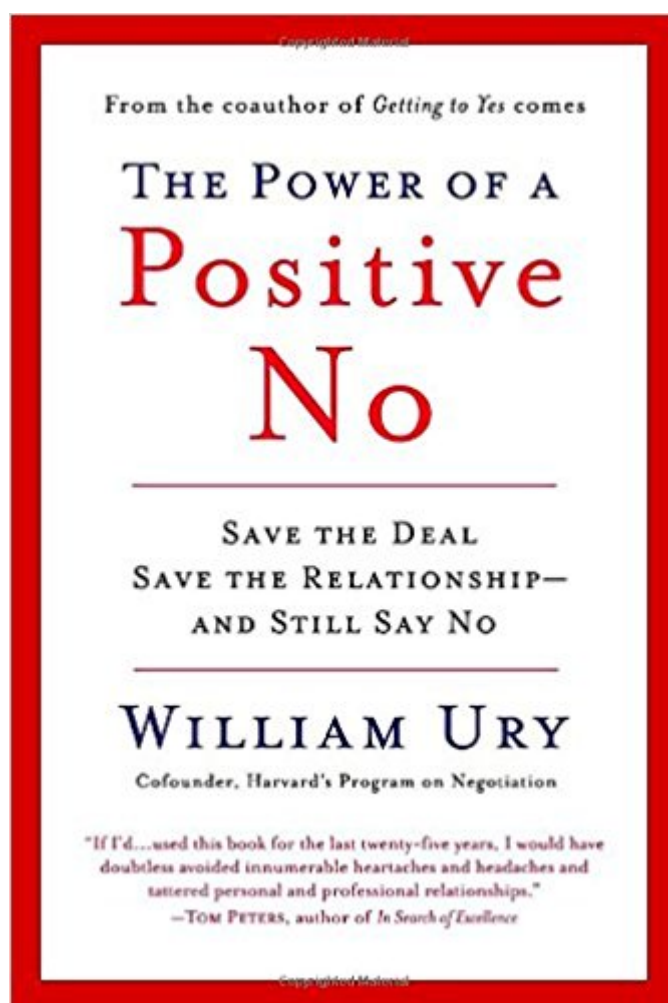


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# The Power Of A Positive No: Save The Deal Save The Relationship And Still Say No



## Synopsis

No is perhaps the most important and certainly the most powerful word in the language. Every day we find ourselves in situations where we need to say No— to people at work, at home, and in our communities— because No is the word we must use to protect ourselves and to stand up for everything and everyone that matters to us. But as we all know, the wrong No can also destroy what we most value by alienating and angering people. That’s why saying No the right way is crucial. The secret to saying No without destroying relationships lies in the art of the Positive No, a proven technique that anyone can learn. This indispensable book gives you a simple three-step method for saying a Positive No. It will show you how to assert and defend your key interests; how to make your No firm and strong; how to resist the other side’s aggression and manipulation; and how to do all this while still getting to Yes. In the end, the Positive No will help you get not just to any Yes but to the right Yes, the one that truly serves your interests. Based on William Ury’s celebrated Harvard University course for managers and professionals, *The Power of a Positive No* offers concrete advice and practical examples for saying No in virtually any situation. Whether you need to say No to your customer or your coworker, your employee or your CEO, your child or your spouse, you will find in this book the secret to saying No clearly, respectfully, and effectively. In today’s world of high stress and limitless choices, the pressure to give in and say Yes grows greater every day, producing overload and overwork, expanding e-mail and eroding ethics. Never has No been more needed. A Positive No has the power to profoundly transform our lives by enabling us to say Yes to what counts— our own needs, values, and priorities. Understood this way, No is the new Yes. And the Positive No may be the most valuable life skill you’ll ever learn! From the Hardcover edition.

