



Forum: Slang and Colloquial Expressions ĩ¼~ăšèžă•Šă•Łèžĩ¼%o

Topic: Ask for help

Subject: Re: Ask for help

Posted by: 123

Posted on: 2008/6/24 7:18:58

Bell the cat

"Belling the cat" or "to bell the cat" is an English colloquialism that means to suggest or attempt to perform a difficult or impossible task.[1] The phrase comes from the Aesop's Fable The Mice in Council, in which a group of mice declare that the only way to avoid the dangerous cat is to tie a bell around its neck in order to give warning whenever it is near. One mouse then asks who will perform the dangerous task. The moral of the story, as commonly given, is that it is easy to suggest difficult (or impossible) solutions if the individual giving the solution is not the one who has to implement it.

The phrase comes from Aesop's fable The Mice in Council:

LONG ago, the mice had a general council to consider what measures they could take to outwit their common enemy, the Cat. Some said this, and some said that; but at last a young mouse got up and said he had a proposal to make, which he thought would meet the case. "You will all agree," said he, "that our chief danger consists in the sly and treacherous manner in which the enemy approaches us. Now, if we could receive some signal of her approach, we could easily escape from her. I venture, therefore, to propose that a small bell be procured, and attached by a ribbon round the neck of the Cat. By this means we should always know when she was about, and could easily retire while she was in the neighbourhood." This proposal met with general applause, until an old mouse got up and said: "That is all very well, but who is to bell the Cat?" The mice looked at one another and nobody spoke. Then the old mouse said: "IT IS EASY TO PROPOSE IMPOSSIBLE REMEDIES."

source from:http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bell_the_cat

to perform a very dangerous or very difficult task; - taken metaphorically from a fable about a mouse who proposes to put a bell on a cat, so as to be able to hear the cat coming.

source from:<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/To+bell+the+cat>