

Whenever you approach somebody, whether it is to sell to them or to interest them in an idea, you never know what is going on in their life at that point. They may be in an extraordinarily busy phase where they simply aren't interested in taking on a single new thing or something bad may just have happened to them and you need to develop antenna.

Look at it from the perspective of how these things affect you. I remember when I had just heard that two of my employees who looked after over \$1 million in customer revenues were about to leave to go and work for a competitor. I was pretty agitated about it, and anybody unlucky enough to reach me during the 72 hour period when I was doing damage control would have got short shrift from me – however interested I might have been at another time.

The practical application of this is to listen carefully for tone. If the other person seems distracted or agitated it is often better to back off pursuing your own time-based agenda to get a decision and suggest that another time might be better. Pushing to try to get a decision in these circumstances may simply get you a “no” that wouldn't be a “no” under different circumstances.