

VIEWPOINT

Getting to 'yes' with a 'no'

BY MARY LOU DOBBS | GUEST COLUMNIST



Dobbs

There is a tale of a medieval monk who persistently spoke a phrase in the Latin Eucharist incorrectly – the correct word was *sumpsimus*; the monk's version was *mumpsimus*. According to a version of the incident told in 1517, the monk replied, "I will not change my old 'mumpsimus' for your new 'sumpsimus.' I have been saying it this way for 40 years."

As a result, the word came to be applied to someone who sticks obstinately to his or her old ways, in spite of the clearest evidence that this behavior is stodgy and antiquated. This stops businesses from achieving their full potential.

Fear, the roadblock to success

Everyone is born with two fears: the fear of loud noises and the fear of being dropped. All other fears are learned and then developed over our lifetime. Fear can be the most negative force in our lives, creating unintended consequences. It might be situational fear, such as fear of failure, or it might be emotional fear, such as fear of being judged. Of all the fears that we allow to limit success in our lives, the most powerful one is the fear of hearing "no."

The dreaded fear of 'no'

Our biggest fear when we call on a new business is hearing the dreaded word "no." By the time we've reached the age of 2, we might have heard the word several thousand times. It is usually associated with not getting what we want. Over time, this sense

of dread is hot wired to our brain as an automatic disconnect. So now your fear of rejection has escalated, and all that stands in your way of developing new business is a dedicated gatekeeper who guards the business owner. In your mind, this gatekeeper is blocking the way to your success, stomping out any chance of you making a future sale.

Be creative

In marketing, it is said that you should find out what everyone else is doing and come up with an innovative, creative idea that catches people off guard, and piques their interest in your product or ideas. Since all business owners are tuned to the radio station WIIFM (What's In It For Me), your focus and message needs to be tuned to WIIFT (What's In It For Them).

A unique creative approach

One creative idea is to have delivered to the business you want to contact a special baked cookie wrapped in cellophane and tied with a bright lime-green ribbon, which is attached to a colorful greeting card. Here is what will happen: The gatekeeper will accept the delivery, ceremonially walk the package into the president's office, sweep the mail and bills to the side and place the package on the middle of the desk. Part of a salesperson's job is to create curiosity about her/his product or services.

Power phrase to get to 'no'

A power phrase is framing a request in a way that makes it easy for others to give you permission to have what you want. This will enhance relationships and solicit buy-in to do business with you. This power phrase

can also be used to coach a difficult employee to improve behavior, or acquire a new set of skills. You move into the driver's seat and a "yes" response.

An example of a power phrase: Would you have any objection? This leads to getting to "yes" with a "no." "Bill, would you have any objection if we scheduled our next meeting now so we can move this project closer to the looming deadline?" "No, I wouldn't. What works for you?"

"Mr. Prospect, would you have any objection if I stopped by and introduced myself, and shared an idea that could possibly save your company money, taxes or employee turnover?" "No, I wouldn't mind meeting you and hearing your idea."

"Now that we have reviewed the contract and answered all your questions, would you have any objections if I ordered an inspection report? Made you an offer to join our company in writing?" "No!"

You might say this power phrase is not for you, but remember: *Mumpsimus* feels like the sticky feeling-of-being-stuck in an obstinate, antiquated behavior. When we are told we need to change our behavior, we think of an 800-pound gorilla clinging to our back. On the other hand, when we set an intention to implement a new set of skills, we start to move in the direction of financial flow.

This is an excerpt from Albuquerque businesswoman/author Mary Lou Dobbs' new book, "Repotting Yourself, Financial-Emotional-Spiritual Flow." Meet her at a May 7 book signing event at Sandia BMW Motorcycles, which also benefits the Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation. Reach Dobbs at Executive Benefit Strategies Inc. at (505) 688-6703.