

## “No” Means “Maybe” and Other Secrets To Success

by Jack Perry

You didn't make the ball team. You didn't get accepted to your favorite college. You didn't qualify for the home loan. These things do happen. Rejection is a fact of life. Successful people, however, know they need to embrace rejection instead of shy away from it.

The wealthiest and most successful people in society realize that rejection is a temporary setback, and they keep pushing forward. Other people allow rejection to overpower them and stop them in their tracks. They allow that negative feeling to take up permanent residence in their brain. But rejection doesn't deserve to have that much power over you. Rejection exists only in your mind. It gets awarded power only when you allow it to enter your psyche, control you, and devastate your life.

Successful people face rejection over and over again. Henry Ford is a perfect example. By the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, he had experienced two failing companies and lost the money of two different investment groups. But he didn't give up. He located a third group of investors who gave him \$28,000 to start a motor company. The “Model A” was born and Ford went on to make millions of dollars. Ford Motor Company became one of the most successful car manufacturers the world has ever known. Think how different Ford's life would have been if he gave up after failing with his first company.

Though rejection can feel devastating, someone saying “no” to you won't kill you. The *fear* of rejection, however, is even more dangerous than rejection itself. That fear can prevent you from taking the necessary risks that could lead you to true success. It's the number one reason people do not get more of what they want in life. They think they can escape the pain of failing if they don't even try. While that might be true, they also lose the opportunity to learn valuable lessons from their failures—lessons that can often propel them toward success.

When you decide to take risks, you accept a rejection as a possibility. What you don't have to accept is becoming discouraged and considering yourself a failure because of a rejection. You just need to change the way you think about it. To do this:

- First, **stop taking rejection personally**. It has nothing to do with you.
- Second, **understand the reasoning behind every “no.”** In this way, you're redefining rejection.
- And last, instead of allowing rejection to grind your efforts to a halt, turn it around and **use rejection as a catalyst to gain momentum toward your goals**.

You need to recognize and detour past these three rejection “potholes” to achieve that waiting success. It's right around the corner for you! Refuse to let rejection take you down. Instead, recognize it as an opportunity to gain something—a new client, a sale, or a friend. When you follow these three steps every time you experience rejection, you will be well on your way to achieving true success.

### Step One: Don't Take Rejection Personally

Stop taking “no” as a personal attack. Many people hear “no” and immediately take it to heart. They embrace it. They believe the person who said “no” has waged an all-out war on their character.

Did you know that 50% of salespeople allow rejection to stop them completely after the first “no”? Of the 50% who don’t give up, half of them cease all sales efforts after the second “no.” The fear of being rejected prevents them from ever approaching that prospect again. If you’re doing the math, you now know that 75% have given up after the second contact. They have *handed over the opportunity for a sale to their competitor* instead of considering how to approach this prospect again and again and turn the “no” into a “yes.”

Anytime you go into a situation where rejection is a possibility, remember that if someone says “no” they are not rejecting you as a person. They are simply rejecting your idea or product. When you believe you are a worthwhile person with worthwhile ideas, you will not feel personally rejected. People can reject your idea, product, or service for any number of reasons, but they cannot reject you permanently unless you choose to let them.

### **Step Two: Redefine Rejection**

The best way to change your thinking about rejection is to redefine it. Remember, rejection exists only in your mind. Rejection doesn’t mean “no.” In business, rejection is man-made; it is only temporary. It simply means “maybe.” Therefore, view rejection as a stimulus to continue toward your goal.

When a prospect says “no,” he is not *locking* a door; he’s simply not opening it. The prospect is really saying, “Tell me more. Show me. Give me more reasons to say ‘yes’.” If you throw up your hands and walk away, you’ve told your prospect she is right; your product or service isn’t worthy of her business.

The first “no” usually means that the prospect and salesperson need more information. For example:

- The prospect didn’t have enough information to say “yes.”
- The sales professional didn’t ask the right questions and doesn’t know what the prospect needs.
- The sales professional didn’t give the specific information needed to connect the value of the idea or product to the prospect.
- The real objections were never discovered and addressed positively.

When someone says “no,” you simply haven’t supplied him or her with enough information to say “yes.”

### **Step Three: Allow Every “No” to Encourage You**

Once you have changed your definition of rejection, every “no” can propel you toward a “yes” with increasing speed. Rejection will fire an ever-increasing desire to provide your prospects with all the information they need to be sold on your idea or product. Every rejection will provide the necessary momentum for you to learn and perfect your selling technique. Regroup and ask yourself what your prospect’s biggest reason for rejecting your product or idea is and plan to address those concerns the next time you speak.

### **Change Your Perspective**

Your beliefs about rejection determine your degree of success. Don’t let the fear of rejection kill your initiative. Rejection is not a personal attack. Instead of giving up, re-

frame rejection in your mind as an opportunity to regroup and try again and again. When you do, the prize, a “yes,” is just around the corner.

**About the Author:**

Jack Perry is a renowned leader, coach, and author with over 40 years of experience. “Jack, You’re Fired,” is his forthcoming book on effective sales, goals and motivation techniques. Jack climbed to the top with a District Sales Management position at IBM, then became CEO at a national financial services firm. Now he is a Sr. VP for a division of John Hancock. Jack is an expert on sales, motivation, leadership and retirement planning. For more information on his training and speaking, visit his website: [www.respectfactor.com](http://www.respectfactor.com).