

# ADMINADVANTAGE

The Exclusive Online Magazine for Administrative Professionals

July 2014



## When Turning Down a Job Offer is the Right Thing to Do

### FEATURES:

Developing Success Strategies to Boost Your Career  
5 Powerful Strategies For Building Self-Esteem  
Say Yes to NO

A publication of  
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# ADMINADVANTAGE

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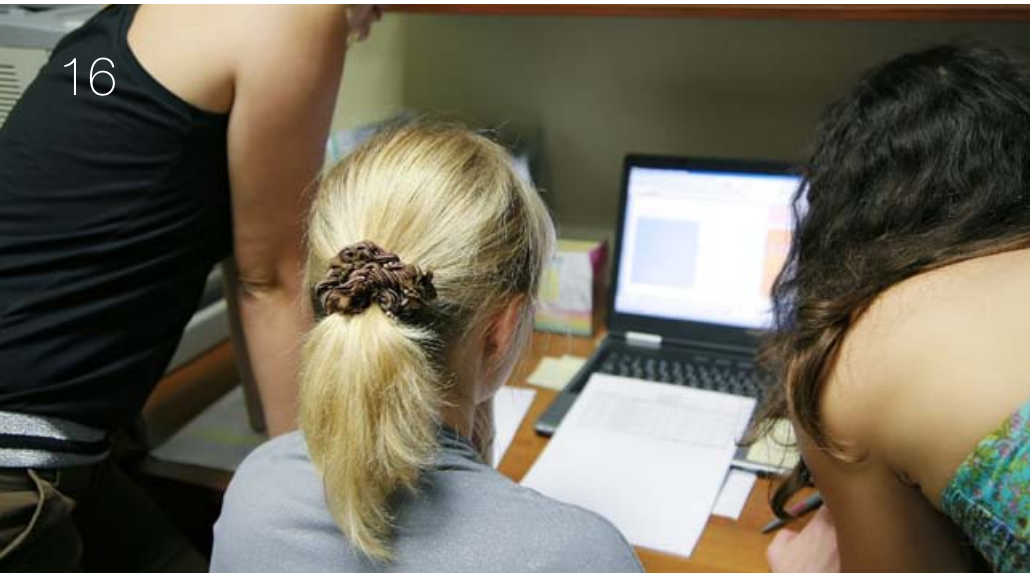
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**WORKSMART**

# Choose a Fun Team Building Activity

by Doug Stanheart

Let's say you are a manager or executive, and you want to reward your team with a fun activity to build teamwork, or perhaps you are an administrative assistant and a supervisor has asked you come up with a few team building event ideas. Where do you start? Most people go to Google and do a search, and get everything under the sun as options. So how do you narrow down the choices to something that will work for your group? ►►

## **DETERMINE THE PURPOSE OF YOUR ACTIVITY ▼**

First, let's cover what "team building" is. Unfortunately, the term team building can mean just about anything. It is kind of like "leadership" or "customer service" in that each of these terms is extremely general. However, if you narrow down the focus, you'll more likely find a better solution. For instance, if your leadership problem is that when your executives retire or quit, your company has a tough time developing

new executives, then your leadership solution might focus around succession planning. If you own a restaurant, and your customer service problem is that customers are waiting too long to receive their food orders, then your customer service solution might involve faster food prep or more efficient ordering procedures. The point is that if you hire a motivational speaker to fix your leadership problem or force your restaurant staff to attend customer service workshops, the underlying problems will likely persist.

Team Building solutions can have a similar challenge. In order to find a good solution, ask yourself a few questions to determine the ultimate purpose of the activity.

- **So why do we really want to do a team building activity, anyway?**
- **Are we rewarding the staff?**
- **Are we looking for a way to add some fun to a dry agenda?**
- **Are there challenges that we need to solve? If so, what are the specific challenges?**
- **If this activity worked perfectly, what results would we expect?**
- **By asking yourself these questions, you will have a better idea of what success really looks like.**

## **ACTIVITIES FOR REWARD OR FUN** ▼

If your group already works really well as a team, and you are looking for a way to reward your staff or add some fun into the normal workday or meeting, then just about any fun activity will likely go over pretty well. For instance, many of our team building clients will often schedule their annual conventions to start the Monday after Super Bowl Sunday so that they can have a huge Super Bowl party in the hotel banquet hall for the entire group the night before. Charity events often work well in these kinds of situations as well. Organizers will often insert a bike team building event into an annual convention just to add some fun to the agenda and give back to the community in the process.

