

How to Say “No” With Style

Does the thought of saying “no” in situations where you normally wouldn’t cause your palms to sweat? Well, this is perfectly normal. If you observe the following tips, you may find it much easier to tell the truth (your truth) going forward.

- **“No” is a complete sentence.**
 - When you honor your needs, it’s easier to say “no” with a smile on your face.
 - “No” can be received well when it is stated in a calm, direct manner, without any excess energy, force or display of emotions.
 - If it’ll make a difference to you, say “No, thank you” or “No, I won’t be able to do that” or even “No, but thanks for asking” before moving on to another subject.

- **It is not necessary to defend, explain or justify.**
 - When you defend, explain or justify yourself, you allow the other person to weaken your position.
 - Share less; it’s more effective.
 - It’s better to say “no” up front, rather than to decline at a later date or not follow through on your commitment.
 - Say “no” now; don’t ask for time to say “no” later.

- **When you say “no” to something, you say “yes” to something else.**
 - When you eliminate things from your life that don’t suit you, you have more time to pursue more meaningful activities.
 - When you delegate or say “no” to projects that won’t reflect you well, you have more time to build on your strengths.

- **It’s a lot easier to remember and operate from the truth.**
 - It’s much better to tell the truth than to make up an excuse.
 - Share what you think or feel.
 - When asked to do something, remember that you may accept, decline or negotiate.
 - If you do negotiate, make sure you set yourself up for success by under-promising and over-delivering. Share information about your timelines, limitations, experience, etc.

- **Start small.**
 - First practice saying “no” to things that you don’t care about as much to gain confidence.
 - Keep in mind that you’re saying “no” to maintain a clean and healthy relationship; relationships become strained when one person holds back from sharing the truth.