

Don't Stop with the First No

By Genevieve Morin

From years in sales, I came to see that most people don't want negative answers from anyone. Personally, saying "no" means I can always go to the next step which I often can't do otherwise. If I don't say "no" clearly and there is no obvious yes, I'm in a never never land where the field of play for the next step is murky to others and often to me. It's amazing how saying no speeds up my thinking about the future and frees me from being stuck in the past or even in the present.

How come most people can't face no as an answer? Why is no a dead-end, a finality? Why do they program themselves to expect another no the second time around? Reasons seem to include not wanting to disappoint, being unsure of what you really want, not knowing how you will get what you want in the future, and ultimately a lack of faith in yourself. Ultimately, saying no is a declaration of faith in yourself, and your ability to cope with whatever comes next, no matter what. I personally see no as the abbreviation of New Opportunity, New Option and New Opening.

Still, I see many people stop at the first no and say, "This was not for me, something better will happen later", They give their own mind a reason to accept defeat, and maybe protecting themselves against experiencing failure.

It doesn't have to be this way. My best friend wanted to buy a certain business. He studied the situation, did a risk assessment and a SWAT analysis and then made an offer. It was refused. People said that he had been too aggressive and that he had lost a great opportunity. And, one year later, he made another offer to buy that same business with his price and his terms lower than the previous one. It too it was refused. But, another year later, he made the same offer and it was accepted.

One moment is not connected to the next except in the mind. People in general and salespeople in particular bring the "no" forward in time. They take the "no" out of the past and put it into the future in their mind, and this determines their behavior next time they see the customer. Anticipating a "no" the next time they don't ask the question or make the statement, and never find out what possibly true then. Being able to say no is a way of being, an attitude in which "no" is a fact not an emotional phenomenon. The fact happens, and you just move on. When no is an emotional phenomenon, you are stuck with it. My friend didn't conform to the usual barriers and won the day.

Pessimists might say, "Wow, he had to wait three years to get what he wanted and I'm not that patient!" Well three years to make a dream come true; think twice. Frank A Clark said: If you can find a path with no obstacles, it probably doesn't lead anywhere.

Many, opportunities are smaller than buying a business or life may seem designed by environment (home, work, children) and not the other way around.

Saying "no" can mean an opportunity is as big as you want it to be with you in the driver's seat. You let things happen to you because you let them happen. What if my friend had decided to let go after the first time and take no as the final answer? That story will never be told because he lives to design his own path. He is writing his own story, not an actor in someone else's play, a victim of circumstance.