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THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF "YES"

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“YES” IS THE ANSWER

“Yes is the answer and you know that for sure”

- John Lennon, *Mind Games* (1973)

A canvas hung from the ceiling of a London art gallery with a single word – YES – written so small that viewers could only see it by climbing a ladder and using a magnifying glass - captivated John Lennon of the Beatles in November 1966. The artist, Lennon’s future wife, Yoko Ono, explained that when she made the painting, she “was in a totally difficult situation in [her] life” and felt that “what I need is a Yes” because she felt “depressed” and “totally alone.”¹



(Yoko Ono, Twitter (5/10/2017 and 7/20/2017))

Lennon, too, Ono reported, had likewise been “going through some hard times . . . and feeling alone.”² Lennon described his encounter with the piece, saying that:

¹ www.madelinex.com/2016/11/07/yoko-ceiling-painting-yes/

² *Id.*

You’re on this ladder – you feel like a fool, you could fall any minute – and you look through it and it just says “YES.” Well, all the so-called avant-garde art at the time, and everything that was supposedly interesting was all negative; this smash-the-piano-with-a-hammer, break-the-sculpture, boring, negative crap. It was all anti-, anti-. Anti-art, anti-establishment. And just that “YES” made me stay in the gallery full of apples and nails, instead of just walking out saying “I’m not gonna buy any of this crap.”³



(Yoko Ono, Twitter, 5/10/2017)

Before arriving at Ono’s art exhibition that fateful night, Lennon was under the impression that the exhibition “would be of a sexual nature.”⁴ What he found, instead, were “a variety of conceptual pieces, including an apple and a bag of nails with ludicrous price tags.”⁵ Lennon thought the exhibit was a “con” until he examined the “Yes” piece.⁶ That simple word inspired and transformed Lennon. The rest, as they say, is history.

³ *Id.*

⁴ www.ultimateclassicrock.com/john-lennon-meets-yoko-ono/

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ *Id.*

“YES” IS JUST A STATE OF MIND

“If the rain comes they run and hide their heads
They might as well be dead

Rain, I don’t mind
Shine, the weather’s fine

I can show you that when it starts to rain
(when the rain comes down)
Everything’s the same
(when the rain comes down)

Can you hear me, that when it rains it shines
(when it rains and shines)
It’s just a state of mind?
(when it rains and shines)”

- *Beatles, Rain (1966)*

Dog owners can attest that a simple “yes” will cause aggressive tail wagging, while a “no” will result in cowering by their four-legged friend. Language operates on a similar level with humans. Language focuses one’s “perception, attention, and thought on specific aspects of the world,” both for better and worse.⁷

“A spoonful of tar can spoil a barrel of honey, but a spoonful of honey does nothing for a barrel of tar”

- *Old Russian saying*⁸

As a general principle, humans often dwell on negative experiences and memories more than positive ones.⁹ Why? According to experts on the issue, “[t]he brain handles positive and negative information in different hemispheres,” with negative emotions involving more thinking and, as a result, more processing by the brain.¹⁰ This behavior has been exhibited in experiments with both humans and animals and is

⁷ *How the Language We Speak Affects the Way We Think*, Psychology Today (Feb. 2, 2007), Antonio Benitez-Burraco, Ph.D.

⁸ *Why Bad is Stronger Than good (There is No Opposite of Trauma)*, A Wealth of Common Sense (May 31, 2020), Ben Carlson

⁹ *Praise is Fleeting, but Brickbats We Recall*, New York Times (Mar. 23, 2012), Alina Tugend

¹⁰ *Id.*

considered to be “a basic and wide-ranging principle of psychology.”¹¹ According to Roy Baumeister, a professor of social psychology at Florida State University, “[b]ad emotions, bad parents and bad feedback have more impact than good ones. Bad impressions and bad stereotypes are quicker to form and more resistant to disconfirmation than good ones.”¹²

