



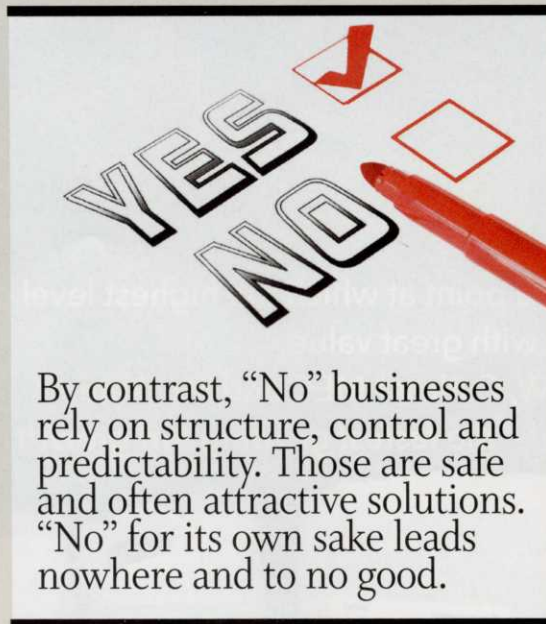
Henry DeLozier, a principal in the Global Golf Advisors consultancy. DeLozier joined Global Golf Advisors in 2008 after nine years as the vice president of golf of Pulte Homes. He is a past president of the National Golf Course Owners Association's board of directors and serves on the PGA of America's Employers Advisory Council.

ANSWER YES OR NO

Are you in the “Yes” business or the “No” business? It’s a simple choice: prosper or perish? Today’s top performers in golf and club management have made a conscious choice to be in the “Yes” business. They understand all things are possible when they find ways to say “Yes.” Throughout the facility, management and department heads realize positive and affirmative behavior begins with the simple answer to a yes-or-no question.

John Lennon sang “All you need is love,” but what he learned from Yoko, as told in “Yes! 50 Scientifically Proven Ways to Be Persuasive” by Noah J. Goldstein, Steve J. Martin and Robert B. Cialdini, is the enormous influence of the word “Yes.” The anecdote of Lennon’s embrace of a simple concept opens a guide for anyone in the service business.

As club leaders, execs and managers prepare for 2013, there’s growing optimism that the worst of the business cycle for courses and clubs is behind us. But



By contrast, “No” businesses rely on structure, control and predictability. Those are safe and often attractive solutions. “No” for its own sake leads nowhere and to no good.

the opportunities are just now clearly emerging. Those who can find affirmative solutions to discouraging problems will be the first to capitalize.

Here are several opportunities to turn a problem into an opportunity by finding a way to say “Yes.”

Are you family friendly? Clubs with happy and engaged members are finding revenue growth because members and best-customers will spend on friends and

family. Where children and family are priorities, clubs are growing in member engagement and participation.

Do you recognize the role of women? Women make the decisions most important to most clubs. But some clubs cling to outdated methods of governance that relegate women to secondary status. The clubs that say “Yes” to women are experiencing growth with new members and increased family utilization.

Do you make room for technology? Tech-friendly clubs – those that have designated media locations and proactive cell phone policies – remain relevant to members. Executives in the middle of an important project or waiting on a piece of vital information will not head for the club if they believe they are going to be disconnected for the next few hours. Nor will a mother willingly be inaccessible to a child.

Do you have a table for me? Formal dining versus casual dining is an issue at many clubs. The issue is not formal or casual; the issue is personalized need fulfillment. If Starbucks can make my exact blend, why can’t my club accommodate my needs? Members expect to be served to their unique needs, regardless how similar their needs may be to their fellow members.

When examining the power of “Yes,” there are many examples and role models from which to choose.

Marvin Waters, who is the PGA professional at the Little River Golf & Resort in the Sandhills of North Carolina, is committed to “Yes.” He says, “When my guests ask for something out of the ordinary, we find a way to deliver it for them. In tough times, everyone has to be a problem-solver.”

Jeff Magoon, the senior director of risk management for the CMAA, has introduced the CMAA initiative called Club DNA. The program is generating favorable results and saving clubs significant sums of money. Saving money and gaining relevance are the by-products of finding “Yes” answers. But the great reward is found in an environment where enthusiasm and harmony self-perpetuate.

By contrast, “No” businesses rely on structure, control and predictability. Those are safe and often attractive solutions. “No” for its own sake leads nowhere and to no good.

“Yes” businesses require vigilance and agility because these businesses are constantly opening the door to possibility, which can introduce an element of risk. That’s where professional club managers, superintendents and golf professionals must exercise their influence and find ways to say “Yes.” **GC**