5 Ways to Be Assertive and Say "No"

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Do you find it difficult to be assertive and say *"no"* to people's requests? Since there just aren't enough hours in the day to appease everyone, the art of saying *"no"* without hurting the feelings of others is an important skill to acquire.

Saying *"no"* doesn't mean you have to be rude about it. There are plenty of polite, yet assertive, ways you can tell people *"no"* when you need to.

Here are some ways you can say *"no"* without being rude or impolite:

1. **"No" to now, but *"yes"* to later.** *"I'm very busy at the moment. Perhaps someone else can help you. If not, I'll have time later in the week to help you out."*

   This is a great way to say *"no."* It's assertive, but also positive and kind. You let the person know there's no way you can do what they're asking at the moment. However, you give them the option to ask someone else or wait until you have the time to help out.

2. **"No" unless something changes.** *"I'm very flattered that you've asked me. However, I'm not currently in a position where I can take on this responsibility. Could we talk about this at another time if there's a change in my circumstances?"*

   This statement says *"no"* while still being very polite. You let them know how thrilled you are that they've asked you, but then you're honest about how little time you have to commit to their request.

3. **A definitive "No."** *"I hate to disappoint you, but I'm not able to do this. I'm afraid I'll overextend myself."*

With this statement, you express regret for disappointing the person, yet you still let them know that this is a solid *"no."* No doubt they'll understand you don't want to overextend yourself, which makes them sympathetic to the plight you're in as well.

This answer is very kind and polite. Plus, it allows them to understand where you're coming from.

4. **"No" to attend an event.** *"I had a great time before, but I won't be able to make it this time since I'm already overscheduled."*

   Sometimes you may get asked to an event you don't want to attend or that you just don't have the time for. You don't have to feel obligated to go. This statement lets the person know you've had a great time in the past, yet you're overscheduled or busy this time around.

5. **"No" to loaning money.** *"I really wish I could but I make it my practice not to loan money to friends and family."*

   Money is one thing that many people ask for from their friends and family. It's a difficult situation since you don't want to insult them or hurt their feelings. This statement is a nice way to be assertive and say *"no"* while still being kind.

   You let them know that you wish you could loan them the money, yet you go on to explain why you won't. You make it clear that this is the practice you have for everyone, and you're not just saying *"no"* to him or her personally.

For some reason, parents often feel the need to always say *"yes."* Whether it's working at a PTA function, helping in your child's classroom, or going to yet another classmate's birthday party, you may feel like these are things you *must* fit into your already busy schedule.

However, you can take control of your family's calendar – and your sanity – by saying *"no"* to some offers that come your way. Saying *"no"* in a pleasant tone of voice won't lose any friends; but it *will* allow you to set boundaries so you can enjoy life rather than racing through it.