for what they want at least 50% of the time.

Analysis: There isn't a substantial percentage difference between the propensity to ask in one's personal and professional life. Statistically, people have the same propensity to ask for they want in both their personal and professional lives.

10. Personally, have you ever asked to:

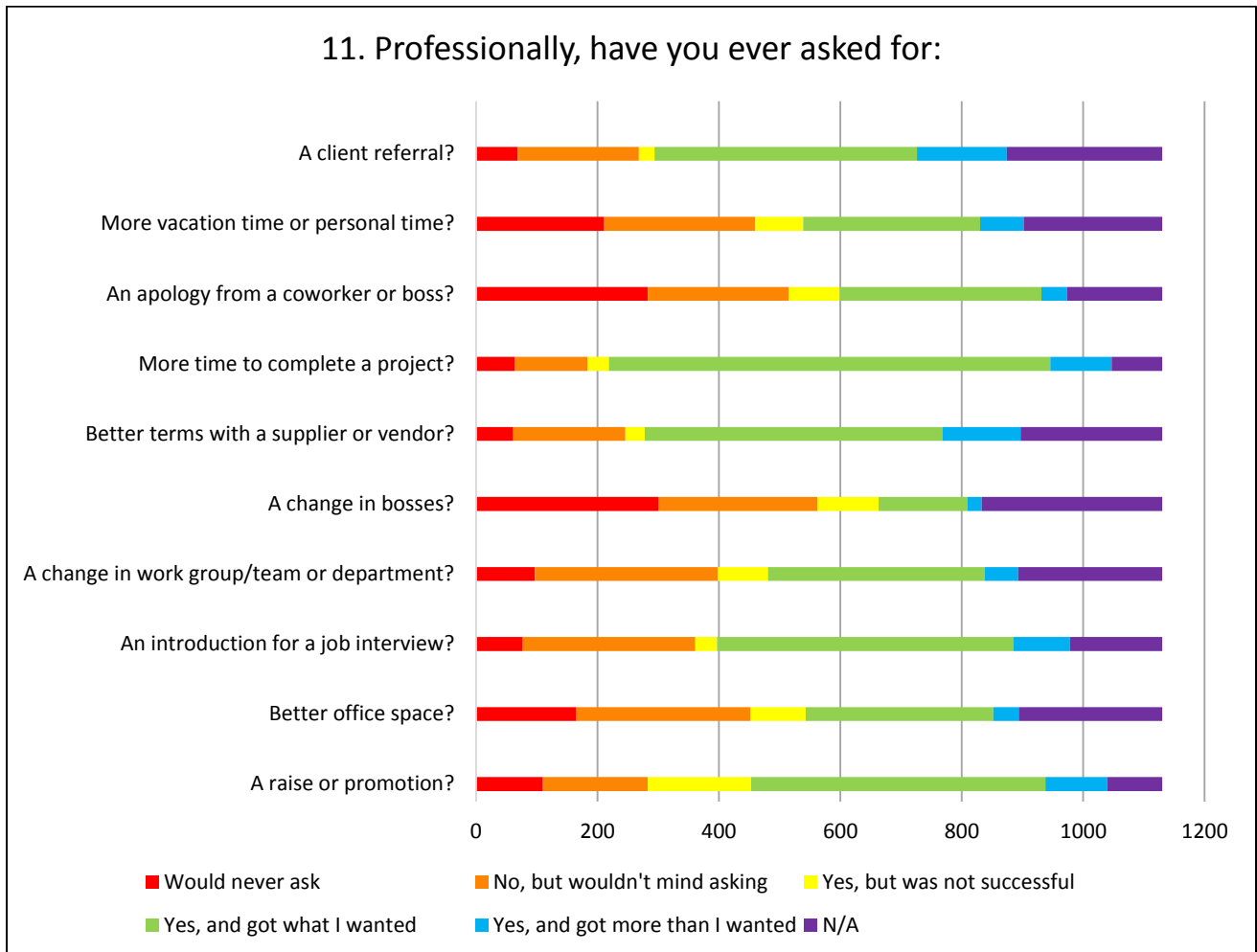


The #1 thing people are likely to NEVER ask for is cut in front of someone in line with 51% of people reporting they would never ask to cut in front of someone in line. Tying for second place, with 28% of people, is asking a teacher/professor to improve a grade or asking to borrow money.

