

5 STEPS TO SAYING NO WITH GRACE



An empathy infused guide to saying "NO" while
SUPERCHARGING your reputation and
EXTINGUISHING guilt.

By Steven Lozada

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Introduction

Friend,

You have just opened a gift within this short manual that will let you to extract power from what is arguably the most powerful word at your disposal...without spreading the ruthlessness that is often attributed to it: "No." One word, made of 2 letters, with limitless power.

In his bestselling book "Start with No," the famous negotiator Jim Camp argues that a matter doesn't come to an end when someone declares "no," it actually begins at "no." Camp stresses that "no" is an indicator in a conversation that negotiations can now begin. Having this idea in mind helps us to view this declaration not as a roadblock, but as a bridge.

When we declare "no," we don't necessarily shatter someone else's dreams, desires or determination. Instead, we retain our right to choose our next steps, while also giving people the opportunity to expand their possibilities and open their field of vision toward the vast resources available to them for achieving what they want to accomplish.

Here's Some Good News

Although it may seem like a generous thing to do, you don't have to say "Yes" to every request that someone (no matter how important you think they are) makes of you. You can say "No." And you should maintain your right to do so while still retaining the respect, love, admiration, credibility and good reputation you've earned and desire to keep.

You're likely reading this because you see value for yourself in maximizing your opportunity to increase your authority and influence without losing your soul, sanity or social connections.

You probably also value your time and your relationships, and find that occasionally these two are in conflict, making you feel like you're getting an ultimatum from a whiny actor shouting: "either him or me!"

I hate when this happens! The "this or that," "either/or" options put you in an awkward position, and in fact, they attempt to victimize you...forcing you to make weak decisions instead of powerful choices

You Have Another Option

You don't need to make decisions using "either/or" options. Your world is bigger. Your opportunities are greater. You're more capable of performing beyond just 2 options.

Friend, you can open your territory of performance beyond the cramped box someone else tries to stuff you into.

How, you ask? By recognizing your authentic inner power, tightly gripping your autonomy, and communicating from your inner desire to be your best in every interaction. From this strong stature you can then confidently choose: both options, none of the options, or create an entirely new option. That's the generative power of choice you have.

I was once a chronic "Yes-er", which is a common malady among people-pleasers. I developed a non-conscious reflex for saying "yes" and it was hurting me and others. This feels horrible.

You've seen people like me. And maybe worse...we may have even dropped-the-ball on you a few times (although once was more than enough). It's also not lost on me that you may also be showing symptoms of being a "Yes-er" yourself, right now.

Either way, you should know that my saying "yes" did not come from bad intentions or ill will. I confess that I simply didn't want to let anyone down or lose an opportunity to serve others at my highest potential. Yet, this noble desire imprisoned me.

The good news is that I was able to break free from that suffocating bondage as soon as I learned an important principle:

If you never say "No" then people will never trust your "Yes"

You Have Another Option

You likely know that trust is in low supply and high demand. Studies even show that trust is a highly appreciating, revenue producing, expense busting catalyst that creates powerful human connection and a competitive advantage, even in the most competitive and cut-throat markets.

I wanted trust...so, I learned how to say "No" with self respect and respect for others, and in doing so, I increased the value of both my time and my relationships, and by reading the pages that follow, you have the opportunity to do the same today.

In the following pages I give you a simple, 5-step process (The 5 A-s) to say "No" and do so gracefully and masterfully. Read. Apply. Repeat. I wish you the greatest success in all you do.

God bless you!

Steven Lozada

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Step 1

Affirm

(their aspiration)



Keep in mind that the person making a request of you may have a genuine need for your help or may be seeking some attention from you to feel connected or even important. Either way, they're approaching you because they have an aspiration and believe that you might be a conduit for their success.

This may bring with it some flattery, but hopefully it generates greater gratitude in you, which is critically important. As you engage this 5-step process, I invite you to engage it with honesty and humility because this is essential for being graceful in saying "no."

This may bring with it some flattery, but hopefully it generates greater gratitude in you, which is critically important. As you engage this 5-step process, I invite you to engage it with honesty and humility because this is essential for being graceful in saying "no."

From an attitude of gratitude, gently affirm their aspiration. Let people know that their desire for continuous improvement, growth and contribution is a noble pursuit. When you share an affirmation you display your empathetic concern and demonstrate your emotional intelligence. It lets others know that you're not being dismissive toward them, but that you're listening attentively and able to see their potentiality. That feeling you produce in others is priceless and there is always a return on that investment.

