



Timely Information for Personal Success

Why Hearing 'No' is Actually a Good Thing

By Dr. Cindy McGovern

Once worked with someone who couldn't handle the answer, "no." It was a lot like dealing with a child. One day I literally saw her stomp, raise her voice and throw a book! She then spent the rest of the day trying to "rally the troops" in an attempt to get other employees on her side – just to hear someone say she was right and should have gotten what she wanted.

At one point, she went so far as to file a grievance against her boss. Hearing "no" was not in her skill set and really hurt her in the long run.

Whether she felt she was right or not, had she bothered to take a moment of self-reflection, she may have seen there were non-personal reasons why she hadn't gotten what she wanted.

Hearing No is Not a Bad Thing

Hearing "no" is not the worst thing in the world, in fact it can be a good thing! What might feel like rejection could actually be the opening of a door. It's all about how you perceive the situation. If you take a moment to view the opportunities, there may be great things in the mix.

Remember there is always a win-win to be had if you keep your eyes open to possibilities. Besides that, negativity will rarely bring you satisfaction or bring about the change you're looking for.

Here's some reality for you: You aren't entitled to everything you want, but you can negotiate a "no" with just about everything. From your next promotion or raise to a deal with a client or agreement with a

vendor – it's all negotiable. And that means that getting a NO really just means NOT NOW.

How do you negotiate through a no? Here are three critical pieces:

1. **Change your mind set about win-lose situations.** No one likes to hear a no, but that doesn't mean someone has to lose in a negotiation, and it doesn't have to be aggressive. The art of interest-based negotiating (and if you haven't studied up on IBN, do so right now!) is realizing you and the other person both want the same thing: a good

continued on Page 2





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Healthy Recipe: Baked Sweet Potatoes

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 medium sweet potatoes (or yams), scrubbed clean

NUTRITIONAL VALUE:

- Calories per serving: 130
- Protein: 2 g.
- Carbohydrates: 33 g.
- Sodium: 45 mg.
- Saturated fat: 0 g.
- Fat: 0 g.
- Fiber: 4 g.

DIRECTIONS:

- 1 Preheat oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit.
- 2 Prick the skin of the potatoes with a fork in several places to prevent them from bursting.
- 3 Place the potatoes in a warm oven to bake for 45 to 60 minutes, until tender.

Serving size: 1 potato.

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Questions and Answers

Take Advantage of 'Teachable Moments'

Q: You hear about "teachable moments" for parents and teachers, but I've heard they can also be useful in the workplace. Possibly even as a replacement for annual performance reviews? What do you think?

A: First, performance reviews can be useful, especially if the employee is provided with a list of the questions that the interviewer will ask ahead of time.

The advantage of teachable moments is that, as the name implies, the manager or supervisor is taking advantage of a work situation "in the moment" to instruct the employee about something that he or she is doing, as opposed to bringing it up later in a review situation, in which the details of the incident may not be remembered clearly.

In other words, if someone is doing something wrong – or right for that matter! – Then why wait to tell the employee?! ■

Why Hearing 'No' is Actually a Good Thing continued from Page 1

deal. So, find the win-win! How? Talk! Continue the conversation until you both discover a mutually beneficial solution.

2. **Come to the table prepared.** You wouldn't take a test completely unprepared, so why would you begin negotiations without a plan? Do your research. Know what can help the other person, but also know what else is available on the market. Careful research also shows the other person how seriously you take them and respect their time – which is already a win-win!

3. **Rehearse.** There's a reason I include role playing when I'm coaching clients – it works! Break out of your comfort zone and practice in front of the mirror, with a friend, with a colleague – or even better yet, find a mentor and practice with them. Write a script if it helps!

Summary

To reframe a "no," realize you have a big opportunity to learn something about yourself or the situation. You get to understand why it's a "no" and explore it. Ask why! Be respectful and professional and most people will share their rationale.

Remember, one "no" doesn't mean "no" to all future requests. If all you want from someone is a one-time deal, that's all you'll get. If you want an ongoing relationship, build on that initial "no" and find ways to help each other out on an ongoing basis and you'll start hearing a lot more yeses! ■

Dr. Cindy McGovern, known as the "First Lady of Sales," speaks and consults internationally on sales, interpersonal communication and leadership. She is the author of Every Job is a Sales Job: How to Use the Art of Selling to Win at Work. Dr. Cindy is the CEO of Orange Leaf Consulting, a sales management and consulting firm. For more information, please visit, www.drcindy.com and connect with her on Twitter, @1stladyofsales and LinkedIn.