People are most likely to ask and be successful when asking to be seated at a better restaurant table or upgraded to a better hotel room. Tying for second place is asking for a discount from a store and receiving better terms on a phone, Internet or energy contract.

While people ask, they are most likely to ask and be unsuccessful when asking to get out of a traffic ticket.

11. Professionally, have you ever asked for:



The #1 thing people will NEVER ask for at work is a change in bosses, with 26% saying they would never ask for it. Coming in a close second is asking for an apology from a coworker or boss, with 24% saying they would never ask for it.

People are most likely to ask and be successful when asking for more time to complete a project and asking for a client referral. It's most likely for people to get more than they wanted when asking for a client referral and asking for better terms from a supplier/vendor.

People are most likely to ask and be unsuccessful when asking for a raise or promotion.

12. A request I made that seemed risky or “outrageous” at the time AND produced successful results beyond my expectations was:

This open-ended question did not require a response. However, more than 620 responded with statements in the following categories:

- Additional compensation or vacation time when hired.
- Raises and promotions after proving worth through research, results, or taking on additional responsibilities, functions or commitments.
- Additional vacation/personal time for special events such as a big trip, education or a wedding. Time off (often paid) also included taking care of family member who took ill.
- Charitable requests for organizations or individuals suffering hardships.
- Purchase of a home.
- Negotiating the price or upgrades on a car.
- Improved vacation or travel accommodations including suites, first-class tickets and views.
- Surprises when receiving poor customer service or experiencing problems with products.

Participants shared reasons for their success including:

The request was not as outrageous as I thought from the other person's perspective. My arguments and track records were good, but more importantly, I think people inherently want to help.

Simply being direct and just asking the question...no “asky”...no “getty.”

Asking has to have thought behind it and reasons. You also need to have a good attitude, stay positive!

I'm of the theory that "my wallet doesn't blush".

It was a risky request that not only got approved but also earned me respect with the business owner for asking!

Many times it's just as easy as asking, and if you come prepared most times you will get it.

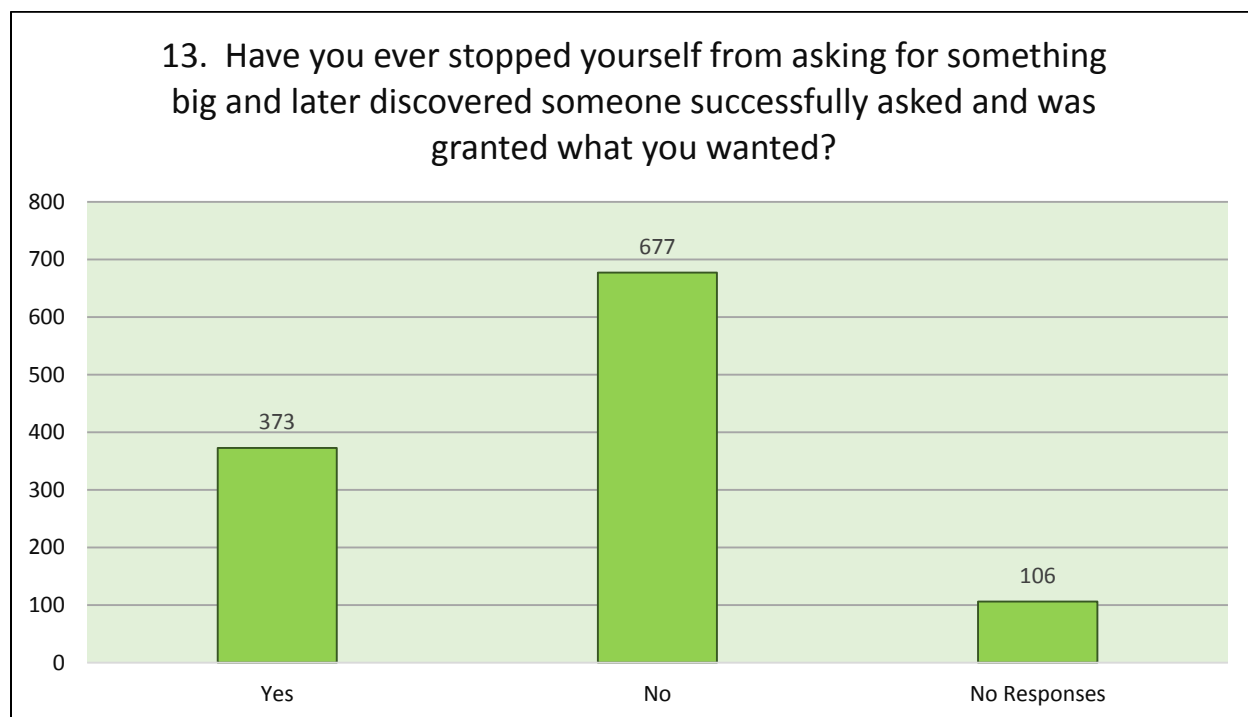
Other responses provided explanations for not asking:

