

A Guide To Fund-raising Etiquette

Presented by:

Racine Danish Kringles and Etiquette Expert Robin Thompson

Racine Danish Kringles has teamed with Robin Thompson, etiquette expert and author of the self-improvement book “Be the Best You Can Be,” to create a fund-raising etiquette guide with useful tips for schools, religious institutions and other non-profit organizations trying to raise money for a special cause. This tool was especially developed to help parents and their kids avoid common fund-raising “faux pas” so that they can maximize their fund-raising success. Feel free to print out this guide and share it with friends, family, co-workers or anyone else who may be planning to raise funds in the near future.

Good luck and happy fund-raising!

Michael Heyer
President
Racine Danish Kringles

ETIQUETTE ESSENTIALS FOR KIDS

1. *Make Safety A Priority.* While involving children in fund raising can provide a lesson in volunteer service, experts agree that safety should be the foremost concern. Children should not be allowed to sell door-to-door, unless they are supervised by a parent or another adult. If children are asked to come inside for any reason, all they need to say is, “Thank you, but I’m not allowed to enter anyone’s home.”
2. *Present a Professional Image.* Simple advice: be clean, neat and dress up. People who are dressed well receive preferential treatment – it may not be fair, but it’s true. A good appearance adds credibility, and your child is an ambassador of the organization. Clothing should be ironed and should not be soiled, missing buttons or be too far out. Always remember to remove hats (baseball caps) as a sign of respect.

Don't forget about your hands, which are on display. Keep nails well-manicured and don't bite fingernails. Always check your appearance before heading out the door. Parents, if you're heading out with the kids, the same rules apply – and avoid smoking which may turn off some potential customers.

3. *Be polite on the phone.* This can be a tough one for children and adults. Kids shouldn't play video games while calling on family and friends. They should use good grammar, never chew gum and learn to say, "I beg your pardon" if they need to have something repeated. Also, they should remember to introduce themselves and the fund raiser. A good approach for a child is to say something like, "Hello, my name is Stephanie, would you like to support my soccer team by purchasing a Kringle? We're raising money for new equipment."
4. *Be a good listener.* Be sure to give your customer full attention and listen carefully without interrupting. By doing this, you can determine the best way to overcome objections to a sale by showing alternative products or even offering to return at a different time that's more convenient.
5. *Practice Your Presentation.* Selling to anyone (except maybe grandma) can be intimidating if you haven't done it before. It helps to think about what you want to say to your customer before you talk to them and practice your approach in the mirror. "Hello, I'm _____. Would you like to support (our organization) by purchasing _____? Thank you very much for your support. I really appreciate it." If possible, carry a sample of your fund-raising product with you so that customers can get a visual sense of what you are selling.

6. *Explain Your Fund-raiser.* Many people forget to tell their customers why they are raising funds. What will your organization do with the proceeds? Don't just ask, "Would you like to buy this?" You may even want to create a letter that outlines all the details of your fund raiser – including deadlines, payment options, your name and number, and delivery information.
7. *Be Organized.* Move your sale along faster by making sure that your kids have everything they need at hand. Designate a special tote, backpack or briefcase for fund-raising materials. Make sure to have extra pens available.
8. *Promote the product.* Be sure to try the product (or have your kids try it as well) Is it delicious? When are your favorite times to eat it? If you don't use the product, why should anyone else buy it. Kids say the darnest things – but make sure they remember never to say that they don't like a product that they are trying to sell.
9. *Think positive, but take "no" for an answer.* Saying, "You probably don't want to buy any of this, do you?" will not make the sale. Children should speak confidently, but must learn to accept that not everyone will want to give money. It is important to remind them to use please and thank you, whether people buy anything or not.
10. *Print Thank You's.* Most customers won't expect this and are pleasantly surprised to receive one. If your children are too young to write their own thank you notes, create a flyer that can be personalized and delivered with each order.

DO'S AND DON'TS FOR PARENTS

Parents often find themselves caught between wanting to help their child succeed at fund raising so that they can earn those “must have” prizes, and feeling like the host of “Let’s Make a Deal” at the office. So, what’s a parent to do? Here are some guidelines:

1. Do get involved in your child’s fund-raiser, particularly to oversee collection of money. Make sure that you have enough cash/coins on hand to make change on the spot, if that’s necessary. Be prepared (or help your kids) to break large bills. If your customer orders \$10 worth of product, but only has a \$20, you must have enough money to make change. Never say “I’ll bring your change tomorrow.”
2. Don’t just post a sign-up sheet at work. Thompson notes that bosses who bring fund-raisers to the office put employees in a difficult position. She suggests politely mentioning to friendly co-workers that you are helping with your child’s fund-raiser and have the materials at your desk. Also, don’t pressure co-workers to buy just because you purchased product from their child. Focus on product benefits instead.
3. Do make sure children are soliciting people within their circle of family and friends, and always supervise any door-to-door sales. When going door-to-door, ring the doorbell once. Don’t lean on it, knock continuously or pound on the door. Even if a parent or guardian is with a child, it’s a wise idea to make a habit of not entering anyone’s home.
4. Do consider updating your phone answering machine to advertise the fact that you are involved with a fund-raiser. You never know what kind of additional interest you’ll generate. Also promote your fund-raiser by sending a news release with a photo of the product to your community newspaper. Make sure that you use clean, quality paper and have no typos on the

release. Also, think about wearing a button about your fund-raising efforts so that people will ask you about it.

5. Be prepared to answer all possible questions about your fund-raising sale. For example, are all donations tax deductible? Are you able to provide a receipt? Is there a guarantee or warranty on the product you are selling? Help educate your children if they are involved with the sales process. A prepared salesperson will ultimately be more successful.
6. Share tips to help your children succeed, but avoid taking over the project altogether. Explain the fund-raiser to younger children and motivate them to help achieve the group goal. Best of all, make sure to buy some of the product yourself!
7. Don't forget this is a fun lesson for your children in civic-mindedness. Make it a fun activity and praise their results no matter how much they sell!