## **WHAT IF THERE IS A REAL TEAM CHALLENGE, THOUGH?** ▼

What happens if your group is involved in a challenge, though? If this is the case, you'll want to put a lot more thought into your solution, because if you choose the wrong program, it can backfire on you. For instance, when two companies merge, two cultures are being forced together and conflict is likely to erupt. So, just throwing together a fun company outing probably won't have a lot of positive benefits (and might have a lot of negatives). Instead, start at the top. Work with your executives first so that everyone is on the same page as to where the new culture is being developed. Then, identify team workshops, activities, and training that will help strengthen those aspects of the culture.

For example, a few years ago, a family-owned furniture company that had been in business over 30 years with two stores began to expand and grow very quickly. In the last three years, they have added an additional six stores, so the company owner, for the first time, has created a corporate support team for the stores. In the past, the few store managers were captain of their ships and pretty autonomous. Today, though, there is an entire level of new executives and support staff between the owner and the store managers. Conflicts began to develop almost immediately, so the human resource department hired us to come in and lead a



# WORKSMART

fun charity bike build with the group. Instead, we showed them that if they really want to fix this challenge, the first step is to get the store managers to see that the corporate support team is there to “support” them. We organized a series of workshops to help the support staff improve communication skills and people skills. Once the culture of the organization begins to shift, then, the fun shared-experience programs work much better.

## HOW BIG IS THE GROUP? ▼

One key aspect of determining the appropriate activity is to pick an activity that is appropriate to the size of the group. As a rule of thumb, the bigger the group, the more likely you are to want to get professional help facilitating the event. For a small team of under 25 or so people, it is much easier to both shift culture and lead a fun activity. Just taking your team bowling or out as a group for a big meal will create more of a team culture and build rapport. In fact, the high-energy shared experience team activities can actually fall flat in a small group. For example, with a charity bike build for 10 people, in order to make it team focused, you’d have to divide the group up into three, four, or five person groups. So, if each group builds one bike, the ending is anticlimactic because only two or three bikes are actually built. So a group outing is often actually less expensive and will likely get you better results.

However, as the group gets bigger, it is better

to get help. It is pretty easy to keep 20 or fewer people active and entertained for a few hours. Keeping 100 or 1000 people entertained and active is a high-level skill, though. In addition, if you are doing something for charity as a group, the more people that you have, the bigger the donation, and the bigger the “reveal” at the end when the group gets to see the donation to the charity. For instance, if you are donating food to a food bank, then tons of food boxed up is more exciting than a couple of boxes, and hundreds of underprivileged kids rushing into a banquet hall to receive a new bike is more exciting than two or three. Big events like this take lots of planning, though, because things will not always go as planned. A good event planner or team building company might be a great investment.

So if you want to build a great team, don’t just throw something together. Plan ahead and ask for help if you are new to this type of activity, and you will be more likely to have a fantastic success. 🚩

*Doug Staneart is the founder of The Leader's Institute® and specializes in team building activities for corporate clients. He is author of the books 28 Ways to Influence People and Cultivating Customers.*





# 5 Powerful Strategies For Building Self-Esteem

by Jan M. Mueller

If you're looking for greater happiness and fulfillment in life, nurturing a healthy sense of self-esteem is the best place to start. Why? Because what you think about who you are has a lot to do with being able to reach your true potential in life. ►►

Let's Begin With Your Beliefs...

## HAVE YOU EVER HEARD THE QUOTE BY WILLIAM ARTHUR WARD? ▼

If you can imagine it, you can achieve it. If you can dream it, you can become it.

Do you believe what it's trying to tell you? That whatever you want in life, you can have?

I'm not sure why it is but - for some reason - an awful lot of people think of BIG goals as something they are unable to achieve. That "I

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can't" mentality kicks in and so many people give up before they ever begin.

Does that sound familiar?

Sure, we all struggle with negative thoughts... the question is do you let the negative voice inside your head win every time? Or do you fight back by looking for the positive in everything you do? Having a strong sense of self-esteem can make it easier to overcome negativity when it strikes. And, luckily, building self-esteem doesn't have to be a Herculean task! In fact, here are some small, simple changes you can start making today to help strengthen yours:

## #1) TURN A DEAF EAR TO NEGATIVITY ▼

Unfortunately, there are a lot of negative people in this world. And, though, we know we shouldn't listen to what they have to say, it can be hard to ignore them - especially when the criticism is coming from someone close to you.

