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## How To Crowdfund Without Losing Friends

By [Kristi Eaton](#) (/contributors/kristieaton)

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But at what point is asking for money going to rub people the wrong way? And are there any projects that should be off limits?

“Crowdfunding is a great tool for business funding that is creative, and effective in so very many cases — but like any other business tool, especially one that is as widespread and far reaching to so many, it can be abused, at worst, and improperly used in many situations,” says relationship expert April Masini, who runs an advice column “Ask April” at [AskApril.com](http://askapril.com) (<http://askapril.com/>).

Masini says there are four key things to remember when considering a crowdfunding project.

- Don't crowd fund a personal project or toy. If a new gadget is what you're craving, Masini has one response for you: Get a job. Already have one? She

says get a second one or a better paying one. “Crowdfunding personal projects or personal items is like begging,” she says. “There are plenty of people with less than you have. Crowdfunding for personal luxury items is entitled behavior that is inappropriate and unattractive.”

- Crowdfunding your wedding, your divorce, your birthday party or any other life event is bad form. Masini says that if that huge party to mark that major life milestone is so expensive you need to turn to crowdfunding, it’s time to downgrade to a cheaper alternative. “Living within one’s means is a virtue,” she says. “Leveraging the kindness of strangers for a party is not.”
- Crowdfunding doesn’t mean you are immune to thanking donors. A sincere and personal thank you note that includes your plans for the project is appropriate, she says.
- If the project is unsuccessful and you don’t raise what you need to, return the proceeds in an organized and timely fashion. “You promised that the crowd funded money would be used for a project. When the project fails, don’t abandon your promise. Return the proceeds,” Masini says.

Amisha Patel has done two crowdfunding projects. One of the biggest challenges, Patel says, is getting over the feeling that you are asking for money for yourself and instead focusing on building a community that is coming together because of one idea.

“Crowdfunding begins with your personal network and so, at first, it feels like you are asking your friends for a handout,” Patel says. “But the amazing thing that happens when you launch a crowd-funding campaign is seeing all of the support that friends want to give you because they believe in the underlying mission of your project, in addition to believing in your ability to carry it out.”

Entrepreneurship can be lonely, Patel says, so building a supportive community has positive effects beyond just the financial benefits.



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