Well-known comedian and late night talk show host David Letterman summed up this point, noting that “[m]aybe life is the hard way. I don’t know. When the show was great, it was never as enjoyable as the misery of the show being bad. Is that human nature?”¹³ Various studies, including those briefly summarized below, support the notion that people remember and focus on negative results and experiences more than positive ones:

1. Studies have found that people who live near others are more likely to become enemies than friends.
2. Research shows that negative stories receive more coverage than positive ones – not just in mainstream media but also in psychology journal articles.
3. According to researchers, bad reputations are easier earned than good ones.
4. Psychological studies have found that bad events have a more lasting affect than good ones.¹⁴

In the 1970s, researchers interviewed lottery winners, people paralyzed in accidents, and people who had not experienced a similar (negative or positive) life-changing event and then re-interviewed them a year later.¹⁵ On the whole, the lottery winners were no happier than the other interviewees at the end of the one-year period and, in fact, reported additional areas of unhappiness not reported by the other groups.¹⁶

Without a doubt, negativity and a “no” attitude can adversely affect one’s state of mind and outlook. Yet, as the Beatles sang, “it’s just a state of mind.” When asked about *Rain*, Paul McCartney emphasized that “[s]ongs have traditionally treated rain as a bad thing and we got on to was that it’s no bad thing. There’s no greater feeling than the rain dripping down your back.”¹⁷

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² *Id.*

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ *Id.*

¹⁵ *Id.*

¹⁶ *Id.*

¹⁷ www.beatlesbible.com/songs/rain/

“Hey, Jude, don’t make it bad
Take a sad song and make it better”

- *Beatles, Hey, Jude (1968)*

Mahatma Gandhi famously stressed that individuals should keep their thoughts positive because one’s thoughts become one’s words, one’s words become one’s behavior, one’s behavior becomes one’s habits, one’s habits become one’s values, and one’s values become one’s destiny.¹⁸ Similarly, Buddha is credited as having said that “all that we are is a result of what we have thought.”¹⁹ Like Gandhi and Buddha, the Beatles promoted the idea of turning a “no” into a “yes” in *Hey, Jude*. McCartney penned the song for Lennon’s son, Julian, in an effort to help Julian deal with his parents’ divorce.²⁰

Without a doubt, the “no” mindset is powerful poison. The word is polarizing and negative. Its use causes others to become defensive and to shut down (thereby destroying opportunities for innovation and collaboration). “No” tells someone that you do not value his or her input and opinion and that you do not trust him or her. Positive psychology, on the other hand, has been lauded as a means by which one can rewire the brain’s tendency to focus on negative results.²¹ Psychologist Martin Seligman, a proponent of positive psychology, “has described [positive psychology’s] core philosophy as a ‘build what’s strong’ approach that can augment the ‘fix what’s wrong’ approach of more traditional psychotherapy.”²² This doctrine’s foundation rests upon the concept of “yes,” focusing on the individual’s strengths, keeping track of positive events in the individual’s daily life, and expressing gratitude to others. The underlying goal is to change the individual’s focus from one of negativity to one of positivity – in other words, to change “no” to “yes” in the individual’s mindset.

Psychologist Carol Kauffman, the director of the Coaching and Positive Psychology Initiative at Harvard’s McLean Hospital, identified four techniques for integrating positivity into one’s life:

1. Reverse the focus from negative to positive – for example, take time each night to review all of the positive developments and events from the day.
2. Develop a language of strength – focus on one’s strengths, rather than one’s weaknesses, to build a more positive mindset.