Sometimes the person advising you may even send you off in the wrong direction. Not because they're trying to be misleading but because they honestly believe they are being helpful.

Remember, you are the only one who truly understands your needs, wants and desires. When it comes down to making a move, the final call must always be yours.

## #2) ACCEPT COMPLIMENTS GRACEFULLY ▼

It's strange but most of us find it difficult to accept compliments. We feel the other person is "just saying that" or "just trying to be nice" instead of enjoying the acknowledgement we're given and simply saying thank you.

The truth is most compliments are genuine. And learning to accept compliments gracefully - with a simple thank you - is a wonderful way to build your self-esteem while helping you discover those things you're good at, at the same time.

## #3) SEEK OUT SUPPORT ▼

Sometimes we need a helping hand when it comes to boosting our feelings of self-worth. And that's perfectly okay.

In fact there are several different options you may want to consider. You could look into finding a life coach to help guide you along the path toward reaching your full potential. Or you may want to check out some of the self-improvement guides available at your local bookstore. Another possibility might be to sign up for an online course designed to help you boost your self-esteem.

Either way, if you feel you need some extra support don't hesitate to look around and choose an option that suits your needs.

Whether you choose a life coach, a guide or an online course, knowing you don't have to go it alone can make a huge difference in what you're ultimately able to achieve.

## #4) MAKE A HABIT OF USING POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS ▼

Positive affirmations are terrific self-esteem catalysts because they help reprogram your mind to accept what you already know you can achieve.

There are all kinds of resources online to help you choose affirmations to suit both your personality and your needs. Still, learning to write your own can give them extra strength. After all, nothing is more targeted and true to your deepest feelings than your own words!


## #5) BASK IN YOUR UNIQUENESS ▼

Everywhere we turn, people are comparing themselves with others. And more often than not, they are comparing themselves negatively. But you know what? Each and every one of us is unique. So, instead of looking at others to highlight your weaknesses, start focusing on and developing your strengths!

After all, nobody can be a better YOU than you can. Take that knowledge. Use it to your advantage. Now, go out there and SHINE! And The Next Step? Okay, you're started down the right path, now what do you need to do to keep building and strengthening your self-confidence?

The next step - and a big part of having healthy self-esteem - is the willingness to take action. Put a plan together and do what it takes to see it through.

If you've followed the tips I've outlined here and are feeling more confident, you need to keep moving forward. Failing to take action towards following your dreams now, would be like seeing your balloon rise only to discover it had a leak ... it wouldn't get very far at all before it started to fall again.

When life gets challenging, seek solutions. Take proactive steps. The more actively you follow your dreams, the more your self-esteem will blossom and grow! 

*Jan Marie Mueller is the founder and CEO of ThinkBrilliantly.com. As a firm believer in personal growth and development for a better, more productive life, she's passionate about helping people recognize the power they have to define and direct their lives through the choices they make. Jan is also a successful business owner, author, community volunteer and co-founder of the German non-profit Helping Hands for Children in Tanzania.*

