

7 STEPS TO CONFIDENTLY SAY NO WITHOUT HURTING ANY FEELINGS



THE CHALLENGE



Do you ...

Do you say 'yes' when you actually mean 'no' to your boss, colleagues, and family?

And then get stressed, annoyed, and frustrated with the people who made such requests and at yourself? Do you feel guilty!?

Are you afraid of ...

Are you afraid of saying no and having boundaries because you don't want to be rude and because it may slow down your career or even get you fired?

Or maybe you don't want to be too selfish or upset someone? Or you don't want to be seen as a non-team player?

FRUSTRATIONS

Do you identify with these situations?

Do you do things that you don't want to do? Such as:

- Skip your vacations
- Take work calls during dinner?
- Work more after hours and weekends than you'd like?
- Accept unreasonable deadlines over and over again?
- Take more work trips than you'd like
- Take on a hard project that is not aligned with your goals?
- Take the hit for other people's mistakes?
- Work often during your vacations?
- Relocate to another city because of work demands when you don't want to?



SHOCKING STATS

76% want to leave jobs because of toxic boss

76% of people searching for jobs claimed the reason was a toxic boss, according to Monster.com study.

54% of eligible vacation days used

The average American took only 54% of their eligible vacation days in 12 months, according to Glassdoor study.

35% of women with sexual harassment

35% of women in corporate america experience sexual harassment, according to Mckinsey study.



