



WSC- Say NO (more often)

30 second summary:

- ✔ **Summary:** Build the habit to SAY NO by managing your emotions better so you can protect your precious time and spend it in line with your goals.
- ✔ **Main Outcome:** In 5 minutes, you learn to integrate in your day to day a new habit that will take less than 2 minutes to deploy and will help you to SAY NO more and better
- ✔ **Top Benefit(s):** More time saving -less stress (less feelings of always be behind of focusing on wrong priorities)
 - more focus on your goals and strategic tasks
 - Better Work Life Balance
- ✔ **Next Steps:** Apply your habit and next 2 weeks action plan then reflect and decide to adjust/anchor/drop
- ✔ **Duration:** 5 minutes.
- ✔ **Target Audience:** All busy professionals

Why it works

✔ **Before:**

Saying “no” is a critical skill for maintaining focus, energy, and alignment with your priorities. Many professionals struggle with this due to fear of disappointing others, fear of missing opportunities, or an ingrained habit of people-pleasing. However, every “yes” to something misaligned with your goals is a “no” to something that truly matters.

✔ **After:**

This post will help you develop the confidence and clarity to say “no” effectively while maintaining strong relationships and professional credibility. So by saying NO more often in a way that protects the safety of your relationships, you have more time for your priorities, therefore your delivery and performance increase which feeds the virtuous cycle of Saying NO more often.



TO DO

✔ **Pause Before Responding**

When asked to commit to something, resist the urge to answer immediately. Take a deep breath and say, “Let me check and get back to you.”

✔ **Use a Default No**

Have a go-to phrase like, “I appreciate the opportunity, but I can’t take this on right now.”

✔ **Clarify Your Priorities**

Before the next workday, list your top 3 priorities. When a new request arises, check if it aligns.

✔ **Practice with Low-Stakes Scenarios**

Start saying “no” in minor situations (e.g., declining extra work at a restaurant or skipping a social event you don’t enjoy).

✔ **Set Up a Buffer**

Use a scheduling rule, like “No new commitments on Fridays” or “No meetings before 10 AM,” to create automatic boundaries.

NOT DO

✔ **Don’t Over-Explain**

A concise “no” with a brief reason is more effective than long justifications.

✔ **Don’t Say Yes Out of Guilt**

Feeling guilty is not a valid reason to take on extra work.

✔ **Don’t Delay the Inevitable**

If you know you need to decline, do it quickly and respectfully rather than procrastinating.

✔ **Don’t Apologize for Prioritizing**

You have the right to manage your time and energy without guilt.

Eventually / during your Year End review, your raise, promotion, ... will be decided on your overarching goals delivery

✔ **Don’t Use Soft No’s**

Phrases like “maybe later” or “I’ll try” invite follow-ups. Be clear.



Your next 2 weeks steps

☑ **Start NOW or schedule your first try:**

Apply TO DO right away (<5 minutes)

Once done, decide your commitment for the next 2 weeks

How are you feeling right after? Compared to before? What was the value for you?

What to adjust for you to commit for 2 weeks?

Visualize the next time you apply it and how you would like to feel

Celebrate that you have tried something new

☑ **2 Week plan proposal:**

Week 1: Awareness & Small Steps; every morning for under 5 minutes, think of your upcoming day:

Reflect on the “NO” you said on the last day, and visualize how you would want to feel next time instead.

Identify 3 situations where you typically say “yes” when you should say “no.”

Write down your default “no” response and practice saying it out loud.

Visualize yourself pausing before responding to any new requests.

Week 2: Implement & Strengthen; every morning for under 5 minutes, think of your upcoming day:

Reflect on the “NO” you said on the last day, and visualize how you would want to feel next time instead.

What opportunity today to say “no” using a confident but kind approach?

Set and share with a peer or your manager 3X+ personal boundary rules (e.g., “No meetings before noon”...).

Visualize yourself applying the above and it makes you feel compared to how you would like to feel instead.

☑ **Build your habit (-> more practice -> more results)**

Model: After [OTHER CURRENT HABIT] and at/when [TIME], I will [NEW HABIT] in [LOCATION].

Example: Before I go into a meeting, or during my Daily Planning Review, I visualize 1) my current priorities; 2) what others could ask me, that I would want to Say “NO” to, and 3) myself saying “NO” to the ask, and feeling good about it.

Print your sticky habit

☑ **Total time:**

5m/day X 8 = 40 minutes in 2 weeks

☑ **How you measure success:**

Have applied at least 8X times in the next 2 weeks

☑ **What value you can expect:**

More time available for your priorities; prouder about yourself for the courage to say NO while maintaining safety; stronger relationships with others

☑ **How to get started:**

Print and fill your Habit template then apply right away