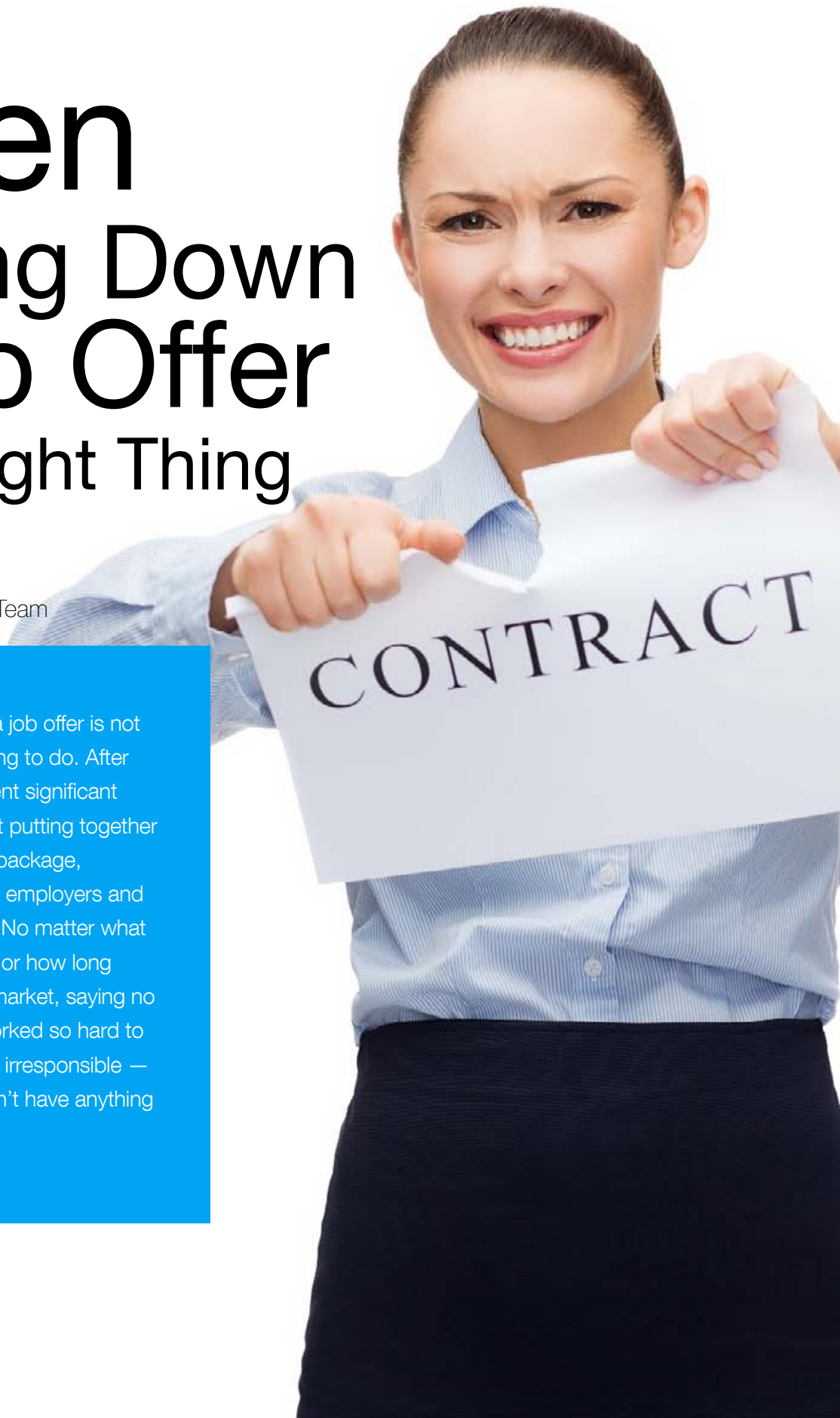
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# When Turning Down a Job Offer is the Right Thing to Do

by Robert Hosking, OfficeTeam

**T**urning down a job offer is not an intuitive thing to do. After all, you've spent significant time and effort putting together a knockout application package, researching prospective employers and prepping for interviews. No matter what your circumstances are or how long you've been in the job market, saying no to something you've worked so hard to get seems reckless and irresponsible — especially when you don't have anything else lined up. ▶▶



On the other hand, you must take the long view. If you go against your gut and accept a job that doesn't feel right, you may actually end up worse off down the road. Listen to your intuition. Having a hard time making up your mind? That right there could be a sign you should turn it down — or at least think long and hard before coming to a decision. Here are some questions to ask yourself before signing on the dotted line or walking away.

**Do I have other options?** The answer is almost always “yes.” Like a baseball player at bat, swinging at every ball that comes your way, especially the wild ones, increases your chances of striking out. Be patient and wait for your “pitch.” Unless you need to start making money straight away, don't be afraid to turn down an offer for a job you're not excited about.

**How would I feel about doing this job years from now?** Here's a thought experiment: You've accepted the job offer, and now it's two years in the future and you're still serving in that position. Does that prospect make your heart sink? If so, turning down a job offer is the better course of action. A mismatch means you'll either be looking for another job anyway, or you'll be earning a living doing something you dislike.

**Does this job fit with my career goals?** You probably have a good idea of how you want your career to proceed. (If not, you should seriously take the time to figure out your career

goals.) Would accepting this job offer get you closer to where you want to be, or would it be a long detour, dead end or even a step or two backward? Think about your resume: You want it to reflect an increasing level of responsibilities. In general, it's better to turn down a job offer that does not fit well in your career path.

