THE FOUR TYPES OF EFFECTIVE RESPONSES TO A REQUEST

No (I Decline)
Saying no to one thing gives you the space to say yes to something else. Yet saying no can be difficult. Most of us prefer to say yes. It's common to procrastinate or avoid giving a definitive answer to a request.

Although it may be slightly uncomfortable to do so, declining a request can actually build trust in a relationship. It reinforces the fact that you are a person who doesn't commit to tasks you aren't serious about following through on.

Example: "I'm sorry. I'm not going to be able to attend that meeting. I'm already committed to finishing a report for the sales department during that time."

Yes (I Accept)
Say yes only if you truly intend to complete the task, if you are actually able to do it, and if the resources are available. Rather than just saying yes, restate the specific request in your response.

Example: "Yes, I will complete that report and send it to you by Wednesday at 5 p.m."

Promise to Promise
People often need some time to carefully consider the request (and their intentions, abilities, and resources) before making a commitment. If you can't answer yes at the time a request is made, commit to respond at a specific later time.
Example: "I'll get back to you with an answer by noon on Friday."

Counteroffer
If you don't wish to fulfill a request as proposed, but would still like to accept, make a counteroffer. This negotiation should result in a commitment that makes both sides happy.

Example: "I can't get the report to you by Wednesday, but I can commit to have it to you by the end of the day Friday. How does that sound?"

This training is heavily borrowed from the highly recommended Stagen Integral Leadership Program