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Saying No Politely

Medium | B1 | Intermediate | Adjective | Adverb | Comma | Conjunction | Modal verb | Negation | Phrasal verb | Phrase | Present tense | Sentence | Subjunctive mood | Verb | Verb mood | Collocations

1. Help Marcus politely decline his manager's request to organize the office talent show. Choose the correct word to complete his polite refusal.

"I'm _____ I can't take this on right now, but I'd be happy to help set up the chairs!"

Select one.

A) afraid
B) scared
C) terrified
D) fearful

2. Help the freelance designer politely say "no" to a client's somewhat unrealistic project request. Drag the correct words to complete the email.

Dear Mr. Smith,

Thank you for thinking of me. That _____ like an exciting project! I _____ I could take it on, but due to my current workload, I must respectfully _____ the offer at this time.

Wishing you the best with the launch!

Choose the correct option for each gap.

Blank 1
A) sounds
B) hears
C) listens

Blank 2
A) wish
B) hope
C) want

Blank 3
A) decline
B) deny
C) reject

3. You need to tell your manager that you cannot take on an extra project because your schedule is completely full. Select ALL the phrases that politely and professionally decline the request.

Select all that apply.

A) I'm currently at full capacity with my other projects, so I can't take this on right now.
B) Absolutely not, I'm already doing the work of three different people!
C) I wish I could help, but my schedule is fully booked for the next two weeks.
D) No way, give it to someone else who actually has free time to waste.
E) Unfortunately, I don't have the bandwidth to give this project the attention it deserves.

4. Help the freelance designer, Leo, politely decline a request to build a website for a client's pet iguana in exchange for "exposure." Select the correct option for each blank.

Hi Tom,

Thank you for the offer! It sounds like a fun project, but _____ I can't take it on right now. I really _____ focus on my paying clients this month. I wish you the best of luck with Iggy's blog!

Choose the correct option for each gap.

Blank 1

- **A)** I'm afraid
- **B)** I worry
- **C)** I apologize

Blank 2

- **A)** have to
- **B)** must to
- **C)** ought

5. Help Jamie decline her coworker's weekend karaoke invitation without hurting any feelings. Select ALL the polite and appropriate responses!

Select all that apply.

- **A)** I'd love to, but I already have plans this weekend. Have fun, though!
- **B)** Thank you so much for the invite, but I won't be able to make it this time.
- **C)** No, I absolutely hate karaoke and weekends are my time to sleep.
- **D)** I am not going to your party under any circumstances.
- **E)** Sounds like a blast, but I'm afraid I'm swamped with chores this weekend.

6. Help Sarah politely decline her adventurous friend's invitation to the city's first "Gourmet Bug Buffet." Choose the correct word to complete the sentence.

"That sounds... crunchy! I _____ love to come, but I already have dinner plans that evening."

Select one.

- **A)** will
- **B)** would
- **C)** should
- **D)** can

7. Guide the bakery owner in refusing a customer's unrealistic request for a 50% discount on a custom wedding cake. Keep the tone friendly but firm. Select ALL the appropriate responses!

Select all that apply.

- **A)** I'm afraid we can't offer a 50% discount, but I would be happy to include some complimentary cupcakes with your order!
- **B)** Are you joking? We would go out of business immediately if we did that.
- **C)** While I'd love to help out, our prices for custom cakes are fixed.
- **D)** No, that's against store policy. Read the sign on the door.
- **E)** Unfortunately, we aren't able to discount custom orders, as they require highly specialized ingredients.

8. Help the barista gently crush a customer's dream of having a whole blueberry muffin blended into their iced coffee. Choose the best word to complete the polite refusal.

"I'd really like to make that muffin-ccino for you. _____, it's against our store's health and safety rules."

Select one.

- **A)** Unfortunately
- **B)** Although
- **C)** Besides
- **D)** Therefore

9. Help the busy project manager politely decline a Friday afternoon meeting without ruining her coworker's weekend. Drag the correct words to complete the email.

Hi Tom,

Thanks for the invitation. I'd _____ to join, but _____ I'm completely booked this afternoon. I'm _____ I won't be able to make it. Let's catch up next week!

Best,
Sarah

Choose the correct option for each gap.

Blank 1

- **A)** love
- **B)** want
- **C)** enjoy

Blank 2

- **A)** unfortunately
- **B)** sadly
- **C)** unluckily

Blank 3

- **A)** afraid
- **B)** scared
- **C)** feared

10. Help the stressed office worker, Marcus, politely decline yet another committee assignment without making his boss angry. Choose the best phrase for each gap.

Hi Sarah,

Thanks for thinking of me! _____, but I'm completely swamped this week. _____, I won't be able to join the committee right now. Let's catch up next month!

Choose the correct option for each gap.

Blank 1

- **A)** I'd love to
- **B)** I'm afraid
- **C)** I wish

Blank 2

- **A)** Unfortunately
- **B)** Unluckily
- **C)** Disappointingly