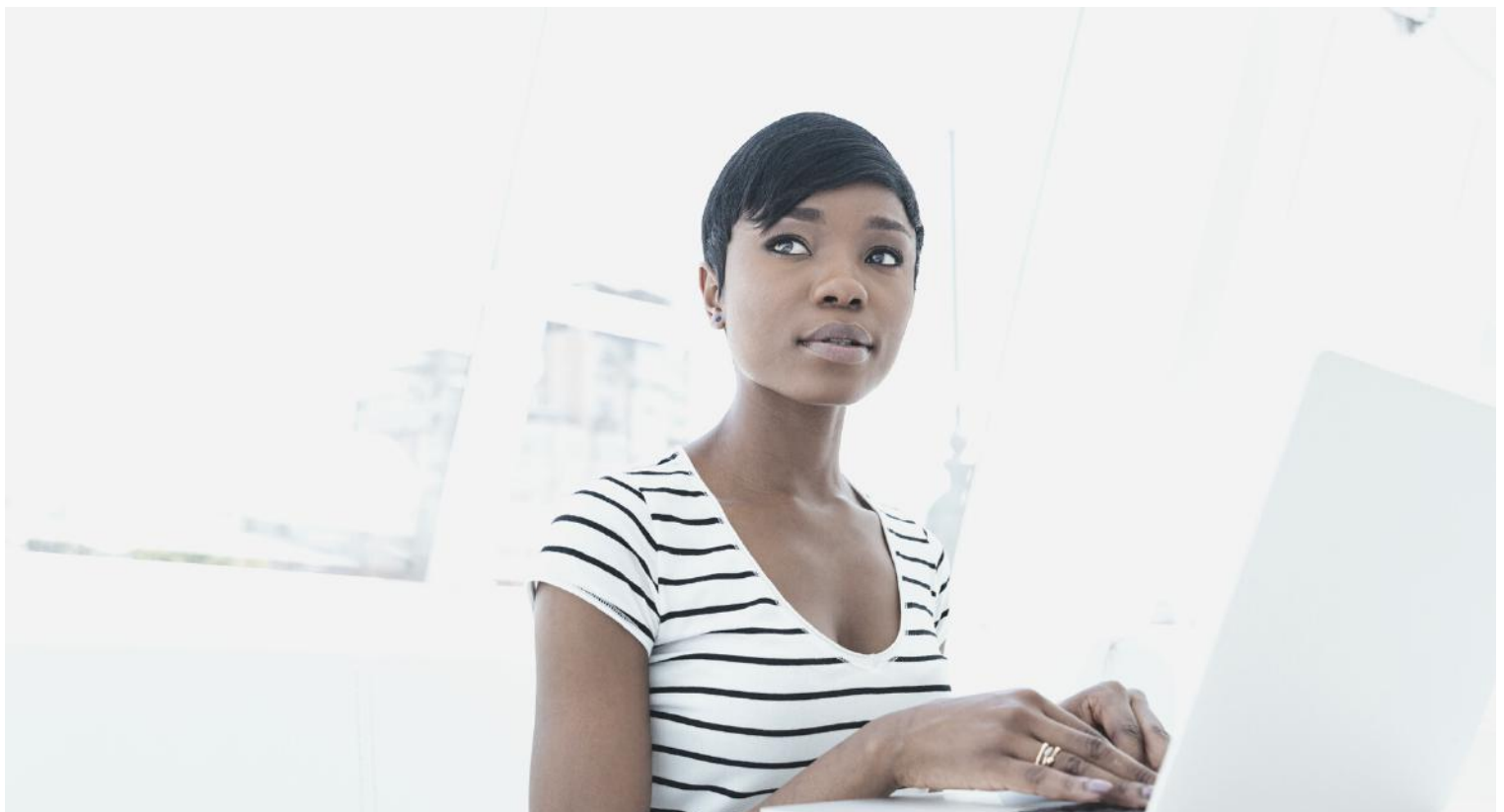
WHAT IT MEANS

You're not alone!

The worst part is that you're overworked, yet still stuck in your career. Despite all those personal sacrifices, you're still not advancing. And you're frustrated with your unreasonable coworkers, boss, and clients.

A woman always accepted her boss's request to work on the weekends without ever pushing back, and because of that the boss would always ask her, not others, to work on weekends without even making an effort to avoid it.

Then, when it was her son's birthday on a weekend, she was in the office and wasn't able to say 'no' to the boss. She ended up working until 11pm and missed all of her son's birthday celebrations. Her son was very upset at her. Worse, she never got a promotion in that team and was blocked for promotion in other teams. Was there a way out?



BENEFITS

A quick look at the benefits of saying no at work.

Saying 'no' in the right way can make others respect you more, because you won't be seen as a pushover.

Just be strategic about when you say 'no'. Avoid saying it all the time. Pick your battles. Choose what really matters to you.

Think of 'no' as a negotiation process. It doesn't start or end with the 'no'. It involves listening, finding a compromise, and walking away if needed.

When you say 'no' to work / projects that doesn't benefit you in the long run, you create time to pursue the what will help you advance.

And you'll have more time to do your work well. You'll get:

- More time
- Less stress
- Space for new opportunities
- More respect
- More focus on what you value
- More productive



NOW WHAT?



SAYING NO & BOUNDARIES IS A LOT LESS RISKY IF YOU DO IT THE RIGHT WAY

SHOW YOU CARE

Start and end listening, acknowledging the other person, the relationship you have with them, and your positive intention to help them.

SAY YES TO SAY NO

In the middle, reveal the 'yes' that underpins your 'no' and then say 'no' firmly but without overdoing it, that is, without over-justification or excuses.

7 STEPS TO SAY NO POLITELY

It's all about being empathetic with the other while standing up for your own interests.

HOW DO YOU SAY A POWERFUL 'NO' WITH CONFIDENCE?

7 Steps to Confidently Say No Without Hurting Any Feelings



EXAMPLE



SAY NO IN 7 STEPS

Boss on a Friday late afternoon, again:
"Could you work on this report this weekend, it's really urgent."

Acknowledge their request & share positive intentions

"I understand that you want to get this report done on the weekend and I want to help."

Buy time to decide instead of saying 'yes' instantly

"I need to check my schedule, is it ok if I get back to you by the end of the day?"

Establish what matters to you and the tradeoffs

Spending time with my family on weekends.

Say 'no' to the request, not the person

"Unfortunately I can't work on the report this weekend because of family commitments I already had planned."

Suggest alternative solutions and encourage them

"Could we negotiate to deliver this Monday by 11am? I can come in a earlier to work on it with Judy."

Follow up on the problem to show you care

"How did the negotiation go?"

Establish boundaries for future requests

"In the future, I'd really appreciate it if you could give me a week's notice for work on weekend, that way I can better plan so that I'm available to help."

(Very reasonable and forces the boss to plan ahead, which reduces need to work on weekends)

BEST PRACTICES

The do's and don'ts of saying 'no'



DO'S

- Be clear on your own priorities
- Take at least a minute to decide
- Show empathy, concern, goodwill
- Offer suggestions
- Share your perspective
- Maintain good eye contact
- Check-in with them later

DON'TS

- Say 'maybe' when it's a definite 'No'
- Justify 'No' with many reasons
- Say 'No' with hesitation
- Say 'yes' and then do it poorly
- Avoid the person or request
- Get defensive

"IT'S ONLY BY SAYING 'NO' THAT YOU CAN CONCENTRATE ON THE THINGS THAT ARE REALLY IMPORTANT." - STEVE JOBS



NEXT STEPS

Saying No is an Assertiveness Skill That Can Be Learned

Saying 'No' and having boundaries is a very important skill for your career success and work fulfillment. Don't leave it to chance.

Saying 'No' in a effective and confident way is a core skill of being assertive.

Learn more about [how to be more assertive without being rude here](#).