

AGENT

# When to say 'no': 15 scenarios a real estate agent should refuse

'No' is a complete sentence

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## Key Takeaways

- Agents should just say "no" to reducing commission, overpriced listings, answering questions they shouldn't, badmouthing clients and unethical behavior.

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Real estate professionals often complain, "I never seem to have enough time."

Considering we haven't figured out how to add a 25th hour to the day, and that spending your week rushing around, wasting your breath, and devoting precious minutes to clients who simply aren't serious will leave you stressed and wrinkled, a reality check may be in order: Do you have a hard time uttering [the word "no"](#)? If so, seize the chance to simplify your vocabulary and, as a result, simplify your life.

Your inability to say "no" can cost you tens of thousands of dollars every year. The reason

many [real estate agents](#) struggle with this simple word is that they have a strong need to please others, even if it comes at their own personal expense.

## **‘No’ is a complete sentence**

Byron Van Arsdale, the co-owner of RealEstateCoach.com, constantly reminds me that “no” is a complete sentence. But agents get into trouble when they feel they must explain themselves.



Here’s a classic example. When a seller asks you to [reduce your commission](#), simply say, “No. Do you have any other questions?”

Please note that the moment you start justifying your response, you have shifted to playing defense rather than offense.



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If the seller persists, you can respond by saying: “If an agent can’t even negotiate a full commission on his own behalf, how effective do you think that agent would be on negotiating the highest price possible for your property?”

Again, note that there is no explanation. Also, remember to sit quietly once you respond. The first one who speaks loses.

## **Saying ‘no’ to [overpriced listings](#)**

For the next time a seller asks you to take an [overpriced listing](#) that won't sell, here's a "no" that generally stops most sellers in their tracks: "Thank you for taking the time to discuss the marketing of your property. Given the current market conditions, I simply don't believe you will be able to sell at the price you are seeking. I wish you the best in selling your home quickly and at the price you want."

Stand up, extend your hand for a handshake, and smile. The key to using this approach is that you must be friendly and have absolutely no energy on the words.

Avoid being arrogant or condescending. In many cases, the sellers will stop you from leaving. If not, you just said "no" to working three to six months without pay.

## **Say 'no' to answering questions you shouldn't answer**

Many agents are afraid to answer a client's question with, "I don't know." Instead of trying to come up with an answer that could be wrong and may create problems later, a better approach is to say, "I don't know — let me check on the answer and get back to you."

This is especially important when buyer says, "The roof looks terrible. Do you think we would have to replace it?" Or, "Is that the property line?"

Rather than justifying or explaining, ask, "Would you like the name and number of a roofer/surveyor who is qualified to give you an answer?"

## **Say 'no' to badmouthing clients**

When agents become frustrated with their clients, they often describe them as "bottom feeders" or "low-ballers." If your buyer makes an offer and the seller or [listing agent](#) asks, "Why did they write such a [low offer](#)?"

Answer by saying: "My experience has been that when a buyer makes an offer that is substantially below the asking price, about half the time we can put these together, provided that you will give me a counteroffer and let us continue the negotiation."

## **Other times to say no to clients, agents, affiliates or service providers include when:**

1. The buyers refuse to work with you exclusively.
2. Someone lies to you or asks you to do something that is [illegal or unethical](#).
3. Their primary focus is on gossiping or badmouthing others.

4. Any mortgage, title, escrow or other service provider who fails to deliver excellent customer service.

## **Also say 'no' to engaging in these behaviors:**

5. Criticizing the seller's property as a means of compensating for your clients' very low offer.
6. Trying to explain how the comparable sales support a ridiculously low price.
7. Making derogatory remarks about a client, their agent or how they responded during the [negotiation](#).
8. Eating in your car, texting and driving, smoking, overdoing caffeinated drinks or doing any other activity that does not support your physical and emotional wellbeing.
9. Volunteering for [activities that you don't have time for](#), yet think you should be doing.
10. Putting your business before your personal well-being or that of your family.
11. Doing two activities at once such as driving and conducting business on your cellphone.

## **Are you ready to exercise your 'no' muscle?**

Here's a simple way to exercise your 'no' muscle. Explain to your friends, family and colleagues that for the next week, no matter what anyone asks you, your answer will be 'no'; after that, however, you reserve the right to say yes.

Be sure each person is willing to go along with this agreement without becoming upset.

At the end of one week, you will be surprised at how much calmer and happier you feel. Best of all, you may even have some extra time to take a day off.

*Bernice Ross, CEO of [RealEstateCoach.com](http://RealEstateCoach.com), is a national speaker, author and trainer with over 1,000 published articles and two best-selling real estate books. Learn about her training programs at [www.RealEstateCoach.com/AgentTraining](http://www.RealEstateCoach.com/AgentTraining) and [www.RealEstateCoach.com/newagent](http://www.RealEstateCoach.com/newagent).*

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