I don't ask, so I cannot be successful.

I was taught to never ask for anything.....I think it was the way I was raised and my circumstances. I undervalue myself and looking back, I am sad about how I have not taken care of myself.

I'm not prone to asking for things I consider outrageous. Perhaps that's my problem.

I haven't really asked for anything. The way I was raised, you don't ask for favors.



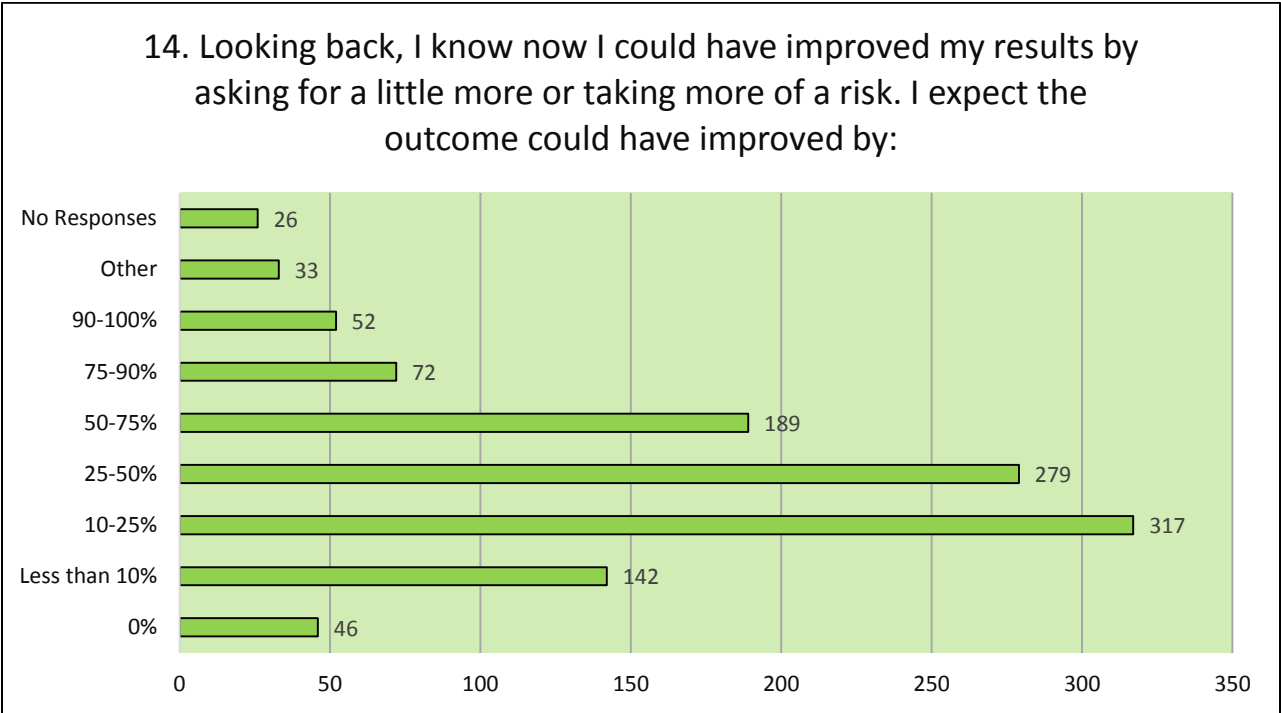
35% of people have stopped themselves from asking for something and later determined someone else successfully asked and was granted what they wanted.

