

Saying No

Description

When you are asked to do something that you do not want to do, then you can just say no.

When saying 'no', keep your refusal short, but not so abrupt as to unnecessarily upset the other person. Make sure what you are saying is crystal clear, with no scope for the other person to think that you might yet be persuaded.

You can make the message clear by starting your response with 'no'.

You do not need to qualify or explain your response. The fact that you have made a decision is enough. It may be helpful sometimes to explain a decision, but do not allow this as something for them to challenge.

Do not apologize for your refusal and do not be apologetic in your tone. 'I'm sorry, but...' often appears weak and leads to challenges and further argument. Be firm: neither weak nor aggressive.

Do not make up excuses. If you are to give a reason, then be honest, even if it is uncomfortable. Be careful about giving them explanation on which they may use objection-handling.

Do not be persuaded by pleading, whining, wheedling etc. Listen to rational argument and make rational decisions based on what you have heard. Only change your mind if it makes real sense.

It can help to acknowledge the other person, for example by using their name.

Show that it is *you* making the decision rather than hiding behind other people or impersonal rules. Say 'I' rather than 'we' or 'they'.

If the other person persists, repeat your reasons (do not look for new reasons to decline). Use the broken record method if necessary.

Example

I can't take on any extra work. My calendar is completely full for the next month.

Sorry, Mike. You're a nice guy, but I do not want to go out with you.

I do not want double glazing. I am happy with my house as it is, thank you.

Discussion

Saying 'no' is something with which many people have problems.

Whilst it is easy to say yes, saying no is risking the wrath of the person involved or the other people they might tell. Ultimately, refusal may seem to risk hurting a relationship, being ostracized from the group, being fired from the company or otherwise being severely punished for your lack of cooperation. When you refuse, it may seem as if you are also giving up your right to ask something of the other person.

All this is, of course, untrue. You have a basic right to refuse. The good news is that reality is nowhere near as bad as imagination. When you say 'no' assertively and clearly, you are more likely to gain respect than lose it.

Source: www.changingminds.org

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