¹⁸ www.goodreads.com/quotes/50584-your-beliefs-become-your-thoughts-your-thoughts-become-your-words

¹⁹ www.goodreads.com/quotes/1296640-all-that-we-are-is-the-result-of-what-we

²⁰ www.songmeaningsandfacts.com/meaning-of-heay-jude-by-the-beatles

²¹ *Positive Psychology for Lawyers – The Benefits of Positive Emotions*, North Carolina Lawyer Assistance Program, Hallie Love

²² *Positive Psychology in Practice*, Harvard Mental Health Letter (May 2008)

3. Balance the negative and the positive – if one encounters a “no,” look for an offsetting “yes” or positive event or outcome.
4. Build strategies that foster hope – for example, break down tasks into a series of smaller components that enable one to cope with the larger project.²³

A Stanford Research Institute study revealed that “success is 88 percent positive thinking, and only 12 percent education.”²⁴ That finding is astounding. According to the lead author of the study’s report, “the hippocampus, the brain area linked with memory and learning, was significantly more active [during the test] in those with a positive attitude.”²⁵ Quantifying precisely what role aptitude played in the Stanford study is probably an impossible task, but the bottom line is that it one’s state of mind plays a critical role in one’s success.

WHY IS IT SO DIFFICULT TO SAY “YES”

“Doesn’t have a point of view
Knows not where he’s going to
Isn’t he a bit like you and me?”

He’s as blind as he can be
Just sees what he wants to see
Nowhere man can you see me at all?”

- *Beatles, Nowhere Man (1965)*

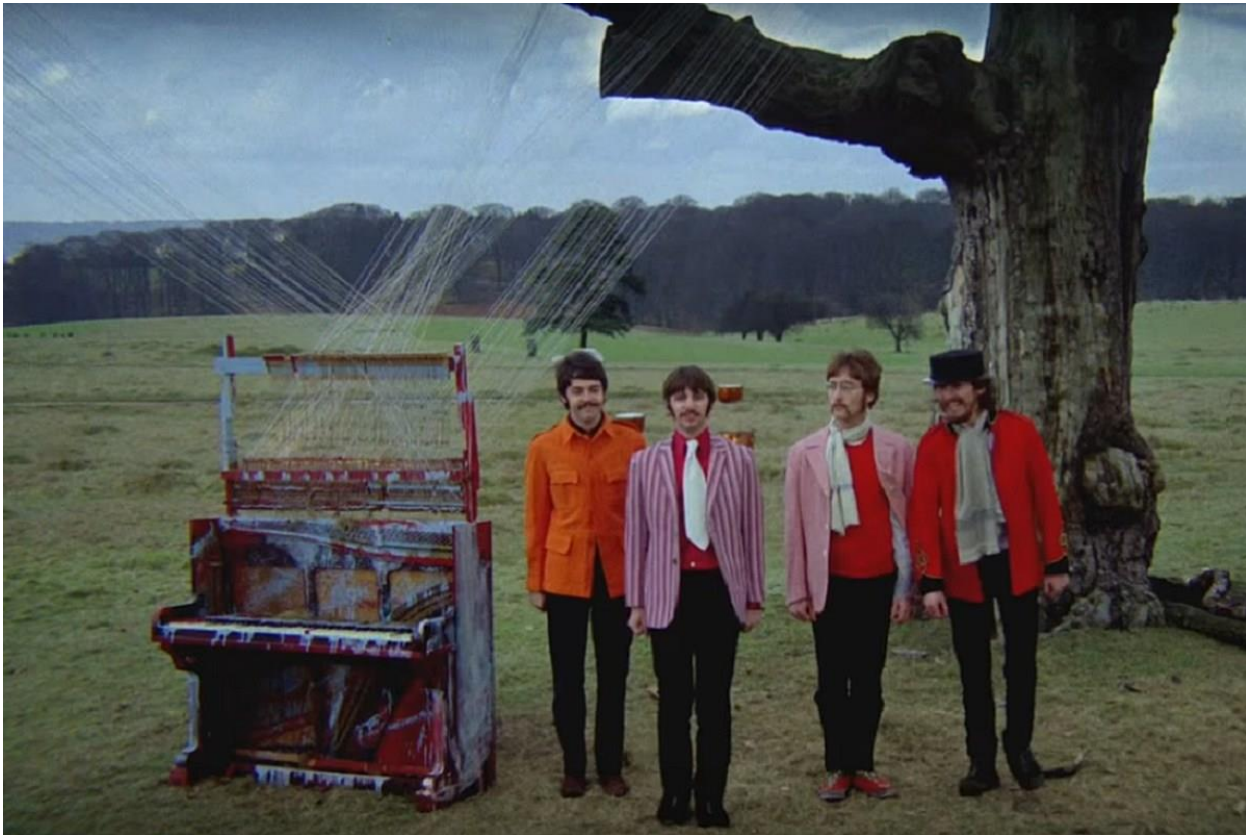
“Living is easy with eyes closed
Misunderstanding all you see”

