

Know when to say no!

Why is it that one of the most important words to say is also the hardest? It is not a bad thing to say no, and no is not a negative word, but somehow, we have attached negative emotions to the use of this word. The truth is, when used at the right time and in an appropriate manner, saying no can be the most positive and the best option. In fact, being comfortable saying no and graciously accepting no, is an especially important leadership quality. It is key to successfully achieving your goals and dreams. You simply just must know when to say no. Yes, there is a method to successfully saying no.

Saying yes is good, but only if it is the right thing to do. So how do you know when to say no? Here are three questions to ask yourself to help you decide if you should say no when being asked for something.

Am I making an emotional decision? A mistake we can often make is allowing our emotions to determine our choices. After all, we are emotional beings. Of course, some humans are more people pleasers than others, but we all have this human nature of wanting to feel loved and feeling like we belong. If you are a kind, caring, and sensitive person, you tend to want others to be happy, even at the expense of sacrificing your own happiness. Saying no can feel harsh or even aggressive, and the fear of being rejected causes all kinds of bad feelings. Saying yes because of how saying no will make you or someone else feel, is rarely a good reason, and it usually will cause more pain than good in the long run. Instead, be clear about why you will say yes or no. Do your best to remove the emotion and make a more discerned decision.

Is it an opportunity or a distraction? Understanding if what you are being asked to do is an opportunity or a distraction is probably the most important factor you should consider. The

rule of thumb is, always say yes to opportunities and always say no to distractions. What is an opportunity? An opportunity is anything that will move you closer to your goals and where you want to be. If possible, when an opportunity arises, you most definitely want to say yes. What is a distraction? A distraction is something that may appear to be a good option, but it is not going to move you in the direction you genuinely want to go. It is more of a detour or a side-move. As in anything, there could always be an exception to the rule, but generally you can know when to say no by having a clear vision of what it is you want. Having clarity will help you understand if you are being presented with an opportunity or a distraction.

Will no result in a better outcome? When no is appropriate, it will bring a better outcome for you and the party you are saying no to. Sometimes, you are simply not the right person for the task you are being asked to do. It could be timing, experience, or it is just not a good fit. By politely declining, you are opening the window for a better situation to come about. It is not selfish to say no. In fact, it can be the least selfish thing you do. Saying yes half-heartedly is far more selfish than being upfront and honest and graciously saying no. You will do yourself a favor, and the person asking by simply saying no. Remember, no does not necessarily mean never. It just means not right now. Creating an environment of being constantly over busy because you cannot or will not say no is an extremely negative space to be in and it does far more harm than good. Sometimes, no will result in the absolute best outcome.

It's easy to see what's wrong with saying no, but hopefully now you can see what's right about saying no. No is not a negative word. When used appropriately and with the right attitude, it is far more positive and powerful than we give it credit for. So go ahead, and just say no!

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