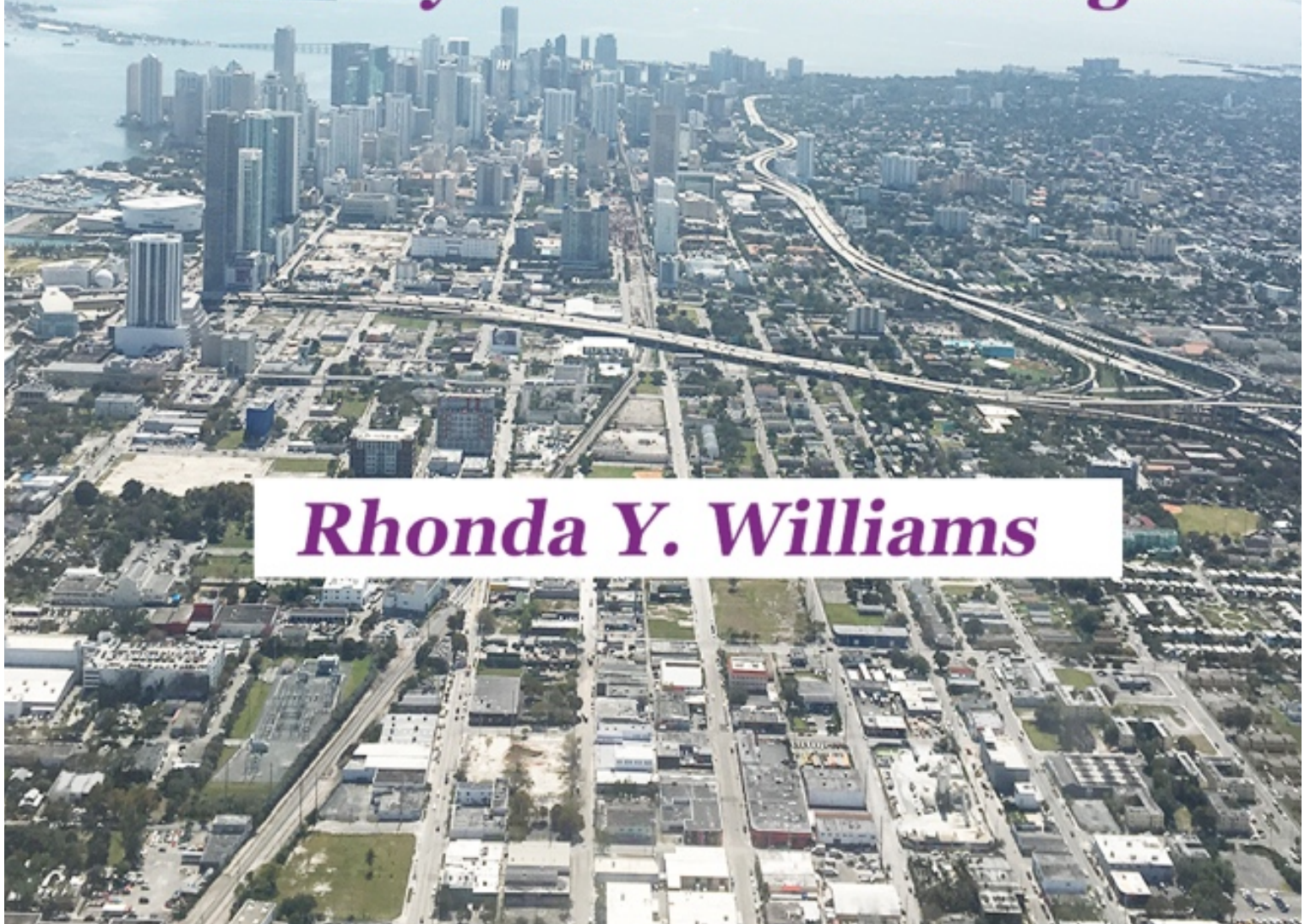


Dream Life University™

The Art of Saying No 2-Part Series

*Why and how you should say
NO to live your most amazing life!*

Rhonda Y. Williams



Life Management Series

The Art of Saying No
Part I – 10 Reasons to Say No

Life Management Series The Art of Saying No

PART I - 10 Reasons to Say NO

NO is the two letter word no one wants to hear. In fact, we dread saying it almost as much as people dislike hearing it. I'd like to challenge you to shift your paradigm when it comes to the word no. Shed some of those old misconceptions to begin living your most amazing life!