Example Statements

- "I'm excited to hear that you are ...[insert their aspiration]"
- "I think it's a great idea that you are...[insert their aspiration]"
- "I understand that you're...[insert their aspiration]"
- "I feel like you have...[insert their aspiration]"
- "It sounds like you are...[insert their aspiration]"
- "It seems clear to me that...[insert their aspiration]"

Step 2

Appreciate (the relationship)



The attitude of gratitude is a secret success factor for many great leaders. It is the engine that propels the cycle of giving, receiving and sharing. It allows you to produce a safe space for creative risk among your allies and even adversaries, without tyranny or heart stopping complication. It's actually pretty simple.

One of the easiest expressions of gratitude is saying "thank you." This is an emotionally neutral response you can give to others when they share information, time, or anything with you. "Thank you" is not only a phrase that can make the heart smile, but is also powerful for generating an environment of trust and positive influence.

It is a cost-free gift to the person with whom you're communicating that can produce great benefit for you. Please recognize that you are in a powerful position to let someone experience the warm feeling that you are caring and are interested in being kind to them. This simple act of decency can produce unbreakable loyalty and deep respect, which is rare and extremely valuable these days.

Example Statements

- "Thank you for your trust in me to ask for ...[insert their request]"
- "I'm honored that you have asked me...[insert their request]"
- "I'm flattered that you...[insert their request]"
- "I appreciate your [relationship type] and you asking me... [insert their request]"
- "You're a great [relationship type] and it's important to me to respond to [insert their request]"

Step 3

Assert

(...your commitment & choice)



It is irresponsible to say "Yes" to every request or demand you receive! Therefore, you must prioritize your time, treasure and talent...deliberately. If you don't, then you're leaving your most valuable resources vulnerable to theft, pillaging and waste. You should not allow someone else to determine how your resources are utilized.

This means that you must commit to certain values and predetermine the manner in which you will invest your time, treasure and talent ...or you may fall victim to others making that determination for you.

Ensure that you're driven by your internal commitments and choices instead of by external circumstances and pressures...and don't be ashamed of this. When others try to force you to make a decision, you can retake your power, dignity and respect by making a choice that is best aligned with your values. By doing this, you give others the right to do the same and create a safe and pleasant space for mutual respect and co-creation.

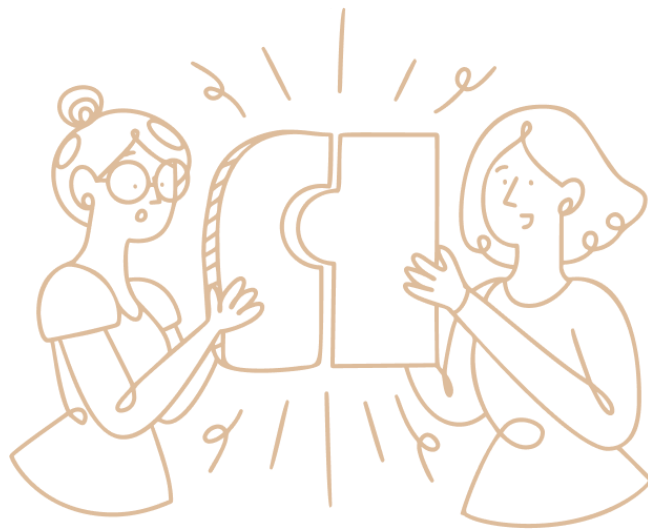
Example Statements

- "I'm currently [insert what you're doing or not doing], which is my focus right now."
- "I'm committed to [insert your choice/activity] at this time and I'm limiting what I say 'yes' to."
- "I made another commitment. I would be unfair to you to accept [enter their request] because I would not be able to give you the 100% effort you deserve."

Step 4

Assist / Add

(...assist them / add value)



Remember that you're saying "Yes" to your commitments and choices and not saying "No" to the other PERSON. You can certainly say "No" to a task without saying "No" to the person. You can do this best by declaring your intentions to the other person. This quick statement helps to avoid misinterpretation. The best way to set-up your "intention declaration" for a successful and well received delivery, you must be sure to complete Step-2 and APPRECIATE the relationship. People believe others they know, like and trust. The set- up is key.

In order to remain consistent with your declarations, you should provide something of value to assist or aid the other person. Here's a rule you may want to consider adopting:

Never leave a person feeling less powerful following a conversation with you.

Give the person something of value to walk away with (even if it's just a good feeling) following an interaction with you, even if it's not what he/she was originally seeking. You might direct them to another person with whom to speak, another resource to consult, or another path to take. By doing this you allow yourself to be a positive impact on the other person's learning and journey toward success without committing your own time, treasure and talent.

Example Statements

- "However/But, I can [enter your offer]."
- "However/But, what I'm able to do is [enter your offer]."
- "However/But, it may be of value to you to [enter your offer/suggestion]."
- "However/But, you should consider [enter your suggestion]."
- "Would you be open to [enter your offer/suggestion]?"
- "Here's what I can do: [enter your offer]."