- *Beatles, Strawberry Fields Forever (1967)*

²³ *Id.*

²⁴ *The Power of Positive Thinking*, www.self-realization.com/articles_the_power_of_positive_thinking.htm, Darshan Goswami

²⁵ *Being Positive and Your Brain*, Courageous Success (Jan. 10, 2019), Liz Villani



(www.ultimateclassicrock.com/beatles-strawberry-fields-forever-penny-lane-videos/)

Those studying these issues believe there is an evolutionary basis for the tendency to say “no.” “No” is, at its heart, a fear response. As one source put it,

From our perspective, it is evolutionarily adaptive for bad to be stronger than good. We believe that throughout our evolutionary history, organisms that were better attuned to bad things would have been more likely to survive threats and, consequently, would have increased probability of passing along their genes. As an example, consider the implications of foregoing options or ignoring certain possible outcomes. A person who ignores the possibility of a positive outcome may later experience significant regret at having missed an opportunity for pleasure or advancement, but nothing directly terrible is likely to result. In contrast, a person who ignores danger (the possibility of a bad outcome) even once may end up maimed or dead. Survival requires urgent attention to possible bad outcomes, but

it is less urgent with regard to good ones. Hence, it would be adaptive to be psychologically designed to respond to bad more strongly than good.²⁶

AN EXPERIMENT IN REJECTION

**“We’re playing those mind games together
Pushing our barriers planting seeds
Playing the mind guerrilla”**

- *John Lennon, Mind Games (1973)*

**Luke Skywalker: “Is the dark side stronger?”
Yoda: “No, no, no. Quicker, easier, more seductive.”**

- *Star Wars: Episode V – The Empire Strikes Back (1980)*

Fortunately, we no longer face many of the immediate threats our ancestors faced on a daily basis and saying “yes” is a lot less likely to result in death. Jia Jiang, a self-described entrepreneur, blogger, TED speaker, and author, conducted a series of “rejection therapy” experiments, including, for example, asking a random stranger to lend him \$100, asking a Five Guys employee to give him a free “burger refill,” asking a Krispy Kreme employee to create an Olympic-rings-shaped donut, and asking a random homeowner for permission to play soccer in the homeowner’s back yard.²⁷ On many occasions, Jiang received a “no” response, but, to his surprise, he received a “yes” more often than he anticipated. From the examples mentioned above, Jiang received a “yes” to his request for the Olympic-rings-shaped donut and permission to play soccer in a stranger’s back yard.²⁸ Jiang’s take-aways from these social experiments were:

1. “The world of rejection is a place where the fears from such snubs are much more destructive than we knew,”
2. “However, with insight, rejection can be much less painful than we believed,” and

²⁶ *Why Bad is Stronger Than good (There is No Opposite of Trauma)*, A Wealth of Common Sense (May 31, 2020), Ben Carlson

²⁷ www.rejectiontherapy.com

²⁸ www.rejectiontherapy.com/100-days-of-rejection-therapy

3. “And, that people are much kinder than we ever imagined.”²⁹

Jiang’s ultimate message: don’t be afraid to ask for “yes.”

