Sometimes it can be challenging to ask for something that we need or want while still respecting the needs and limits of other people. Here is a mnemonic device with some helpful tips.

**D**escribe**:** Use specific words to describe to the other person what you want, explaining yourself through language as clearly as possible. Practice clarity with your words.

**E**xpress**:** Part of learning how to effectively communicate, while still being intentional and mindful, involves using facial expressions, tone of voice, or gestures that capture the content and importance of your request. Work towards finding the happy medium of being expressive while maintaining a sense of self-control.

**A**ssert**:** Work towards finding your own balance between asserting your needs and staying away from aggressiveness (this includes [passive](http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/passive-aggressive-behavior/AN01563) aggressiveness).  Be matter-of-fact as you assert your point(s).

**R**einforce**:** Express to the other person the ways in which the request may be beneficial for them too. People like to feel as though there is a give and take in interactions with others. This can be helpful in getting both of your needs met.

**S**tay Focused**:** Be careful not to allow intense emotions to cloud your thinking.  If the other person responds with intensity, allow yourself to set the tone by responding calmly.  Stay on track with what it is that you are asking for. Maintain your focus.

**A**ppear Confident**:** Imagine yourself as confident, competent, and deserving of what you want or need.  When you take yourself seriously, others are more likely to as well.  Practice [self-validation](http://www.shambhalablackbelts.com/LifeSkills/self-validation.htm) on your own to cultivate this skill.

**N**egotiate**:** When our ideal requests are not met, there is often a way to meet halfway – to find a solution that is “good enough” without compromising our values.  A big part of negotiation is about respecting other people’s limits.