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## Customer Reviews

Twenty-five years after the publication of the bestselling *Getting to Yes*, Ury addresses the other side of the coin, but his version of "No" is not a simple rejection. "A Positive No begins with Yes and ends with Yes," he says, because it defines the nay-sayer's self-interests and paves the way for a continued relationship. Ury delineates this "Yes! No. Yes?" pattern recursively, so that each step is itself another three-part process. In addition to drawing on his own experiences as a negotiator for conflicts in countries like Chechnya and Venezuela, and the historical examples of activists like Rosa Parks, Nelson Mandela and Mahatma Gandhi, he shows how his principles can be used in the home and the workplace. He even throws in a few literary precedents, citing Melville's *Bartleby the Scrivener*, whose repetition of the phrase "I would prefer not to" is cited as a "simple and admirable" method of polite refusal. Some of Ury's advice, like describing how another's actions make you feel rather than attacking the action, may strike the more cynical minded as touchy-feely, but his reminders to consider the other person's perspective while asserting your own position create a clear, unambiguous path to win-win situations. (Mar. 6) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Preloaded Digital Audio Player edition.

"William Ury brings a marvelous blend of experience, insight, integrity and warmth to his work. In this wonderful book he teaches us how to say No with grace and effect so that we might create even better Yes". Jim Collins, author *Good to Great* "Almost any brief comment on *The Power of a Positive No* would be trite. Suffice it to say that if I'd had and used this book for the last 25 years, I would have doubtless avoided innumerable heartaches and headaches and tattered personal and professional relationships. 'Original' is an embarrassingly overused word on book dust jackets, but, simply, this all-important book stands alone on a subject that underpins, like no other, individual and organizational effectiveness." Tom Peters, author of *In search of Excellence* "The world's biggest shared secret is that most of us say yes when we really want to say no, in both our professional and private lives. Bill Ury generously provides us with insights and techniques to turn this malady into win-win solutions. This is a wise and powerful book." John Naisbitt, author of *Megatrends* "No matter whether you are negotiating

compensation with the toughest CFO or a curfew for your teenager, this book teaches us a critical and counterintuitive lesson. "You can say no and still be nice." Simple, straightforward and easy to read, *The Power of a Positive No* is a YES on our reading list. —Linda Kaplan Thaler and Robin Koval, authors of *The Power of Nice: How to Conquer the Business World with Kindness* From the Hardcover edition.

Filled with pertinent and poignant case studies and reasoned arguments, *The Power of a Positive No* (a prequel to *Getting to Yes* and *Getting Past No*) shows how rushing to decisions, giving in to negative emotions (fear, guilt and anger), failing to articulate one's own underlying interests and being ill-prepared can often torpedo relationships in business and life while failing to advance your own interests and goals. Three simple and reasonable assumptions must be made before entering any negotiation. 1. The other party exists. 2. The other party's interests exist. 3. The other party's power exists. Negative emotions often lead to accommodating the other party (guilt), avoiding conflict altogether (fear) or attacking the opposition (guilt). Needless to say, these tactics do not foster respect and are the result of emotional short circuits run amok. One of the most important components of the solution is to recognise your own emotions and seeing them as events that are happening to you, rather than as something you are. "I am angry" is far less productive than "I feel anger." That is not to say that emotions are something that must be suppressed. That is often counterproductive and tends to result in emotional outbursts at a later date. Emotions can often signal problems or opportunities that can be uncovered and dealt with. Detaching oneself from feelings of intense anger, fear, guilt, anxiety or apprehension can be very effective when preparing for a negotiation. Calming oneself, going to the balcony and refusing to give in to one's own temper or indignation will often foster respect from the other party. Three essential points must be uncovered before initiating any negotiation. What do you want to create that is of value to you? How will you protect it once you have it? What can you change that doesn't work? Ury uses the example of Southwest Airlines, a superlative leader in the US air transport industry. By selecting profit, reliable flights and fast turnover, it did away with reserved seats and meals on its flights. This proved to be a very successful strategy. Taking customers out to extravagant meals before delivering bad news can also help dampen the disappointment that is almost certain to result. Again, the key is to build, nurture and sustain healthy, productive and win-win relationships for all parties. Ury's most insightful (and counter-intuitive) insight concerns how to help your adversary cross your golden bridge to agreement. It is a tactic that few will devise on their own. When dealing with the other side's representative, always keep in mind the fact that they are accountable to their constituents,