Let's look at 10 reasons why you may want to say no and the benefits of doing so.

- 1. Increased Efficiency** – when there are too many things on your “to do” list, human nature is to try to focus on all of them. In turn, you lose precious efficiency when your mind feels the need to jump from task to task, even while you are trying to focus on just one.
- 2. Effective Delegation** – sometimes our failure to say no is a direct result of our lack of delegation. Every task does not need to be performed by you so look for opportunities to share and in turn help others grow.
- 3. Improved Work Product** – saying no is another way to manage your workload. You can deliver better results when you have the adequate time to devote to each of the tasks on your plate.
- 4. Effective Management of Expectations** – saying no can help you management expectations. Not only for yourself but it also manages the expectations of those around you. They will become comfortable with you stating what you can and cannot do and develop an appreciation for it.

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PART I - 10 Reasons to Say NO (cont'd)

- 5. Honest Communication** – Have you ever been asked to complete a task and your mind screams NO, but strangely what comes out of your mouth is “sure”. Now you are scrambling to rearrange other priorities to accommodate this request. A better option might be to just say no or not now. In Part II of this series, we’ll discuss the “how” to say no.
- 6. Realistic Objectives** – This one is about always putting yourself in a position to be successful. If you start each day with a set of objectives you probably cannot achieve, you risk ending the day feeling dissatisfied and unfulfilled.
- 7. Fairness** – Have you ever had someone promise you something and then fail to deliver? Possibly placing you in a very difficult position of scrambling at the last minute to recover? That’s just not fair. Do yourself and those you interact with a big favor by being fair to them as well as yourself.
- 8. Increased Confidence** – How good would it make you feel to know that if and when the need arises, you can communicate that you cannot do something in a manner that is effective and well-received? Let’s be honest, no one wants to anger people. Mastering the art of saying no can increase your chances to be successful and help your confidence soar!
- 9. Improved Work Life Balance** – One of the hardest things to do is to create a comfortable shared existence for life and work. Often referred to as work life balance. I often coach my clients on taking control of the little things in order to make a big impact on your lifestyle. Saying no can be a tremendous step in the right direction.

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PART I - 10 Reasons to Say NO (cont'd)

10. Decreased Stress – How important is it to you to reduce the physical and mental effects of stress in your life? And, what if there was a simple way to start reducing that stress? Without making life altering changes, learning to say no can be one of the very effective tools in your toolbox when it comes to managing your time and your stress.

These reasons are just the tip of the iceberg and can be incredibly empowering when you look at the benefits to you and those around you. In fact, sometimes, saying no is exactly what the doctor ordered. It is very difficult for you to lead your most amazing life until you learn to master the art of saying no.

Now that we have discussed **10 Reasons to Say No**, I invite you to take a look at Part II of this series. **How to Say No** will help you craft the most effective response when you need to say no.

All the best,
Rhonda

About the Author

Rhonda Williams is an entrepreneur, executive life strategist, author and speaker. As a former healthcare executive, Rhonda developed a passion for helping others reach their true potential. She's used her own life as a petri dish to learn to manage her life in pursuit of her dreams... often turning lemons into lemonade. As The Dream Life Coach, Rhonda helps others do the same.

Have a comment, question or would you like to information regarding coaching or speaking engagements? I'd love to hear your thought after you put this lesson into action!

Email: info@dream-life-enterprises.com

Life Management Series

The Art of Saying No
Part II – How to Say No

Life Management Series The Art of Saying No

Part II - 4 Key Elements to Effectively Say No

In Part I – The ART of Saying No, we discussed 10 Reasons to Say No. In exploring these reasons, it becomes quite clear that saying no can contribute to positive outcomes in many situations. Today in Part II, I want to focus on delivery because it is the primary determinant of effectiveness. That doesn't mean that you will always have a positive outcome. What it does mean is you have done your part to manage the things within your control. The 4 key elements we will discuss today will help you effectively deliver your message.