**Do I like the corporate culture and the people I would be working with?** We all have certain values, work styles and outlooks. During the interview process, you got to know the company better. Does its culture mesh with your personality? Do you agree with its mission? While there's an adjustment period and learning curve in every new job, having to change who you are just to fit in means the job won't be a good fit.

Be sure to get acquainted with your would-be boss. Can you see yourself reporting to this person 250 days a year for the foreseeable future? Get a good look around the office and meet as many people as possible. Does it seem like a pleasant place to spend eight hours each day? How good is the morale? If you have any doubts about the corporate culture and your would-be coworkers, save yourself future headaches and cut your losses now.

**Is there room for learning and growth?** There are two basic ways to advance in your career: taking a job with another company or moving up within your current company. Before saying



yes (or no) to an offer, ask during the interview about opportunities for advancement and ways to upgrade your administrative skills. While it's it may not be a deal-breaker if the organization doesn't offer perks like training or tuition reimbursement, you do want to be able to stretch and grow in your new job.

**How would this job mesh with my personal life?**

You could like the job itself but hate almost everything else about it. Take a hard look at the practical aspects of taking this new position: the commute, work hours, time-off policy and work-

related travel. Do they fit with your lifestyle and family obligations, or would taking this job tip your work-life balance into the red zone? Unless you're willing to sacrifice, turn down a job offer that is clearly at odds with your personal life.

**Have I thoroughly researched this company?**

Don't base your decision solely on your experience during the interviews. As you put together your customized resume and cover letter for this job, you should have checked out at least the company's website. Now it's time to dig deeper into its reputation. What do the general press



and industry newsletters have to say about the organization? Do the headlines make you want to sign on right away or run for the hills? Check on LinkedIn and with your in-person network to see whether anyone has worked for the company. Then make discrete inquiries about turnover, job satisfaction and whether that person would work there again.


**Does it pay enough?** The formal job offer should have laid out in clear terms the salary and benefits. Do they meet your expectations? Do you even know what they should be? To find out what you're worth, check out the OfficeTeam 2014 Salary Guide (<http://www.roberthalf.com/officeteam/administrative-salary-center>).

For a more customized salary range based on geography and job title, plug your specifics into the Salary Calculator (<http://www.roberthalf.com/officeteam/salary-calculator>). If the salary is on the low end, don't be afraid to negotiate. If the company can't get close to your number or is unable to compensate you in other ways, accepting less than what you're worth could be a bad career move — not to mention a hardship on your wallet.

### **How to Turn Down a Job Offer**

If you've decided to decline, do so professionally and promptly. Saying you'll get back to the hiring manager within 24 hours but not doing so is bad business etiquette. It's best to turn down a job offer by phone. Start

by thanking the hiring manager for extending you the position, and perhaps mention a few things you really like about the company. Then courteously but firmly say that you will not be accepting the offer. If asked why, name one or two reasons — and be diplomatic about it. No need to give graphic details about all the negatives of the offer or workplace.

The bottom line: Turning down a job offer is something to consider if it's not a good match. Otherwise, you risk cheating the employer out of an enthusiastic and dedicated worker, and yourself out of career satisfaction. 

*Robert Hosking is executive director of OfficeTeam, the nation's leading staffing service specializing in the temporary placement of highly skilled office and administrative support professionals.*

*OfficeTeam has more than 300 locations worldwide and offers online job search services at [www.officeteam.com](http://www.officeteam.com).*

*For more career advice, connect with us on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Google+ and the OfficeTeam blog.*

CAREER

# Developing Success Strategies to Boost Your Career

by Dr. Bruce A. Johnson



**T**here are a lot of articles written about success and with so many you would think by now that all of the secrets to attaining it would be known. But it actually indicates something else - there isn't one method that can be applied to everyone. As a career coach I do not claim to offer new secrets; however, what I can teach you are strategies for you to develop that are personal to your career and allow you to create goals. Finding any degree of success begins with a self-awareness of who you are and the purpose that you want to establish for your career. From that point you are able to utilize these strategies or tools that are provided and it will help you create a proactive state of mind that provides better control of your career outcomes. ▶▶

## DOES EVERYONE WANT SUCCESS? ▼

As a career coach I have found that a majority of people either want to experience some form of success or they want to become successful. When asked for a specific meaning people often refer to something tangible, such as a particular level of wealth, a certain amount of material possessions, or something related to



