



How to say « No » or turn down a Proposal: Task / Mission / Promotion

1 RISK THAT YOU RUN IF YOU SAID "NO"

1.1 Disappoint a person who believes in you, damage / hamper a relationship, bother a person

- *Hurt or generate a guilt feeling in your counterparts' mind.*
- *Disappoint your counterpart by letting them believe that they made a mistake.*
- *Damage, break or loose the relationship of trust with the person who made you the proposal.*
- *Embarrass some other people in the loop.*
- *Put your counterpart in a difficult situation (if they do not have a Plan B).*
- *Cause a frustration in your counterpart's mind.*

1.2 Miss a managerial career opportunity

- *Slow down / block your career.*
- *Miss an opportunity. Bypass interesting topics or promotion that could lead you to thriving responsibilities.*
- *Have no more right to make a mistake.*
- *Close the door to other proposals in the future.*
- *Leave or understand that you have to leave.*
- *Take the risk that someone says "Yes".*
- *Take the risk that your "No" is stored in your files) for a wrong reason or worse, without a reason.*
- *Get fade up doing tasks that soon become repetitive, monotonous and boring.*

1.3 Be penalized (financially, morally)

- *Be financially penalized.*
- *Regret this opportunity that my not show up any more.*

1.4 Hamper your image

- *Irritate others.*
- *Be badly perceived by your hierarchy.*
- *Be marginalized. Instill distrust. Spread a bad image of you.*
- *Be labeled (at least during 3 to 5 years). For instance for lack of professional ambition.*



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2 WHAT YOU SHOULD NOT DO, SAY, EXPRESS...WHEN YOU SAY "NO"

2.1 Say "No" abruptly without explanations

- Say "No" immediately, without explaining your decision and...without having reflected.
- Say "No" in an abrupt or aggressive way.
- Turn down the offer without listening to your counterpart.

2.2 Try to justify yourself in an awkward way

- Provide too many reasons (mostly mentioning personal or family issues) or justifying your "No" using a "guilty pitch".
- Adopt a wrong tone of voice: be aggressive in your way of saying "No" or express your "No" with bitterness.

2.3 Avoid (Run away, Flee)

- Ask someone to say "No" for you.

2.4 Adopt an inconsistent / awkward attitude

- Decline the proposal that has been made but do the task / mission asked for (thus hampering your credibility and eventually destroying your authority).
- Say "Yes" and hoping to be able to say "No" later.

2.5 Loose control of your emotions

- Cry and / or start a long diatribe.

2.6 Hurt / embarrass the person who has made you the offer / proposal

- Make feel guilty the person to whom you said "No".
- Say that you are not interested in the offer / proposal.
- Give your counterpart the feeling that you have no interest whatsoever for the offer / proposal.
- Put the person who made you the offer / proposal in difficult position.

3 WHAT YOU SHOULD DO, SAY, EXPRESS...WHEN YOU SAY "NO"

3.1 Think before acting

- Analyze the consequences of your refusal for you and for the others and balance the pros and the cons.
- Take your time to reflect.
- Prepare your argumentation / pitch if you decide to say "No".
- Double-check the reasons why you are considering saying "No".



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3.2 Argue / Justify your decision

- *Persuade your counterpart of your reasons / rationale.*
- *Say "No" by arguing firmly, by explaining your choice and by accepting the risks of your decision. Dialogue in a positive and constructive way. Document your decision with facts / figures.*
- *Be sincere by showing that your "No" comes from the fact that you do not know each other enough and / or you still miss key information.*
- *Ask your counterpart the reason why you have been chosen.*

3.3 Explain positively / elegantly your refusal

- *Be determined, positive, while remaining polite.*
- *Avoid hurting the person who made you the offer / proposal.*
- *Express your refusal with firmness / conviction, but without negativism.*
- *Make, to your counterpart understand that she / he is not the reason of your decision.*
- *Keep smiling*
- *Thank for the offer / proposal, which has been made...*
- *Find the right words.*

3.4 Keep the door opened / Negotiate with tact / make a counter offer / proposal

- *Announce your "No" by suggesting a counter offer / proposal / solution.*
- *Say "No «to part of the offer / proposal and leave the door opened for the other part (afterwards / later...).*
- *Stress your assets / skills and specify what you wish to do / be offered...*
- *Find and introduce someone ready to accept the offer / proposal to your counterpart*
- *Offer your services for something else.*
- *Stay open for the future, offer alternative solutions (i.e.: modify the offer / proposal, adjust the objectives, postpone in time...).*