This question had a section for written comments and 111 responded. The areas identified where people could have asked for more, but didn't, were:

- Additional compensation, moving expenses or vacation time when hired.
- Undervaluing services or personal value to organizations.
- Real estate purchases and sales.
- Negotiating the price or upgrades on a car.
- Personal requests when no problem asking professionally or for others.

Interestingly, instead of selecting "no" and moving on, approximately half of these responses contained statements or provided examples which differentiate behavior from the question asked. These responses included comments about how the respondents asked appropriately, had no regrets and took appropriate risks.

Others shared they didn't ask when they younger. However, with age came wisdom and/or less concern about others' opinions. Now, they ask more frequently.

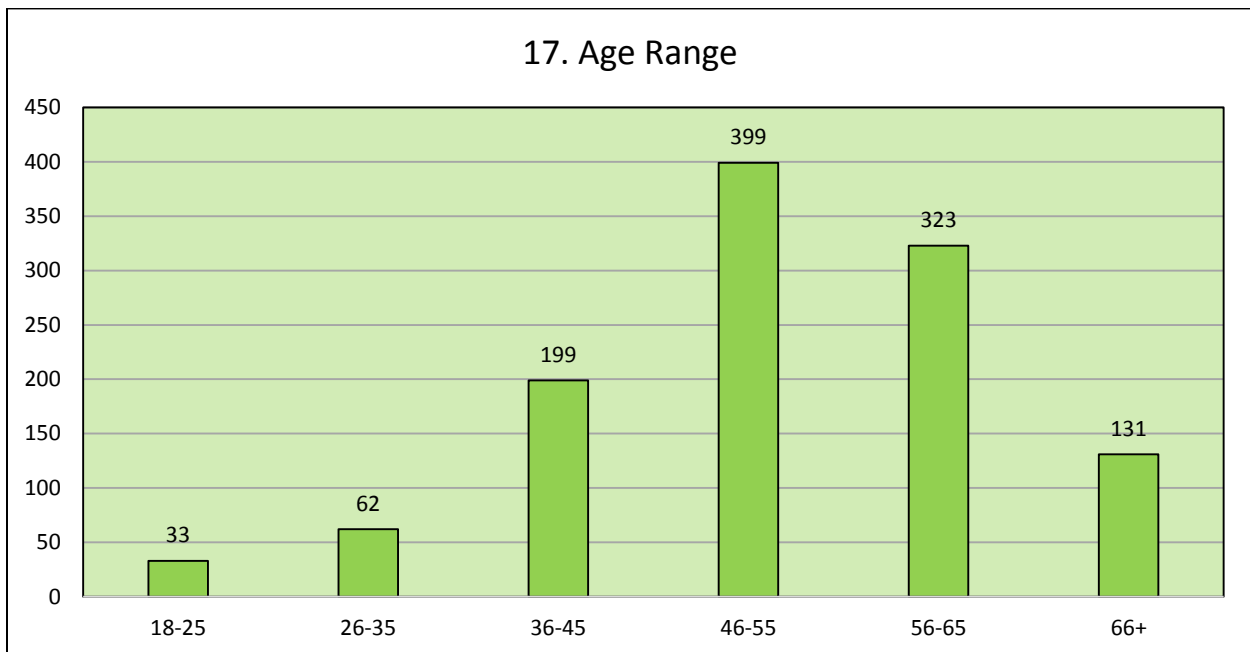
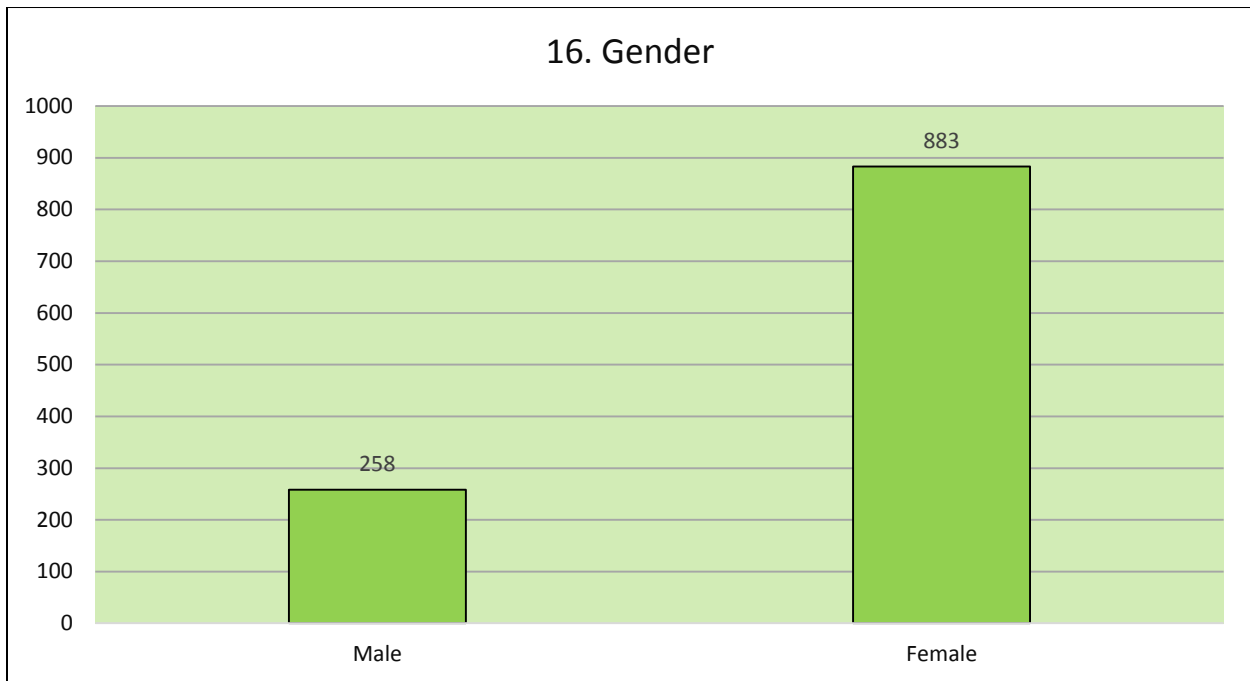


