

The Ask

Write it before you say it:

- 1 What I need (one sentence, no cushioning):

- 2 Why it matters to the work (one sentence, not five):

- 3 What I am NOT going to say: the softeners. Circle your usuals:

just maybe only if that's okay sorry to ask I know it's a lot

- 4 **The pause plan:** make the ask, then stop talking. The silence after an ask is not a problem to fix.

- 5 **If they push back:** acknowledge, restate once, ask what would make it possible.

Remember: one clear ask sounds more confident than ten justifications. And you can ask clearly and stay warm.

State it. Don't shrink it.