

“No” is Merely a Two-letter Word

By Elinor Stutz

The first step as a business person, learn to welcome the word ‘no’. Generally speaking, the word merely represents a request for more information. Your prospect may have misunderstood what you said, uses a particular word in a different manner, or truly wants more information. It is also quite possible your prospect had a bad experience with what you suggested to them.



Your second step is to begin viewing ‘no’ as your marketing research. You must begin questioning as to why you are being told ‘no’. This is the only way in which you can rectify a problem or learn from the experience.

My recommendations are to ask, “Why” in order to find the true meaning of the objection. Determine if it means “not now” or “not ever”. Did you leave some needed information out of the discussion without realizing it? What was your prospect’s previous experience?

Through the years I have observed other business people. They struggle with what to do, and in some cases, fear overtakes them. So they either begin to argue with their prospect or they walk away in anger. In either case, they cut off all hope for future business.

The good news is once you begin to view “no” as your marketing research, dependent upon where the objection lies in the sales cycle, you may be able to turn the “no” into a “yes.”

If the “no” comes at the beginning or middle of the sales cycle, get to the root cause of the problem. Perhaps it’s only a misunderstanding and can easily be corrected. You may have not fully answered a question or you caught the Prospect at a bad time.

At the very worst case, if the “no” is delivered at the end of a final presentation, ask what it is your competitor offered that was more favorable. If the Prospect is honest, you will learn something new about your competitor and how they positioned against you. The knowledge will make you stronger the next time around. You will be able to anticipate what may occur and work to minimize any concern in that area. The good news is, by embracing the meaning of “no,” the objection will arise less frequently.

In the course of conversation, when you see an eyebrow raised, arms suddenly cross or the body lean back, you must stop immediately to ask if there is a question. This is the only way to truly turn the objection around to a positive response and move the sales cycle forward.

By flushing out the objection as soon as it occurs, you stand a far better chance to proceed. If you were to ignore any sign of disbelief or disinterest, and wait until

the very end to ask for the business, you will be denied every time. Prospects appreciate your willingness to work with them by responding to their needs. It goes toward developing your credibility.

In the case where you inherit an angry client, the best thing you can do is to offer to listen to what happened previously. Let them know you are concerned and will do everything in your power to help resolve the situation. Most often, angry clients have become so because no one took the time to listen to them or to resolve issues at hand. Once you demonstrate that you are there to do just that, you will earn their respect and loyalty.

Whenever you hear the word, 'no', go back to basics and ask 'why'. Get the history of events leading up to their negative feelings and determine if you can fill in the gaps for a more positive outcome. Make certain you understand the question at hand and answer succinctly. Use some of your prospect's vocabulary to demonstrate you were listening and make them feel you are on the same page.

Once you have completed your answer, ask if there are further questions. Develop an honest and sincere dialogue with your prospects. *In most instances you will be able to turn 'no' into 'yes' and greatly improve your sales success.*

Additional Ideas to Build Business:

- Work on providing the best possible service
- Make it easy to do business with you
- Always ask questions
- Follow up at every stage to check level of customer satisfaction
- Work for a win-win not just commission

Your center of influence will grow... and Your Business Will Prosper.

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