



Practice: Responding to Requests

Knowing how to skillfully respond to the requests you receive every day can make the difference between building or losing trust with your clients, colleagues, family, and friends.

Rule #1: Don't make a promise if you're not sure that you can or you want to. When you make a promise to someone, they begin to make choices based on what you've promised to them. Kept promises build trust, relationships, and self-esteem. Broken promises do the opposite. Yes, there are times when you will have to renegotiate a promise due to unforeseen circumstances, but if you're unsure, it's better to pause and promise to decide later than make a promise you can't keep.

Request: Can we have lunch together this Saturday at 12:30 p.m.?

Type of Response	Example of Response	When to Use
<i>Promise</i>	Yes, I promise to have lunch with you on Saturday at 12:30 p.m.	When you know that it's something you want to promise to do.
<i>Decline</i>	No, I can't have lunch with you.	When you know that you can't or don't want to promise to fulfill the request.
<i>Counteroffer</i>	I'd like to have lunch with you but I'm busy on Saturday. How about brunch on Sunday instead?	When you'd like to fulfill the request but you have constraints or different preferences.
<i>Promise to decide later</i>	I don't have my calendar with me right now. I'll call you tomorrow to let you know if I'm available.	When you don't know if you have the time or desire to fulfill the request. Gives you space to think about it.