“YES” PROMOTES CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION

“Blackbird singing in the dead of night
Take these broken wings and learn to fly
All your life
You were only waiting for this moment to arise”

- *Beatles, Blackbird (1968)*

Great lawyers think on their feet. They can adapt to the situation. Great lawyers say “yes, and...”

Paul Newman’s Westport, Connecticut, office contained a sign reading “If I had a plan I would be screwed.”³⁰ Newman was a big proponent of “creative chaos,” wanting everyone involved in a project to have a voice.³¹ The art of improvisation requires the same of its participants, and the phrase “yes, and” serves as its cornerstone.³²

Joel Lee, a professor at National University of Singapore, organized a three-hour improv workshop for students in his mediation class, using three iterations in a skit centering around the planning of a birthday party.³³ Participants were told to first respond to every suggestion from one’s partner with a “no, but,” then to respond with a “yes, but,” and finally with a “yes, and.” According to Lee, “this exercise illustrated remarkably the effect of these three iterations. In real experience, all but the last iteration made the communication and planning feel choppy and blocked. The last iteration made the interaction feel smooth and synergistic.”³⁴

As a part of the process, Lee wrote, participants “must be aware” in order to make one’s partner look good.³⁵ The same is true for great lawyers – successful ones are “mindful of what is happening in the

²⁹ www.rejectiontherapy.com/about-jia

³⁰ *The Legacy of Paul Newman*, Daily News (Aug. 29, 2017)

³¹ *Id.*

³² www.mediationblog.kluwerarbitration.com/2016/03/14/improv-and-mediation/. Improv’s other two main components are making one’s partner look good and embracing failure. *Id.*

³³ *Id.*

³⁴ *Id.*

³⁵ *Id.*

moment.”³⁶ Improv also requires participants be open to failure.³⁷ As Lee explained, “[m]ost people don’t dare suggest an intervention or try something new because they are afraid of failing. If one embraces failure, then one leaves that fear behind.”³⁸

Attorneys could benefit from applying the principles of improv in their work. At its heart, improv is not just merely creating a story from scratch. Improv, instead, involves creating a story from scratch in cooperation with other performers (clients and witnesses). As all lawyers well know, the ability to adapt is essential as it is impossible to predict what might come out of a witness’ mouth under oath. Improv also requires participants to listen, rather than being hell-bent on getting a particular point across, something lawyers can struggle with at times. And, of course, keeping a “yes, and” mindset opens up the doors to creativity and opportunity.

“YES” DOES NOT ALWAYS MEAN IMMEDIATE SUCCESS

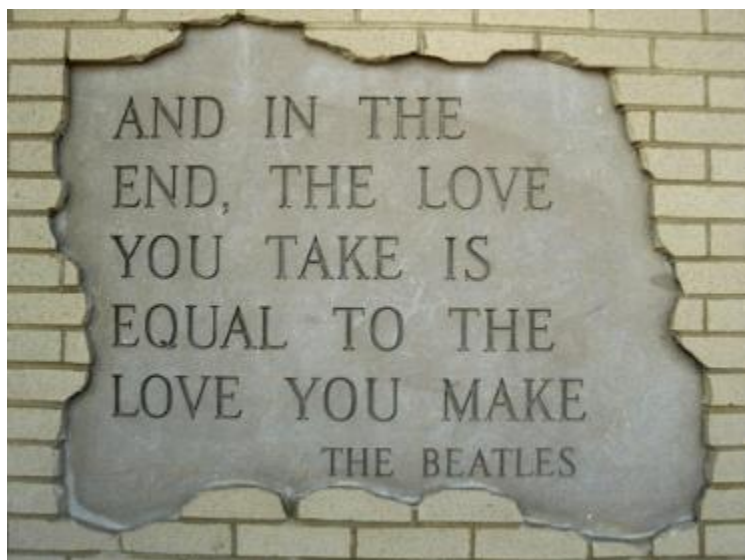
“And in the end
The love you take
Is equal to the love
You make”

- *Beatles, The End (1969)*

³⁶ *Id.*

³⁷ *Id.*

³⁸ *Id.*



(www.beatlesebooks.com/the-end/)

“Yes” and “yes, and” do not equate with immediate success, but they allow us, at a minimum, to fail and learn. “Yes” and “yes, and” let us figure out how to make it work and keep us from missing opportunities for success.

