

Loving the sound of 'no'

Earn the admiration and respect of your customers and prospects by learning this simple concept.

Here's something to ponder. I think a successful sales career is based less on your ability to get people to say yes and more on your ability to get them to tell you no, faster and more often. Unless you want to be the kind of manipulative salesperson that everyone loves to hate, you can't really get someone else to say yes to you.

If, however, you want to be the kind of salesperson that's admired and respected by your customers and prospects, you have to become a master of getting people to say no, as quickly and efficiently as possible. Why? Because in most cases, the alternative to saying no is not saying yes—it's one of the 1,001 variations of *maybe* that prospects learn in sales-avoidance class.

We all know that getting to yes is the ultimate goal in a sales situation. Yes is what pays the bills and makes all the no's worthwhile. Yes is every salesperson's favorite word, no doubt about it.

It's just that hearing it is such an infrequent occurrence compared to the number of times we hear no that we sometimes fall into the trap of believing that *maybe* is a good substitute.

"Maybe" is not your friend. In fact *maybe* left unchecked will kill *your* sales career. Maybe will keep you guessing indefinitely and chasing opportunities that have the same likelihood of converting to sales as my chances of winning on American Idol.

For example, you're making a sales presentation and the prospect says, "Thanks for your time...we need to think it over." Off you go, thinking you've actually got a shot. A few days later, you call to follow up and the prospect says they are still thinking things over.

You call back after a few more days, and you get voicemail. You leave a message, it never gets returned, and you just keep up the illusion, all the while telling your manager that you've got a really good feeling about this one. Wouldn't it be better if the prospect had just said no?

A simple "no" would have freed you up to go after all the other thousands of prospects out there who actually want to buy your product from you. It would have prevented all that frustrating wheel-spinning and made you a better salesperson because it would have caused you to analyze what you could have done differently to improve your chances at getting a yes next time out.

If you want to become a better salesperson, stop obsessing about yes and never, under any circumstances, settle for *maybe*. Instead, become a master of getting to no, better, faster and more frequently. The more times you hear no, the

closer you are to hearing yes.

In the next column, we'll further discuss becoming a master of getting to no. In the meantime, log on to <http://jerrykennedy.com/category/getting-to-no/> for more tips on learning to love the sound of no!



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