

Y04 — The Call

Okay. The call. Let us take the scariest thing in this whole ministry and shrink it down to its real size, because I promise it is smaller than it looks from here.

First, the truth about nerves. Your heart will beat a little fast on your first call. Everyone's does - mine did, your leader's did, the teenager from the story's definitely did. Nerves do not mean you are doing it wrong; they mean you are doing something that matters. The cure is not waiting until you feel brave. The cure is knowing your words so well that they walk out of your mouth on their own. That is why tonight is practice night.

Now look at what you are actually holding. You are not calling to ask for money. You are not selling anything. You are calling to tell someone you made them a gift. Say that to yourself before every call: I have a gift for this person. It changes your voice, and they can hear it.

Here are the words. Your leader has them printed on a card, but they fit in four breaths.

Breath one - who you are: Hi, my name is - first name only - and I am calling from the youth group at - your church - here in town.

Breath two - what you noticed: We noticed that - their name - does not have a website, so people can't find your hours or what you do when they search for you.

Breath three - the gift: So our group went ahead and built you one. It is real, it is finished, and it is free - we do this as a ministry project. Can I send you the link so you can take a look?

Breath four - the close: There is nothing to sign and nothing to pay. If you like it, we will put it online for you and hand you the keys.

That is the whole call. Twenty seconds of talking, and then you stop and let them respond. The stopping is important - after you offer the link, be quiet and let them catch up, because you have just surprised them.

What happens next is one of three things, and you will practice all three tonight.

They say yes - most do. You say wonderful, get the best way to send the link, thank them, and tell them someone will follow up in a couple of days. Then celebrate quietly and write everything on the call log.

They say no, or no thanks. Here is the beautiful thing about giving instead of selling: no costs you nothing. You say, no problem at all - the offer stands if you ever change your mind, have a great day. Warm, short, done. No convincing, no pushing, not one extra sentence. We are not closers. We are neighbors. And you would be surprised how many no's call the church back a month later.

They say wait, what's the catch, or who is this again? Fair question - kindness from strangers is rare enough to be suspicious. You just tell the plain truth: no catch, our youth group builds websites for local places as a service project, the site is

yours free either way. The truth, said simply, is the most disarming thing in the world.

Two rules that never bend, and your leader will be right there to back them. The call happens on the church's phone, with your leader in the room. And you give your first name only - every other detail, like a number to reach, belongs to the church, not to you.

Tonight's build is the practice. Pair up. One of you is the owner - and be a little difficult, it is more fun and better training. The other makes the call, card in hand, all four breaths, then handle whatever your partner throws. Then swap. Run it until the words stop feeling like a script and start feeling like something true you happen to be saying. Because it is.

Next meeting, one of you dials for real. The site is built. The words are yours. The gift is wrapped. All that is left is the doorbell.