One can find countless examples of successful people who refused to live with a “no” mindset. At the age of 65, Harland Sanders, better known as Colonel Sanders, the founder of Kentucky Fried Chicken, found himself penniless after having run a small fried chicken restaurant for a number of years.³⁹ Col. Sanders hit the road, frying chicken in restaurants one at a time to try to convince the restaurant owners to buy packets of his secret herbs and spices to use in their stores.⁴⁰ One-thousand-nine (1009) restaurants told Col. Sanders “no” before he was successful a single time.⁴¹

³⁹www.yourstory.com/2012/07/the-story-of-colonel-sanders-a-man-who-started-at-65-and-failed-1009-times-before-succeeding?utm_pageloadtype=scroll

⁴⁰ *Id.*

⁴¹ *Id.*

“I have missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I have lost almost 300 games. On 26 occasions I have been entrusted to take the game winning shot, and I missed. I have failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.”

- Michael Jordan⁴²

Walt Disney, likewise, faced a “no” early in his life in the form of his former boss, a newspaper editor, telling him that he “lacked imagination and had no good ideas.”⁴³ Disney later said that “I think it’s important to have a good hard failure when you’re young. . . Because it makes you kind of aware of what can happen to you. Because of it I’ve never had any fear in my whole life when we’ve been near collapse and all of that. I’ve never been afraid.”⁴⁴

HOW ARE WE SAYING YES IN A COVID-19 WORLD?

“There’s nothing you can do that can’t be done
Nothing you can sing that can’t be sung
Nothing you can say but you can learn how to play the game
It’s easy”

- *Beatles, All You Need Is Love (1967)*

“Try to see it my way
Do I have to keep on talking til I can’t go on
While you see it your way
Run the risk of knowing that our love may soon be gone . . .
We can work it out
We can work it out”

- *Beatles, We Can Work It Out (1965)*

⁴² www.lifehack.org/articles/productivity/15-highly-successful-people-who-failed-their-way-success.html

⁴³ *Id.*

⁴⁴ *Id.*

COVID-19 has dramatically changed life over the past year. Businesses have had to adapt to survive. A culture of “yes” is now more critical than ever. But how have successful businesses implemented that culture?

For starters, many businesses have implemented work from home models for various reasons, not the least of which, of course, is COVID-19. In a recent study by Gartner, 80% of polled businesses indicated that their organizations plan to allow employees to work remotely at least part of the time after the pandemic.⁴⁵ Another 47% of businesses participating in the Gartner poll will allow employees to work remotely on a full-time basis.⁴⁶ In a survey by PwC, 78% of respondents believed that remote collaboration will remain in place long-term.⁴⁷ Businesses are responding to the demands of their employees – 65% of the respondents in a FlexJobs survey expressed a desire to work remotely full-time after the pandemic, while another 31% of participants in the survey wanted a hybrid remote work option.⁴⁸ In other words, 96% of the survey respondents wanted some form of a remote work environment.⁴⁹

The work from home movement absolutely exploded as a result of COVID-19, but a staggering 4.7 million Americans were already working remotely before the pandemic began.⁵⁰ That represents 3.4% of the entire U.S. workforce, a 1% increase from just 2015.⁵¹ After COVID-19 emerged as a serious health threat, 88% of businesses across the globe mandated or encouraged employees to work from home, with 97% of businesses canceling all work-related travel.⁵² Global Workplace Analytics estimates that at least 25 – 30% of the workforce will be working remotely from home by the end of 2021.⁵³

