

## MANAGEMENT MAGIC: Overloaded? Who isn't?

Each of us faces some kind of overload every day. As I completed my daily 'To Do' list, I once again wondered 'How I could get it all done?' Well, I can't!

What will get done are those items that are most important to me, or interesting. Arguably some items will fall off and absurdly, I will keep putting them on until I finally accept I'm not going to complete them. But in my real world, too many items are on the list----always. I must begin to manage this overload more effectively, and I suspect, you do too.

The most effective action is to use that magical word, 'No' to requests I really don't want, or that will not help my business, or someone else can manage better. The management gurus (me included, though I hesitate to call myself a guru) tell us to prioritize our lists. A B C .... sure! And it is much easier is the list is short. But first, I have to keep unnecessary items OFF my list. And the most effective way is to 'Just Say No'.

We avoid using this powerful word. We are afraid to disappoint another, not clear on our own priorities, uncomfortable giving a direct response, don't know how to say 'No' without sounding harsh..... Of course, if you are unclear about what is important, it will be very difficult to know when to say 'No'. And if you are unclear about what's important, well that needs more discussion. Or see MindSpring articles on planning.

But for all other situations, we need to learn to say 'No' in a way that won't create additional problems. Try out these ways of saying 'No':

That won't work for me.  
I cannot commit to another project.  
My 'To do' list is overloaded. I'm afraid I will disappoint you if I take on more.  
This project is excellent, but it doesn't fit with my priorities right now.  
I'm sorry, I can't do that.

It's important to make your statement and stop. Don't fill up air space by reversing yourself. (Once again!) And it's wonderful if you can refer the requester to someone else who can do the work, but you don't need to take on that additional task unless it can be done quickly and/or you want to keep this person happy.

Just say 'No' a few times and enjoy the ease with which you can now manage your To Do list. Of course, you'll still have some overload, but the items on your list will be the ones you really want to accomplish....and you will. Because isn't that why we started our businesses....to do the work we truly enjoy?

It's Always About People....And Sometimes It's About You.