



JIM HARSHAW, JR.

Clarity of Action. Peace of Mind.

Success for the Athletic-Minded Man Podcast

Action Plan Episode #451

The Art of Saying No: Setting Boundaries for Success and Sanity

Ever felt like you're moving a hundred miles an hour but not getting anywhere?

Discover how saying "no" strategically can unlock the power of saying "yes" to what truly matters.

Join me in this ["Success for the Athletic-Minded Man" episode](#) and let's unravel the art of discernment, empowering you to navigate tricky situations with grace and confidence. As Ryan Holiday wisely tweeted, "Say no (a lot)."

Explore the nuances of saying "no" to your boss tactfully, and uncover three game-changing phrases that will revolutionize your communication style.

But remember, saying "no" isn't about being lazy— it's about aligning your actions with your vision and goals. It's not about rejecting every opportunity but about discerning the right ones to say "no" to.

Are you ready to take the first step towards mastering the art of saying "no"? Tune in now and unlock the key to saying "yes" to your success!

Top Quotes From This Episode

"Say 'no' to the wrong thing so that you can say 'yes' to the right things."

"Saying 'yes' to one thing inherently means saying 'no' to something else."

"No' doesn't mean 'no' forever. It means 'not now' or 'not yet.'"

"Make sure that if you say 'no,' it's coming from the right place."

Show Notes

This episode touches on the following key topics and ideas:

- **Why saying “no” is important (0:43):** Imagine hustling tirelessly but not making real progress. That's why saying “no” is key— it helps you prioritize the right opportunities over distractions. As Ryan Holiday aptly puts it, “say ‘no’ (a lot).”
- **The value of saying “no” (2:28):** Drawing from my athletic experiences, saying “no” often led to pursuing better opportunities. The same principle applies in life— it's about making strategic choices for long-term success.

How to Say “No”

- **Get clear on your vision and core values (4:58):** When you're clear on what matters most, saying “no” becomes easier and more meaningful. [Listen to episode 441 where I talk about crafting a crystal-clear vision for your life.](#)
- **Set clear goals (6:02):** Set clear goals and track those goals so that you know exactly what you're saying “yes” to. [In episode 443, I talked about how to set aligned goals.](#)

Strategies for Saying “No”

- **Practice empathy (14:45):** When you empathize, the words just tend to come out right. Put yourself in other people's shoes.
- **Offer an alternative (15:40):** Offer a different way that they could go about the situation. Maybe they can hire somebody, or there's a tool or a technology that might help them.
- **Don't lie (16:02):** Don't lie and make something up. It will just bring bad energy to the conversation. Be confident and courageous when saying “no.”
- **How to decline your boss (16:21):** [Harvard Business Review's](#) insights on saying “no” to your boss:
 1. Take a day to think about whether a task is going to help you or hurt you.
 2. Don't just say “no,” explain why you're saying “no.”
 3. Support your reasoning with actual facts and data.

Three Ways to Say "No"

- **No Bandwidth (18:59):** Example: "I don't have the bandwidth right now to take on additional tasks. I understand you need help, but I don't have time."
- **Trade-offs (19:18):** Example: "If I say 'yes' to this, I would have to say 'no' to something else that's equally important."
- **Request for time (19:53):** Example: "Can I get back to you on this? I need some time to consider my current commitments."

List of Resources Mentioned in the Episode

Ryan Holiday books:

["Ego Is the Enemy"](#)

["The Obstacle Is the Way: The Timeless Art of Turning Trials into Triumph"](#)

["The Daily Stoic: 366 Meditations on Wisdom, Perseverance, and the Art of Living"](#)

[7 keys to a productive life by Ryan Holiday](#)

[3 Ways to Say "No" to Your Boss](#)

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Other Episodes Referenced

[#441 \(Pt 2 of 5\) The First Step to Success: Clarifying Your Vision and Values](#)

[#443 \(Pt 3 of 5\) The Power of Aligned Goals: The Path to Purposeful Success](#)