

Editorial – Be agreeable

In concert with the quest to present a welcoming and inviting presence, we will occasionally encounter a *Negative Norman*. Inconceivably, that sour puss could very well be you.

When you're approached by people who say something contrary to what you want to hear, or do something that doesn't precisely meet your approval, it's often easier to point out their seemingly incorrect thinking than to try and see things from their perspective. Instead, agree with others at every opportunity. Avoid telling them they're wrong, if at all possible. For example,

- Person asks, *Should I go to Center Street to help them?*
- But rather than say, *No, I need you over at 100 North Main Street.*
- Instead say, *That's a great idea, but I could use your help more on 100 North Main Street.*
(Say **Yes** instead of **No**)

- Person asks, *Is my radio offset correct?*
- But rather than say, *No, it needs to be 600 kHz.*
- Instead say, *Try setting it to 600 kHz.*
(Turn your answer into a positive comment by avoiding a **Yes** or **No** answer altogether)

- Person asks, *Do you need any help?*
- But rather than say, *No, but thanks for asking.*
- Instead say, *Thanks for asking! I believe I've got it under control.*
(Be grateful for the help or idea **and** avoid using the word **but** to point out additional facts. People are quick to pick up on your **but** exceptions, as this next extreme and silly example illustrates)

- Person asks, *Do you like my hat?*
- But rather than say, *I do, but you have something in your teeth right here.*
- Instead say, *I do like your hat! By the way, you have something in your teeth right here.*
(In this silly example, complete the affirmation without reservation, **I do like your hat!** Then, start another, unrelated topic if you need to, **You have something in your teeth...**)

Yes language is an art form that seldom comes naturally, and often takes some practice. Family members, friends, and hams, tend to be good, well-meaning people who want to feel like their portion of the discussion or situation is valuable and worthwhile. Your acknowledgment of that contribution can mean the difference between them feeling very small and worthless, and them feeling motivated to further help and improve, and contribute even more.

When we assume that people are *intelligent*, and recognize that they *mean well* by trying to do and say good things, it becomes a little easier to see their perspective and acknowledge their contribution to the situation. This applies to emergency communication, radio talk, and everyday conversation. The more non-negative you sound, the more others are attracted to you and want to be around you and listen to you, and *the more you'll command their respect*.



Anything to add? Email editor@utaharc.org