While it may have taken a global pandemic to drastically change the way businesses viewed the work from home model, the statistics bear out that businesses have adapted to the changing times. Although the statistics will continue to change as vaccines are developed and distributed, nearly twice as many employees were working from home as there were working at their places of business at the end of June 2020.⁵⁴ Perhaps more notably, as one author observed, “if we consider the contribution to U.S. gross domestic product based on their earnings, this enlarged group of work-from-home employees now accounts or more than two-thirds of U.S. economic activity.”⁵⁵ Absent this change in the remote work business model, “the lockdown could never have lasted. The economy would have collapsed, forcing us to return to work, reigniting infection rates.”⁵⁶

⁴⁵ www.hrdiver.com/news/gartner-over-80-of-company-leaders-plan-to-permit-remote-work-after-pande/581744/

⁴⁶ *Id.*

⁴⁷ www.flexjobs.com/blog/post/remote-work-statistics/

⁴⁸ *Id.*

⁴⁹ *Id.*

⁵⁰ *28 Need-to-Know Remote Work Statistics of 2020*, Iva Marinova, Review 42 (Nov. 21, 2020)

⁵¹ *Id.*

⁵² *Id.*

⁵³ *Id.*

⁵⁴ <https://news.stanford.edu/2020/06/09/snapshot-new-working-from-home-economy/>

⁵⁵ *Id.*

⁵⁶ *Id.*

Second, businesses are saying “yes” to diversity and inclusion now more than ever. In addition to allowing businesses to “do the right thing,” diversity and inclusion programs have been proven to improve companies’ bottom lines. Companies that are inclusive are “1.7 times more likely to be innovation leaders,” and according to a Harvard Business Review report, diverse companies are “70% more likely to capture new markets.”⁵⁷ A commitment to diversity and inclusion also allows businesses to attract and retain talented employees. A Glassdoor survey, for example, found that 67% of job applicants view a diverse workforce as important when searching for a job.⁵⁸ Studies have also shown that workers, particularly millennials, are more loyal to employers that promote diversity.⁵⁹

Nestle is one of many companies to take a proactive approach to diversity and inclusion. Based on efforts taken by the company in the last three years, Nestle has the following stats: “50 percent female senior marketing leadership and 70 percent in marketing roles at manager level and above; 41 percent of summer associates from ethnically diverse backgrounds; 87 percent of diverse employees participating in culture programs feeling more engaged as a result and; a 1:1 gender pay equity for salaried employees.”⁶⁰ Nestle has partnered with The Consortium and Prospanica to find top diverse candidates to bring onto its team.⁶¹

Nestle is, of course, just one example of a business invested in diversity and inclusion. Sodexo, too, has made a commitment to “gender balance.”⁶² 55% of Sodexo’s staff members are now female, up from only 17% in 2009, and 58% of its board members are women.⁶³ Not to be left out, Marriott International, recently named as one of the “World’s Best Multinational Workplaces” by Great Place to Work, is committed to diversity and inclusion. Female-owned businesses comprise 10% of Marriott’s supply chain, and the company committed to spending \$1 billion with diverse owned businesses by 2020.⁶⁴ LGBT inclusion is also important to Marriott, resulting in the company earning a perfect score on HRC’s 2016 Corporate Equality Index, a well-recognized benchmark for diversity and inclusion.⁶⁵

In an effort to promote a culture of diversity and inclusion, Microsoft adopted an Autism Hiring Program several years ago since it realized that the traditional interview process did “not allow people with autism to demonstrate their strengths and qualifications.”⁶⁶ Experts estimate that 1% of the world’s population has an Autism Spectrum Disorder, and 80% of those individuals are unemployed.⁶⁷ Kyle Schwaneke, who

⁵⁷ www.pledgetosayyes.com

⁵⁸ <https://careers.mondelezinternational.com/our-stories/diversity-and-inclusion>

⁵⁹ <https://smallbusiness.chron.com/advantages-diverse-workforce-18780.html>

⁶⁰ www.campaignlive.com/article/nestles-diversity-success-story-road-map-brands-agencies/1667015

