Saying "No" doesn't make you an arse
7 ways to exercise your "No" muscle

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It’s hard to say “No” to the Honey-Do list
Overscheduled? Overworked? Overburdened?

• No is uncomfortable – but saying no is often the right thing to do
• Saying no doesn’t make you an arse
• No is a learned skill
I know you’re busy, but…
“This is an emergency!”
If you allow yourself to be pegged as the printer fixer, count on frequent interruptions and context switching. Don’t assume that what your colleagues are doing is more important than your work.
Major contributor leaves...
“You got this on top of your day job - right?”

BRETT RESIGNED
CAN YOU COVER HIS WORKLOAD UNTIL THE NEW HIRE STARTS?
Some things should be considered before responding quickly.

Stalling tactics get you off the hook until you are certain.
The Boss’s pet project…
“I have a great opportunity for you!”

HELP ME FINISH PROJECT SALLY
Buy some time... by hedging a “No”.

Can't do it, Sally.
Got a minute?... Cause I have this 20 min thing to chat about.
Delaying things to later in the day let’s you finish your most important work of the day.

Remember - unplanned work delays planned work. Your whole day could be consumed by 5 min interruptions if you let it.
Please maximize your time for my benefit…
Can you run my errands for me?

Sorry, but no.
In some cases, it’s best not to elaborate.

“*No*” is a complete sentence
Hey, prioritize me! …
“I’ll be in town for a week.”

I can't

I cannot

I do not currently possess the ability to can
A decision to do one thing is a decision to delay something else.
#1

Can you do me a favor? I’ll owe you one…
WIP is a leading indicator

Why Work-in-Progress Matters

- WIP is a leading indicator
- The single most important factor that affects wait time is capacity utilization
Reduce WIP: Just say No

“The difference between successful people and very successful people is that very successful people say “no” to almost everything.”

~Warren Buffett


Consider Warren’s msg - ruthlessly protect your time
“No” is an honorable response to someone asking you to do something that is not in-line with your goals.
Liberate yourself
What will you choose to *do* vs. *delay*?

More no, less WIP

*Making Work Visible* by Dominica DeGrandis