



PETRA PROCESS

THE ONE WORD YOU NEED TO SAY TO MOVE
YOUR BUSINESS FORWARD THIS YEAR



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LIFE LESSONS for BUSINESS OWNERS

Think back with me for a moment. In your business, how often did you say no in the past year? I'm willing to bet it was more than the amount of times you said yes.

As work forces lean out, but the economy continues to prosper, I've found, through my experience coaching, an increased trend in businesses saying no—whether it be to additional business opportunities, additional product offerings, investing in the workforce, or simply because saying no is usually easier than saying yes (and identifying and achieving the follow-up tasks that a yes requires).

In the past year, I've noticed many leaders have stopped moving forward because things seem to be going well. I hear things like, "Everything seems okay, right? So why push?" In just the past few months alone, I have seen several business situations where companies appear to be understaffing their businesses in an effort to increase bottom line profits, or even neglecting the phones—both of which shut down new opportunities and shift gear into "idle" mode.

Times of hardship are of course a time for saying yes to new opportunities, but I would argue that the most positive times in business are also moments for leaders to give a yes, push the hardest, and gain additional steps over and above the competition. After all, it's infinitely more difficult to break ceilings or set new goals from your lowest moments.

There is, of course, a flip side to this coin, and that is saying yes far too often. If given too readily or in haste, saying yes can lead to loss of focus, wasted time, or even exhaustion.

Leaders, if you're not sure how to start saying yes in your business, commit now to making the effort and staying mindful of new opportunities by taking the following steps:

1. HAVE A PLAN, AND FOCUS ON THE HIGH PAYOFF ACTIVITIES THAT MOVE THE BUSINESS FORWARD

Just because I'm encouraging you to say yes more often in business, it doesn't mean I'm encouraging you to do it blindly. An important first step is to have a plan in place that identifies many potential opportunities or activities that have a high return on investment. Once secured, sit down with your entire team to evaluate these opportunities, encourage everyone to keep their minds open and be willing to say yes, even if some ideas seem out of the box or a little risky.

2. MANAGE YOUR TIME BETTER SO THAT YOU FREE UP TIME TO SAY YES

As a leader, you probably realize that poor time management can cause you to stress out and feel overwhelmed. What you may not realize is that moments of stress or disorganization can cause you to unnecessarily shut down when hearing about new opportunities. To free up your brain to new opportunities, first free up your time.

3. LEARN TO SAY NO TO THINGS THAT WASTE TIME OR DON'T ADD VALUE

Just as it's important to be open to a yes, it's important to know when saying no is really powerful and crucial. You should be able to identify things that waste time or lack value for your business. Once identified, don't be afraid to shut those things down.

4. HAVE A PEER NETWORK FOR BOUNCING IDEAS

Keep this in mind: Many of the biggest breakthroughs in business come as a result of going for something to which others have said no. Sometimes these opportunities or challenges will present themselves to you, and it won't be clear how to answer. Maybe an opportunity has a bit of a bad reputation or it's outside your scope of work or area of expertise—either way, these opportunities shouldn't be shut down just because you're not as up to speed as you could be. Go to your peer network for advice on whether you should or should not say yes. (If you don't have a peer network, get out there and start building one.)

These four steps help illustrate the idea of a proper “yes strategy” in your business, which can reflect a positive mindset and move you and your business forward. The act may feel a bit uncomfortable and leave you feeling overcommitted at first, but in the long run you will expand your capabilities to grow yourself and your business to take on more, which can lead to additional success.

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THE PETRA EXPERIENCE

The Petra Experience is like a Mental Marathon of focused effort to create a specific set of priorities and a planned process to achieve them... as a team.

Looking to change your business life - forever?

The daily grind of growing a business is tough... it doesn't have to be that way. We work from our own business experiences while focusing on your business – as coach and an accountability partner. We implement the Petra Process in a way that ensures it “sticks” then we stay engaged to keep you on your path to success and less frustration. We don't want this to be just another thing you start – then it gets ignored and finally dies... let's stop that cycle in your business. The Petra Program 'clarifies' what is most important to be done – by whom, by when – **AND** creates an accountability structure to ensure **IT GETS DONE.**

*Marshall Martin is an entrepreneur coach with business coaching firm Petra.
Visit his blog at www.petracoach.com for more business and leadership insight.*

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342 Cool Springs Blvd., Suite 203, Franklin, TN 37067 | 888.330.1020
www.petracoach.com | www.facebook.com/petracoach

