

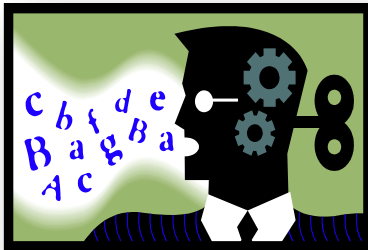
Saying "NO" with "YES"

Dear Small Business Owner:

Do you find yourself in situations where you have to answer "NO" to a request from someone you don't want to disappoint? While you need to answer "NO" for your sake, you still want to leave as many doors open as possible with this person. One way to do this but not shut down the relationship or the discussion is to sandwich your "NO" answer with "YESes."

HUH? What do I mean by this?

A Better Way to Say "NO"



In his book "The Power of a Positive No," William Ury talks about how we can say "YES" and still get to "NO." Let me explain.

When someone asks you to do something to which you must say "NO", respond in these three steps. First, find some way to thank the person for bringing up the subject. Say, "I really appreciate the confidence you're showing in me to ask me to lead this project." Or "I really think the service you're offering is a valuable one." Be authentic. Be real. Be kind.

Then, deliver your no. "I really can't take-on any additional work right now and still maintain the quality level that I always provide." Or, "I just don't have a use for your services since I don't deal with that industry"

Then, lastly, say yes to something else that might be a possibility. "I'd really appreciate it if you would consider me if this kind of project comes up again." Or, "If you ever expand into another type of service, please let me know."

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A Story



Here's a real life story about a "NO" that did extensive damage when it could have been an opportunity to open so many doors.

An employee had just gotten some positive feedback from one of the customers she serves so she decided to use that information to ask her manager for a raise. The manager's response was immediate. "No, you're not getting a raise now. There's no money around here for that," and dismissed her from his office. WOW. I'll bet she didn't leave feeling very

motivated to continuing performing quality work for that company.

What if instead the manager replied like this. "Sally, thanks for coming in to talk about a raise. That really took courage on your part. The job you are doing with that client really is superb. You realize we give raises in February, right? We can talk then about how your work with all your customers has benefited the company and how that will impact your raise. Next week, I'd like you to share in our team meeting just what you're doing to make that client so happy. Thanks for coming in to see me."

In the revised scenario, the manager said no but without rejecting what the other person had done. He reinforced what she had done and helped her see her value in a bigger way. I'll bet this response would have made this employee much happier about coming to work.

Conclusion

So, remember, use "YES-NO-YES" for your responses. A sandwiched "NO" is a better way to get to "NO".

We work with small business owners to help them improve their leadership skills. If you're looking to create a better work environment in your office, give us a call.

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