and if they cannot convince them that their agreement was the right thing to do under the circumstances, they will likely be reticent and reject any deals you may offer. Helping them see the benefits for their constituents and helping them save face (or even gain respect) among their stakeholders will make agreement more likely (to say nothing of the benefits for both relationships). In summary, begin with a firm, assertive Yes! Continue by asserting your interests and explain why you are not willing to accept unreasonable demands. Finish with a Yes?, and propose a reasonable solution that will lead to a win-win solution for all parties.

I found this book by William Ury to be as groundbreaking and revolutionary as Ury's blockbuster hit "Getting to Yes." Ury makes the critical point that is better to say no than to accept a bad deal that will inevitably lead to future conflict. The best way to say no is thoroughly explored in this book and it is worth the time to read since saying no is such a sensitive subject to most relationships. The Ury approach is to first articulate your needs, i.e. your yes, and to be able to explain how your needs are not being met by the bad deal. The next step is to say no in a way that is emphatic and to stick to your no so as not to cave to the other side's pressure. Finally, you then make a counter-proposal, i.e. your "yes," so as to preserve and continue the relationship. This "yes, no, yes" approach may sound simple but it is not. Ury's books have been referred to me by several law professors over the years as part of my legal training. I have found Ury's books eminently practical yet paradigm shifting. I heartily recommend the power of a Positive No as well as all the other Ury books on negotiation.

William Ury is the co-author of the well-known book Getting to YES. In this book he explains how he has come to realize that getting to yes is only half of the picture. Ury even says that "whether and how we say No determines the very quality of our lives." The reason is that word No is indispensable whenever you have to stand up for what really matters to you. Certain situations can create tension between an issue which is important to you and a relationship that is also important to you. This tension can make us fall into the three-A trap of Accommodation (saying yes when we mean No), Attacking (responding forcefully) and Avoiding (doing nothing at all). Ury presents the positive No as a way out. In short this means: 1. Yes! -> positively and concretely describing your core interests and values 2. No. -> explicitly link your no to this YES! 3. Yes? -> suggest another positive outcome or agreement to the other person Ury goes into much detail about how to prepare, deliver, and follow through your positive No. His style of writing is crystal clear and his examples are interesting. Some examples are probably very recognizable to many readers (like: how do you say to someone who

wants to borrow money from you when you don't want to). Other examples are much grander (how to negotiate in an inter-ethnic conflict) and also interesting. The core idea of this book is very simple and very important. I was perhaps most interested to read Chapter 2 which explain the importance of a Plan B, which is your backup for your preferred outcome. I'll end this review with a quote by the great No-sayer Mahatma Gandhi (which is mentioned on page 7): "A 'No' uttered from deepest conviction is better and greater than a 'Yes' merely uttered to please or what is worse, to avoid trouble.

I was pleasantly surprised with this (I read a lot of business books like this). I was expecting a couple of key tactical assists wrapped with dozens of slightly related stories but instead found an excellent background and foundation, and a very actionable yet deep structure. Outstanding book if you are trying to make changes in your life or ever feel like you are being run over.

No means no, enough is enough, and so on. They are clear examples of 'No' you will find on medias, at work or even in you personal life. And maybe you have realized that these Nos will not ever effective if they don't means something or there are good reasons behind of these NosIn this book you will learn what could make effective a 'No' and a procedure for saying 'No' respectfully and supported by your valuesFinally, this book has been a great chance for learning about the author and other topics like negotiations which I ever expected to learn about. I hope you enjoy as I have done.

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