

**How to Politely and Confidently
Decline What Wastes Your Time**

20 Ways to Say No to More Work



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PROFESSIONAL:

01

Thank you for thinking of me. Your idea sounds great. However, as much as I would love to be involved, I can't give your project the attention it deserves right now.



02

While I would love to be involved in your new project, this is one of those activities I must give up while trying to do _____. Thank you for understanding and helping me push through to the finish line.



03

I love helping others in my field get started. Unfortunately, I get so many requests for this that I'm no longer able to meet in person.



04

I appreciate your trust, but I am working on several other tasks with tight deadlines right now and do not have any extra time.



05

I am flattered that you would ask me to review your work. Your topic is really not my expertise, so I wouldn't feel comfortable and have to decline.



06

While I don't have time for a lunch appointment, I'd love to connect for a few minutes over the phone. I can talk tomorrow from 8-8:30am.



07

I would really like to participate in this new endeavour, but want to make sure that I accomplish all that is already expected of me. I need to take the time to review and prioritize my obligations.



08

Thank you so much for caring enough about me to want my involvement. Unfortunately, I'm not able to participate this time. But I'm certainly cheering for your continued success.



09

When I started my business, I promised myself that I wouldn't work for free unless it was a family member.



10

Now's not a good time since I'm in the middle of something. How about we grab lunch together next week?



PERSONAL:

01

While my heart wants to say yes, the reality of my limited time means I have to say no.



02

I am honored by your request but I'm in a season of refocusing my priorities and have committed not to add anything new right now.



03

After living at an unhealthy pace for too long, I'm learning to realistically assess my limitations. Though I would love to say yes, my current situation means I must say no right now.



04

I so appreciate you asking me, but I must decline this opportunity. Saying no is hard for me, but necessary at this time. Thank you for understanding.



05

I've promised my family not to add any new commitments to my schedule right now.



06

I am sorry, I just can't afford to lend any money right now.



07

Wow, I've never really considered doing that. Let me take some time to think about it, and I'll get back to you.



08

I know I'm going to disappoint you, but I've decided not to volunteer this year. Maybe you could check with _____.



09

That sounds like great fun, and I wish I could join you, but it's just not in the budget right now.



10

I really like this idea, but finding the _____ (time, energy, resources) would be my biggest challenge, so I must decline.