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their appearance. The problem with trying to attain those specific indicators is that it can cause frustration if they are not met or accomplished. This can even cause long-term anxiety and lowered self-esteem if it is something they are always trying to pursue and never believe it has been fully met. For those people who become successful they may find that it is not a constant state and if so, the cycle of frustration continues. And there is another type of client who views success from the perspective of having a stable job and a steady income. For anyone who is developing their career, they generally seek to become successful in some manner.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT OF YOUR CAREER ▼

Before you can develop success strategies you need to assess your career from the perspective of what it means to you so that you can develop a personalized approach. Start with the topic of motivation and consider what drives you, and then decide what you hope to reach for or accomplish with your career. For yourself, consider who you want to become or the person you will be as you progress through jobs and your career. You may also want to consider what you are willing to settle for in your career and the trade-offs you will be willing to make as circumstances change. For example, if you get married and decide to start a family will you have to make concessions in your career? These questions may seem difficult, and they certainly are, and the point is for you to develop a clear picture of your career so that you can

establish direction and goals. This is not to suggest that you should develop long-range and definitive plans. However, you are going to evolve throughout your career - especially as you mature - and the overall purpose is to have you develop a greater sense of who you are, what it is you value, and how you are going to develop a career-minded focus.

## DEFINING YOUR CAREER PURPOSE ▼

Developing a greater sense of self, as it relates to your career, will help you define one of the most important qualities that guides your career and it is the purpose you have established. There are other ways to describe your purpose and includes a calling, personal mission statement, or something you are passionate about and love doing. A purpose gives meaning to your career goals and it can influence your definition of success. For example, you may decide that if you can do the work that you love you will be willing to make concessions along the way.

During the early developmental years of your career this may seem difficult to understand, especially if you are just starting out and it seems your current job is enjoyable. It will likely take time, practice, trial and error, and more than one job to understand your purpose. This also relates to success you have achieved. As an example, if you have experienced success early on in your career it may establish a future expectation; however, that may not be your definitive purpose. For many people, they



experience success later in life and that is due to coming into a full realization of who they are and the type of work they want to do.

## DEVELOPING SUCCESS STRATEGIES ▾

### #1. Establish Direction

Always have a plan for your career. You know right now whether or not you enjoy your present job. But what will your career look like five years from now? What are your short-term and long-range plans? What is Plan B, if Plan A doesn't align with your interest or what you aspire to become? This step is about learning to become informed and proactive.

### #2. Believe in Yourself

It is helpful to view your career from a perspective of hope. This may seem that it borders on positive affirmations but there is more to it. Of course feeling hopeful is always easier when your career is going well. But this step is about having self-confidence in yourself, along with your skills and talents, so that you can be looking for and find new opportunities.

### #3. Make Success Personal

Another strategy is to relate your definition of success to what you are in control of now, rather than what someone else may have, so

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that you can prevent creating a cycle of despair. If you are developing your career, you are confident in yourself and have a strong sense of self, you can attain the goals you have set for yourself. This makes success personal to you.


## #4. Learn to Adapt

What can cause barriers in your career progress includes unproductive habits, an unwillingness to learn, and a resistance to change. Every job helps you make decisions about your career and every outcome, whether positive or negative, provides you with feedback. Being adaptive allows you to self-correct along the way and stay on your path to success.

## EMBRACING A SUCCESS MINDSET ▼

For someone who has developed these success strategies, I will suggest as their career coach that they find someone to use as a role model or someone they can study - to emulate their outlook or perspective of career development. As you study this person consider how they attain success. Was it due to inherited wealth, financial savvy, business acumen, or being in the right place at the right time? Being born into wealth does not guarantee success and neither does coming into financial abundance quickly. You will find that there are a number of lottery winners who wound up broke after the money was all spent because they did not have a success mindset. But if you study someone who became successful through a well thought out plan you will discover that there is a particular

mindset they held as they developed their career. It generally includes an unwavering self-belief and a highly attuned sense of purpose, along with a determination to accomplish their goals. More than likely they pushed past challenges, learned from failures, and worked through setbacks. You will find that stories like this about successful people can also help to inspire you and shape your mindset. There is no magic formula for success. It is up to you to chart your career path and focus on goals that align with your purpose.

Decide what being successful means to you and then chart a course. The most effective strategy you can use is one that you believe in and can work towards. 