Step 5

Applaud

(... their success)



Who doesn't like to be encouraged and celebrated and who doesn't like to receive gifts?

We all do! In fact, I've only met one person who's ever felt that they're overappreciated for what they do. The rest of us are working to that level (smile).

Just take a look at some TV Game shows...we can learn something valuable from them.

They've perfected the act of celebrating people by rewarding the winners with great prizes AND ALSO giving "parting gifts" or "consolation prizes" to contestants who did not win the game. It is a generous way of saying: "I recognize your courage to appear and engage with me, and that, in itself, is praiseworthy."

This act of generosity is a confidence builder. You have the opportunity to leave others feeling good about their interaction with you, and encouraged to find what they're looking for elsewhere. They may even discover that it may be best to alter their plan altogether. Either way, you have become a positive part of their success and story.

Example Statements

- "I am confident that you will [enter your compliment]."
- "I know that you will [enter your positive expectation]."
- "I feel like you are going to [enter your declarative compliment]".
- "Keep up the...[enter your positive regard for their aspiration]."
- "I'm hoping for the best as you...[enter their aspiration]."

Scenario

Now that you've learned the 5-Steps and read various examples as possibilities for crafting your statements for each "A" in the process, it's time to assess a mock scenario. It's important that you notice the simplicity of the statements. It may only take you about 60 seconds to execute the entire 5-step process, but it's still powerful.

It doesn't escape us that you can really simplify the entire process and just say "No" period, but it may not be the most beneficial to your reputation or relationships.

We're presenting you with an alternative to the one-word denial of service in hopes of helping to increase your influence without decreasing your stature as a leader.

Meet Monica

Monica is desperately in need of a mentor because she wants the promotion to become the next Director of Sales.

She has interviewed on two previous occasions and has not been able to earn the promotion. She wants the third time to be a charm.

Monica sends an email to Nicole who is a professional acquaintance, whom she highly regards and admires. Monica knows that Nicole helped Amber (a mutual friend) make improvements in her executive skills development, which resulted in her promotion, and she's hoping that Nicole will help her do the same...so she writes her an email.

Monica's Email

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Nicole,

Amber recommended that I call you. She sings your praises and credits you with helping her get promoted. I currently find myself in a strategic situation in my career. I've attempted and failed twice at getting a promotion and I think you are the perfect person to help me. I would love it if you could mentor me in my executive skills development. I am willing to adjust my schedule to yours to make this possible and I'm fully committed to following your guidance. When do you think we can start?

With appreciation,
Monica

Nicole's Email

• • •

Monica,

I'm excited to hear that you are pursuing the next step in your career. I'm honored that you've asked me to mentor you. I'm currently committed to working with three clients, which is my limit right now. However, I would like to recommend Karen who is a close colleague. When you contact her, let her know that you are a friend of mine. I would love to hear about your progress, especially when you get the promotion!

Best wishes,
Nicole

Did You See The 5-Steps?

- 1 "I'm excited to hear that you are pursuing the next step Step 1: AFFIRM in your career."
- 2 "I'm honored that you've asked me to mentor you."
- 3 "I'm currently committed to working with three clients, which is my limit right now."
- 4 "However, I would like to recommend Keren, who is a close colleague. When you contact her, let her know you're a friend of mine."
- 5 "I would love to hear about your progress and especially when you get the promotion!"

Monica's Call

Hi Amber.

Nicole is amazing! She wasn't able to work with me directly, but she connected me with Karen and I couldn't be happier right now. I've developed and grown so much from her coaching, and now I'm in line for the promotion. What do you think is the best way to show Nicole my gratitude?

Conclusion

Friend,

My Leadership Coach told me many years ago:

"Steven, say what you mean, mean what you say, but don't say it in a mean way."

This moment in time marked the beginning of my journey toward engaging crucial conversations and being successful at having difficult discussions. I soon discovered that this is a critical skill set for success and requires that we identify and remove some disabling, internal barriers.

The inability to say "No" is one of the disabling internal barriers and it comes from a spirit of fear that overtakes us.

Saul of Tarsus wrote a letter to his protege Timothy and told him that, "we have not been given a spirit of fear, but of love, power and self-mastery." This is a powerful encouragement that we should take for ourselves. We should be living, working, and playing in THAT reality; from that power.

At Upward Mindset, we coach and train people to achieve extraordinary success by learning conversational prominence for generating agreements and coordinating effective action. We do so from the purposeful reality of love, power and self-mastery. We're here to serve you and look forward to providing value to you as you grow.

Please contact visit us at upwardmindset.com and contact us when you choose to have us join you, and support you in your journey toward extraordinary success.



Thank You For Downloading This Guide.

We would treasure the opportunity to continue supporting your leadership development. Our coaching and training offerings may be just what you've been seeking to go to the next level.

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