

REQUESTING FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

HOW TO REQUEST FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO JOIN A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

WHY WE MADE THIS GUIDE

One of the **biggest deterrents** to investing in your professional development is **cost**.

Oftentimes, **firms will pay for some or all of the cost**.

We created this guide to provide you with suggestions on **best practices for requesting this financial support**.

WHO SHOULD YOU ASK?

Training & Development Team

If your firm has a training and development team, speak to someone from that group as they will be familiar with this process.

Direct Manager

If your firm does not have a training resource, go to your direct manager to get their buy-in and support. Once you have their support, bringing it to a decision maker becomes much easier.

HAVE QUESTIONS?

Feel free to reach out to us with any questions at:

growth@connection.builders

HOW TO ASK FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT

1. Make sure to have a clear “ask”

If you would like your firm to pay for the program, **be clear on the cost and how much you are asking them to pay**. If you need any extra flexibility to participate in the program, **tell them how many hours per week** it will take. The key is to make sure you **know what you need upfront** rather than having to come back later with new requests.

2. Articulate *why this is important to you*

Be clear in communicating that **developing and growing in your career is important to you**. If you are **motivated by growing in your career**, be sure to say that. If there are specific skills that you want to learn to advance your career, communicate that.

3. Communicate how this will benefit you *and* your firm

Professional service firms succeed when they have talented people. **If you become a stronger employee, your firm also becomes stronger**. It is important to identify how this will help you become a better professional, but make sure to **think through how that translates to also helping the firm**. Ask yourself the following questions

- How will this program make you a more valuable employee?
- What gaps or weaknesses in your skillset will this address?
- How can you better deliver on your responsibilities?
- How will this help you improve your abilities to serve clients?
- Can you help others at your firm learn these skills?
- How will this make your firm stronger?
- How will it help grow your firm's business?

4. Anticipate potential concerns

If you think your firm will have concerns, think through how you will address those before you make your request. Most often, employers are concerned that the program will take your time and focus away from doing your job. Make sure to communicate how you will balance your workload and the long-term benefits of investing in your growth.

See our example on the following page →



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SAMPLE REQUEST

1. Clear “ask”

I am requesting that the firm pay for me to enroll in the [Networking Bootcamp](#) program provided by [Connection Builders](#). It is a 6-month program designed to teach professional service providers best practices around networking. The program includes 8 courses, monthly live content sessions, group coaching sessions, facilitated networking, and community engagement to help participants not only **learn about networking but practice and get the required support needed to be successful**. The program cost is \$1,997. My time commitment will be 3 to 5 hours per month working in the program plus 5 to 10 hours per month actively networking outside of the program.

2. Why this is important to me

This program is important to me because **I am highly motivated by learning and growing in my career**. When I am learning and can see progress, it energizes me and makes me want to continue growing to become the best version of myself. **Having a firm that is willing to invest in me makes me feel valued and important.**

3. How this will benefit me *and* the firm

This program will **help me develop the skills needed to jumpstart my networking**, and it will hold me accountable for reaching my goals. Learning to network will provide value to my career by helping me meet other professionals that I can learn from, bounce ideas off, and utilize as resources. **It will also help me develop critical relationship skills that are important to interact with clients.**

The program will also help the firm in many ways. I know that the senior leaders of the firm are all well-connected and many bring in business for the firm. While I may not be bringing in clients from day one, it will help me set the stage for building the relationships that lead to business opportunities in the future.

4. Addressing potential concerns

I know you may be concerned with my ability to balance this with my ongoing responsibilities, but **this program is designed with flexibility in mind**. I can go through all course content on my own time and the networking activities associated with this program can be completed before and after work or during lunch and should not interfere with my client responsibilities. The only element of the program that may intersect with work hours is the monthly live virtual sessions. These will take roughly 2 hours per month, which I believe would not lead to any meaningful disruptions. In all, **I strongly believe the benefits of investing my time in this program far outweigh the minor disruption it may have on my daily schedule.**

