



Deck Plate Leadership Series

The Art of Saying No!

USCG Leadership Competency: Leading Others: Team Building

Learning Outcomes:

- Describe the nine ways to say no.
- Discuss why we sometimes should say no.

Time Required: 25 – 30 minutes

Facilitator Activities: Present slides, providing amplifying information from material below. Facilitate discussion with last slide – Where are We as a Flotilla? Slides can be copied three-to-a-page with line for notes if projector is not available.

An engaged unit is a highly effective team. However, sometimes we have conflicts that we do not consider when volunteering; destroying the engaged unit.

Overview Information for the Facilitator:

The Auxiliary often would take you 24/7. Some members have trouble saying no, causing potential conflicts at home and work. There are times when it is important to recognize that if you accept more work on top of your existing workload, these problems may occur. In this situation, it is better to politely and assertively decline extra. The following is a technique called the Assertive Sentence, which works particularly well in this scenario. The sentence is structured as follows:

- Acknowledge the other person's view
- 'however...'
- Say what you feel
- State what you want to happen.

Example

'I appreciate that you need me to teach the RBS course week; however, with my current commitments, the earliest that I could help is the following Friday. If you can live with that, then I'll take it on; otherwise you will need to find someone else.'

No is one of the shortest and simplest words in English, yet it causes stress for even the most confident of people. Type A people suffer from a natural tendency to bite off more than they can chew. Most Type B people, on the other hand, shrink from saying 'no' because they would rather sacrifice their time, energy and money than cause conflict or awkwardness, or experience feelings of guilt.

To help you learn to say 'no', here are some points to consider.



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1. **Respect yourself** - Develop a new respect for yourself. Revisit your personal boundaries and honor your commitments to yourself. Once you begin to respect yourself fully, others around you will find it easy to respect you.
2. **Get your priorities straight** - What's most important to you? Once you know what it is you want for yourself, it will be easier to stop agreeing to things that will get in the way.
3. **Take responsibility for yourself** - When you realize that only you are responsible for yourself and for the tasks you take on, you'll recognize that saying 'yes' to things to which you really want to say 'no' to is just a way of deferring making your own decisions.
4. **Get clarification** - Assert your right to ask for clarification or more information. This will buy you time, and allow you to weigh your options and your priorities. It will also make it clear to the other person that you're not agreeing to their request straight away.
5. **Don't be so nice** - Stop being invested in being nice. If you say 'yes' so that you can be the nice guy, then the chances are you'll follow through half-heartedly. This won't go down well with the person who asked you – and you won't feel good about it yourself.
6. **Yes or no?** - Remember that you do not have to say 'yes'. You have the right to say 'no' without giving a reason for your answer.
7. **No is just no** - Accept that saying 'no' does not reject the person; it simply refuses the request.
8. **Be assertive** - Don't give a long explanation and don't apologies for yourself. No more 'I'm sorry, but...'
9. **Practice** - Say 'no' in the mirror; role play situations with your partner/friends/family, and practise in real life, starting with smaller things and working your way up to saying 'no' in more difficult situations.

Remember! We cannot be all things to all people all the time. We do have other obligations – to family, to our job, to other volunteer groups. Also, while others would like us to always say "yes", no one expects us to do that.

Some material retrieved from:

<http://www.alchemyformanagers.co.uk/topics/VY2L2njdhcCqMB7t.html>