*Dr. Bruce A. Johnson has a lifelong love of helping adults learn and providing guidance with professional self-development through his work as a college professor, trainer, career coach, and mentor. Dr. J offers resources that include resume writing and a brand new career coaching program, along with a monthly newsletter and weekly career blog.*

*To learn more about these resources please visit:  
<http://www.affordablequalitywriting.com>*



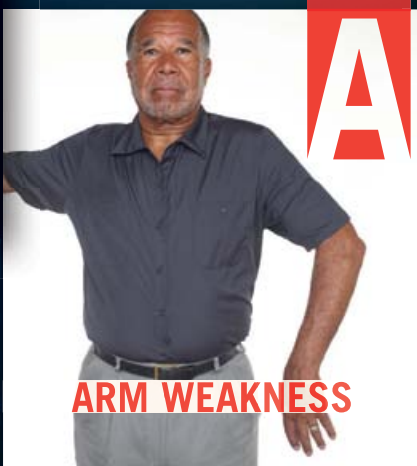


Body language can tell you all sorts of things. Like someone is having a **stroke**.



**F**

**FACE DROOPING**



**A**

**ARM WEAKNESS**



**S**

**SPEECH DIFFICULTY**



**T**

**TIME TO CALL 911**



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**TRAINING**

# Say Yes to NO

by Jaime Kulaga



No has gotten this bad reputation. “No, you can’t do that.” “No, it’s too hard.” “No, I don’t have time.” “No, I’m too old.” “No, I’ll do it some other time.” ▶▶

I am sure that you have said some of these statements before. And, yes, when it comes to stopping a life dream, skipping out on a risk, or self-sabotaging with the word “No,”... YES that IS negative. In fact, saying “No” all the time could skew people’s opinions of you, making them think you are a pessimist or have a negative attitude. I get it.

## BUT

The fact is, “No” is also the good guy. When used inappropriately, anything could be bad. Food isn’t bad, but when you eat high fat foods day in and out, yes, it’s bad. But food isn’t always bad, and neither is the word “No.” In fact, “No” can make you happy and fulfilled.

I guess then, the trick is knowing how to say “No” without feeling guilty. Realize that the word “No” demonstrates self-discipline and the ability to set boundaries with other people. I understand that sometimes saying “No” can create guilt, but the minute you feel that people are taking and taking from you, realize that they probably are. Kindness does not equal doormat. You can do things for other people, but also realize that you are not a doormat. Don’t let people take advantage of your kindness. Many of us are people pleasers, and when we say yes, we get that immediate smile from someone. We feel fulfilled momentarily because we made someone happy. The problem is we walk away from the situation with a lot more responsibility and a task to complete that we don’t have time for. The power in using the word “No” is in the payoff, not necessarily in the beginning. When you say “No” people are not always going to be happy with you, but they will respect you more than if you said “Yes” and did not follow through.

### Tips on how to say “Yes” to “No”:

#### 1. Pre-Make your Responses to People

Journal out some pre-made responses to those



# TRAINING

who consistently ask you to take on additional roles you do not want to take on, or, practice saying “No” to those you feel safe with. When you rehearse what you will say to someone, you are less likely to be blindsided and backed into a corner forced to say yes. You will also find yourself more confident in speaking up when the time comes.

## 2. Dedicate your Time


When you are spending time with people who mean the most to you, be sure to give them time that they see as valuable. Avoid using technology or doing other tasks when spending time with the spouse, children, grandchildren, family, friends, etc. This way, when you have to tell these people “No,” they will be more accepting of your response. You have provided them with valuable time and thus they are more accepting when you want to step away and do something for yourself. You will also have less guilt when saying “No” if you given quality time to loved ones when you are with them.

## 3. Rid of the Toxic People

When you rid of the toxic people in your life, you immediately minimize your potential for having to say “Yes” to things you don’t want to do. Toxic people not only want your time, but they will suck the life and energy right out of you, quickly turning you into a doormat.

## 4. Set Boundaries

If you can’t or don’t want to completely rid of

people who might deplete your energy, you can definitely set boundaries to minimize your “Yes’s” with them. Start by taking control back. When asked to do something, do it at a time that is most convenient for you or meet the person half way on their request. This will begin to put some control back into your court and demonstrate to people the boundaries you are setting with them. For example, you don’t have to answer the phone every time someone calls you. Also, reserve time with yourself each day and make this a permanent meeting that can’t be changed. People who want to take up that time period of your day, let them know that you have a meeting or a place to be during that hour. Be sure to take yourself and your happiness seriously, otherwise, don’t expect others to. 

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