



FOR MANY OF US, the hardest assertiveness skill is the ability to say “no” when the situation requires it. We may feel threatened by a loss of respect, love or responsibility on the job when we say “no” to someone. It’s possible to say “no” with grace and tact, following these guidelines:

- Be honest and direct.
- Don’t make excuses.
- Remember that saying “no” shows self-respect.

### When It’s Especially Hard to Say “No”

Sometimes it’s harder to say “no” to certain people. Check the people you have trouble saying “no” to. Then, in the space, describe a situation where you need to say “no” and write an assertive response:

- Children \_\_\_\_\_
- Spouse \_\_\_\_\_
- A friend \_\_\_\_\_
- A parent \_\_\_\_\_
- A coworker \_\_\_\_\_
- A neighbor \_\_\_\_\_
- Your boss \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



Consider these situations:



<b>You’re invited to go to the opera. You have no plans for that evening but you can’t stand opera.</b>	<b>A coworker asks you to do his work for him.</b>	<b>You’re asked to do something you don’t feel qualified to do.</b>
<b>Dishonest Response</b>		
“I’m afraid I have other plans that night.”	“I’d like to but I don’t have time.”	“Sure. Piece of cake.”
<b>Indirect Response</b>		
“Can I let you know tomorrow?”	“Let me think about it and get back to you.”	“Why don’t you ask Jane?”
<b>Assertive Response</b>		
“Thank you for inviting me, but I really don’t care for opera.”	“I’m sorry. I won’t be able to do that for you.”	“I’m not experienced with that, but I’ll give it my best shot.”