



How to Be a Gift-Giving Success at Christmas!

By Dr. Linda Hancock

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled "All Psyched Up" for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of "Life is An Adventure...every step of the way" and "Open for Business Success" is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email office@drlindahancock.com

Published

December 6th, 2008

I have six grandchildren ranging in age from 3 years to 14 years of age. Each year I have tried to shop for the "perfect" gift for each. Then I would spend hours and considerable money wrapping, labelling, packaging, and shipping parcels. Sometimes I would get a telephone thank you and sometimes I would phone to see how the gifts were received. How disappointing it was when I would hear that things didn't fit, were duplicates or were just not needed.

This year, I decided to do something completely different. Here are the seven specific steps I took:

1. I telephoned each child and told him/her that I was sending books this year
2. Each child was asked to help me decide which books they would like
3. I went online while we talked and was therefore able to look up the requests they had
4. We discussed the information that I found online for the books they discussed
5. I stated my boundaries regarding what I was willing to purchase (no evil or negative characters or plots)
6. When we identified specific personal interests, I made some suggestions in each category (classics such as Hardy Boys, Charlie Brown and Chicken Soup)
7. We agreed that I would order the books to be shipped to each child (I ordered a separate shipment for each)
8. We discussed the fact that the gifts would NOT be wrapped (one grandson suggested that his father might be willing to wrap his)
9. Each child spelled words and gave me the mailing information as I entered it into the computer order form
10. I informed the child that they would receive the box at their postal outlet and would have to arrange with their parents to pick it up (they love getting mail and I'm sure that I won't need to try to motivate the parents as this is now the job of the children)

Finally, we agreed that each child will act "surprised" when they open the box at Christmas. This allowed us to share a little joke. My oldest grandson even agreed to say, "That is EXACTLY what I wanted".

The whole process took less than two hours. I do not have any shopping to do. There is no additional cost or time for wrapping. No standing in line at the postal outlet and no shipping charges.

To top it off, my daughter later told me "I really like the way that you buy gifts now".

Sounds to me like it is win-win-win this year!

Why don't you try to save yourself some time and money this Christmas and, at the same time, strengthen the bond you have with your children?