Written by Julie Desmond
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Dear Santa,

Please bring me a ball, a game and a bike.

Ok, says Santa. Into the sleigh goes the soccer ball, Bop It and a green two wheeler with a little white basket on the front. You got just what you wanted. Why are you so disappointed?

During this season of giving, we are given countless opportunities to be disappointed as well as to disappoint. Usually, disappointment stems from miscommunication. Asking for what you want, very specifically, will always improve your results.

You say, "He should know he needs to sign the contract." I say, "You just need to sign the third page. Please, use my pen!"

You say, "They should know this restaurant has won awards for its outstanding dessert menu." I say, "Did you enjoy your dinner? Let me show you this tray showcasing our amazing cakes and pies!"

Donate Right (donateright.org) is a Twin Cities company who has figured this out. Their technology allows a charitable organization to capitalize on the generosity of online givers. Through Donate Right, groups can request, and givers can select to pay for, very specific items. iPads for a school, a hammer or drill for the team rebuilding after Hurricane Sandy. Research says donations go up when people can pinpoint what their funds will be used for.

What makes Donate Right effective makes the world go around: transparency. This year, try asking Santa for a Wilson F1100 Official NFL game football, Madden 2013 for Xbox, and a Harley Davidson Iron 883. You might not get everything you ask for; but when you get specific, what you do receive, over the holidays and in life, will be a lot closer to what you desire.

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