More than 28% of people know that, in the past, they could've improved their outcomes by 50% or more if they had asked for more.

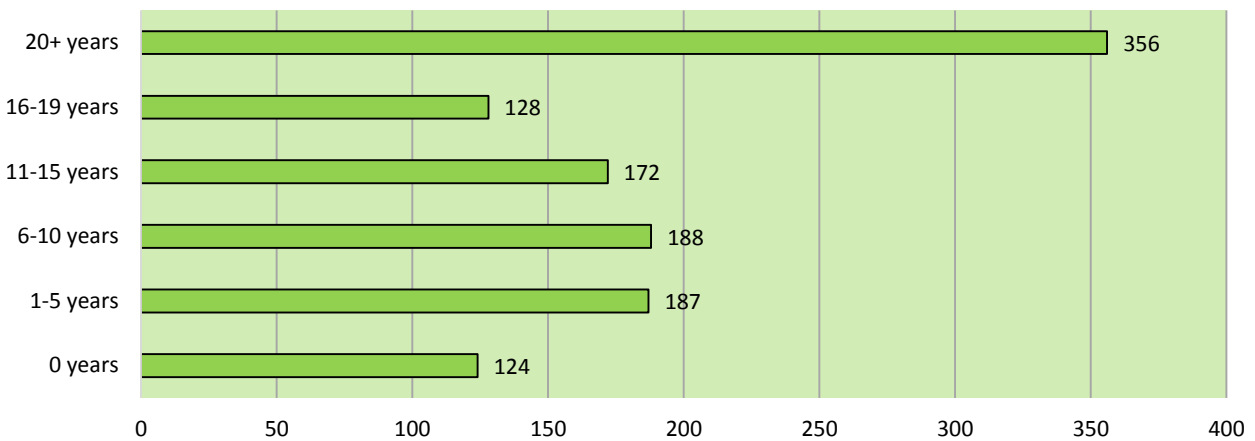
15. What, if any, influences in your personal history or experience affect how you make requests?