As a matter of awareness, we know most people view no as a negative. With this understanding in mind, we need to deliver our message in a manner that removes some of the sting that inherently comes when you say no.

Before we get into the details of your delivery, I want to first encourage you to carefully consider the situation and the messenger. For instance, who is making the request and when. At the risk of stating the obvious, I can't just say no to my manager whenever I want and think I'm going to keep a job. So, having said that, let's move on to the details of crafting your message.

Here are the 4 key elements to effectively saying no:

1. **The Request** - Start by restating the request
2. **The Message** - State your message and avoid use of the word "no" if possible
3. **The Explanation** - Explain why you cannot meet the request or when a more appropriate time might be
4. **The Close** - End on a soft note or with an apology

Let's examine each of these key elements.

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Part II - 4 Key Elements to Effectively Say No (cont'd)

The Request

When delivering a message that includes turning down a request, you want to begin by restating the original request. Restating the original request ensures that the person knows there was no disconnect and you understood what was being asked. In addition, if there was a misunderstanding this provides an opening to clarify what was intended.

The Message

When you deliver this type of message, it is important to understand that the receiver of the message will probably not be happy about it. Even so, it is your responsibility to deliver it in a way that does not cause more dissatisfaction than necessary.

This is where we often miss the mark.

We come to our decision and then deliver it with an “it is what it is” attitude. This only serves to inflame the situation that may already be a little uncomfortable.

One way to tone it down is to avoid use of the word “no”, which can have that stinging effect. Instead craft your message using statements like, “unfortunately, I’m not able to meet that deadline”. Or, “I can’t work late today”. Using these types of statements make it a bit more palatable although your message is still the same.

The Explanation

Why do you need to provide an explanation? The answer is, you may not. But, the fact is that when and if you do, it goes a long way towards ensuring you are continually building bridges and not burning them. Whether you are talking with your spouse, children or a co-worker, the constant is people feel better when they

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Part II - 4 Key Elements to Effectively Say No (cont'd)

understand what is behind your message. Ultimately everyone owns their own emotional response and that is something you cannot control. So while I am in no way indicating that your job is to make everyone feel better, I am saying that it is your responsibility to make sure they do not feel worse after your interaction because of your delivery.

As adults, we often feel we don't need to provide an explanation and in some cases that is true. I would ask that you carefully assess each situation and determine when explaining your position contributes to your ultimate goal of keeping lines of communication open and building honest and open relationships.

The Close

You've delivered your message and now you need to provide a bit to closure. Personally, I like to convey one of the following as I bring the response to a close: 1) I'm not angry 2) no today doesn't mean no forever 3) an apology 4) I'm a team player or 5) I'm always open to further conversation.

If you close your conversation this way, it will go a very long way in maintaining that connection. For instance, I might say, "gee, I'm sorry I can't help you out this time". That sends a very different message than if I'd just said, "no, I can't do it".

Putting It All Together

Let's look at an example of what this might look like in a real conversation. In this example, a co-worker as asked me at the last minute to complete section A of a proposal that is due on Friday. This gives me 2 days to complete this portion.

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Part II - 4 Key Elements to Effectively Say No (cont'd)

My response might look like this:

Jane, I know you would like me to complete section A and have to ready by Friday morning. Unfortunately, I cannot commit to that at this time. Last week I was assigned some additional work and my plate is pretty full. I'm sorry I can't help you out this time. I do hope you understand.

Can you see how this message might be received very differently than if we just deliver a "no"?

I hope this has been helpful as you think about how to manage your life and work priorities and gives you confidence that you can artfully deliver a message of "No". Doing so takes you one step closer to living your most amazing life!

All the best,

Rhonda

About the Author

Rhonda Williams is an entrepreneur, executive life strategist, author and speaker. As a former healthcare executive, Rhonda developed a passion for helping others reach their true potential. She's used her own life as a petri dish to learn to manage her life in pursuit of her dreams... often turning lemons into lemonade. As The Dream Life Coach, Rhonda helps others do the same.

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