⁶¹ *Id.*

⁶² www.socialtalent.com/blog/diversity-and-inclusion/9-companies-around-the-world-that-are-embracing-diversity

⁶³ *Id.*

⁶⁴ *Id.*

⁶⁵ *Id.*

⁶⁶ www.microsoft.com/en-us/diversity/inside-microsoft/cross-disability/autismhiringcorporate

⁶⁷ <https://news.microsoft.com/stories/people/kyle-schwaneke.html>

has Asperger’s syndrome, a form of autism, is one of Microsoft’s success stories.⁶⁸ Schwaneke, an Xbox software engineer, helped bring digital personal assistant Cortana to the Xbox gaming console.⁶⁹ The program appears to be paying off not only with success stories like Schwaneke’s, but also with building rapport with employees and creating a culture of loyalty and respect for the company. According to corporate leaders, “employees, managers, people with autism already working for Microsoft and parents who have children with autism” have repeatedly expressed their appreciation for the program and have joined in Microsoft’s quest to offer opportunities to “disabled” individuals.⁷⁰

These are just a few of the examples of companies that have embraced a “yes” culture.

THE ART OF SAYING “NO”

“You say yes, I say no
You say stop and I say go go go
I don’t know why you say goodbye, I say hello”

- *Beatles, Hello, Goodbye (1967)*

⁶⁸ *Id.*

⁶⁹ *Id.*

⁷⁰ *Id.*



(Beatles, *Hello, Goodbye*, Album Cover (1967))

“I’m gonna make him an offer he can’t refuse.”

- Don Vito Corleone, *The Godfather* (1972)

Being open to “yes” does not require one to actually say “yes” on every occasion. Peter Drucker had the following observation:

In a few hundred years, when the history of our time will be written from a long-term perspective, it is likely that the most important event historians will see is not technology, not the Internet, not e-commerce. It is an unprecedented change in the human condition. For the first time – literally – substantial and rapidly growing numbers of people have choices. For the first time, they will have to manage themselves. And society is totally unprepared for it.⁷¹

⁷¹ www.thriveglobal.com/stories/7-timeless-lessons-from-peter-drucker/

The art of saying “no,” as some have observed, “isn’t a new phenomenon.”⁷² Confucius, for example, observed that “[t]he man who chases two rabbits catches none.”⁷³ Saying “no” allows one to say “yes” to what is important.⁷⁴

But when is “no” the better answer? Here are some ideas of when a “no” may be more appropriate than a “yes”:

1. Avoid “yes” when you are being exploited.⁷⁵
2. Avoid “yes” while under social pressure.⁷⁶
3. Avoid “yes” to “fit in.”⁷⁷
4. Avoid “yes” when it causes your priorities to be pushed to the side.⁷⁸
5. Avoid “yes” when doing so will drain your time.⁷⁹

“The difference between successful people and really successful people is that really successful people say no to almost everything.”

- *Warren Buffett*⁸⁰

“It’s not a proxy of your seriousness that you’ve filled every minute in your schedule.”

- *Bill Gates*⁸¹

⁷² www.sloww.co/say-no-say-yes/

⁷³ *Id.*

⁷⁴ *Id.*

⁷⁵ www.lifehack.org/articles/communication/16-things-you-dont-need-say-yes-all-the-time-though-you-think-you.html

⁷⁶ *Id.*

⁷⁷ *Id.*

⁷⁸ *Id.*

⁷⁹ *Id.*

⁸⁰ www.inc.com/jeff-haden/how-successful-leaders-like-bill-gates-jason-fried-avoid-toxic-yes-mindset.html

⁸¹ *Id.*

A life of “yes” does not require one to allow oneself to be run ragged or to suffer damage to one’s healthy work-life balance. Saying “no” when one’s schedule is full, one’s priorities are long, or when requests are unreasonable will enable one to say “yes” to meaningful opportunities.