*This open-ended question had 621 responses with responses falling into the following categories:

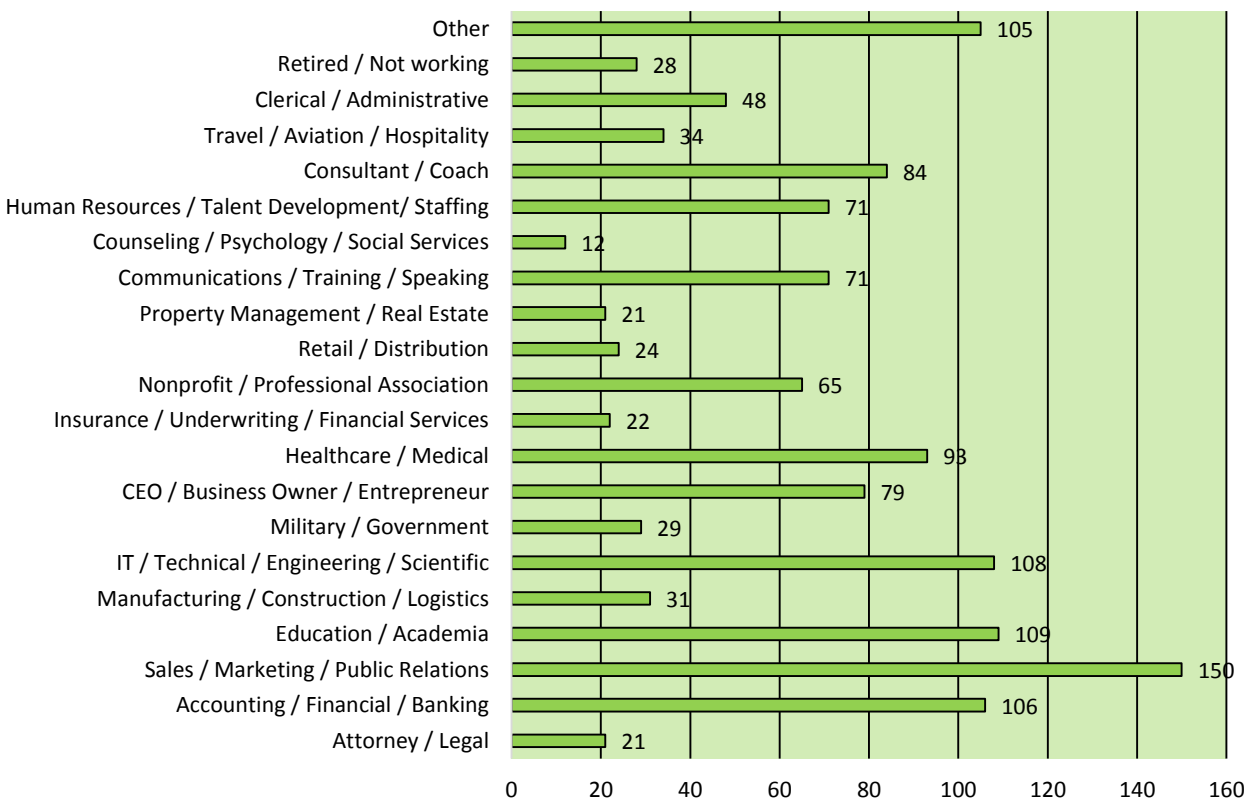
- Upbringing and family
- Gender
- Education
- Religion
- Mentors
- Age and experience



18. How many years have you worked in a management position - both now or in the past?



19. Please check the professional field that best applies to your occupation.





About Linda Swindling

From the courtroom to the boardroom, Linda Swindling, JD knows firsthand about influencing decision makers and asking outrageously. She is a “recovering” attorney, popular speaker, executive coach and strategic consultant. Additionally, Linda is a Certified Speaking Professional (CSP) and president of Journey On, her own speaking and consulting company. The author of *Stop Complainers and Energy Drainers: How to Positively Negotiate Work Drama to Get Things Done* and *The Manager’s High-Performance Handbook: How to Drive Winning Performance with Everyone on Your Team*, Linda created the popular *Passports to Success* book series which offers thirteen titles on workplace and communication issues. Her TEDx Talk, “Why the World Needs You to Ask Outrageously,” was presented in 2016 at TEDx SMU. Her newest book, *Ask Outrageously: The Secret to Getting What You Really Want* will be released by Berrett-Koehler in May 2017.