

SECURITY AND DIPLOMACY

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were led by Habayit Hayehudi chairman Naftali Bennett.

In response to the question of who would be the best alternative to Netanyahu, 21 percent said that it would be Lapid, 12 percent chose Bennett, 7 percent Gideon Saar, and 6 percent named Moshe Yaalon.

Under all scenarios, the joint power of Zionist Union/YeshAtid would be between 36 and 37 seats, while the constellation of Likud, Habayit Hayehudi, and Yisrael Beytenu would range between 42 and 45. In all scenarios United Arab List would maintain 13 seats, meaning that, taking into account the likely refusal of *chareidi* parties to join a Lapid-led government, the only way for Lapid to form a government would be to include the Arab list, also a very unlikely scenario.

Israel Opens NATO Office in Tie-Strengthening Move

Israel has opened its first office in NATO headquarters, as it develops closer ties with the European defense alliance, Ynet reported last week.

A number of high-ranking NATO officials were on hand as Roni Leshno Yaar formally submitted his credentials to NATO Secretary-General Jens

Stoltenberg in Brussels. Israel has been accepted as a partner to the organization but not a member.

IDF Deputy Chief of Staff Maj. Gen. Yair Golan was also there, the highest-ranking Israeli official to meet with NATO representatives.

While in Brussels, Golan also met with the head of the Turkish Armed Forces Gen. Hulusi Akar. It was the highest-level meeting since the exchange of ambassadors between Yerushalayim and Ankara following the signing of the reconciliation agreement.

Golan also met with several Arab military leaders on the sidelines. Among Arab countries represented at the meeting were Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Bahrain, Kuwait, Morocco and Tunisia.

Navy Gets Boost to Protect Offshore Oil and Gas Zone

Israel is boosting spending on its navy to better protect offshore oil and gas deposits and secure a large maritime zone that abuts that of its neighbor and enemy, Lebanon.

The navy in 2013 asked for an increase in its budget of \$700 million to build up its systems and \$100 million annually to maintain them, though the Defense



Edi Israel/Flash90

An Israeli Navy vessel seen off the coast of Gaza.

Ministry declines to say how much it has since received.

The increase was tied to the need to defend the oil and gas development, and the current spending comes as Israel begins accepting bids from companies that want to explore 24 offshore blocks in the eastern Mediterranean that adjoin the vast Leviathan deposit.

Israel estimates 2,137 billion cubic meters and 6.6 billion barrels of oil are

waiting to be found in the blocks and hopes to choose two or three foreign consortia to drill.

Investors say the steps are reassuring.

"We have full confidence in the Israeli government's ability to protect Israel's territory and the development of its natural resources," Mathios Rigas, the chief executive of Greek energy firm Energean, told Reuters.

Women in the Workforce – *Vataas b'Chefetz Kapelah* The Quality 'No'

SHAINDY BABAD

The title of this piece is not a typo.

We are *gomlei chassadim* by birthright, and as such, it pains us when we need to refuse a request. Our "default mode" is one of giving and sharing, helping and assisting.

So why talk about saying no?

Mastering the art of offering a quality no, when you have to refuse a request, is a critical skill, and useful in every sphere of our lives.

When 'No' Is 'Maybe Later'

Often, it's the time, timing or location of the request that is the problem, not the actual request. When you sense that this is the case, use these tips to reschedule considering the request. This usually results in a better result, or at the very least preserves a great relationship when a "no" must eventually be delivered.

It's five minutes to closing. Four customers with overfilled wagons are waiting for checkout and your daughter needs a ride to her school practice in 15 minutes. One customer asks if you make calls to all other branches of the franchise for an out-of-stock item she really likes. She's a good customer and you'd like to grant her request, but now will really not work, and the last thing you want is three other customers happy to make similar requests this close to closing. **Defer the decision to a better time or place.** You can take the sting out of the "no" and keep your relationship pleasant by advising her to call you in the morning, during the slow hours, to check for her then.

A business you work for regularly doing freelance graphic work asks you for a rush job at the regular price. Its *erev chag*, and while they are really desperate you are over your head. You can get it done, but would normally charge a higher rate for such

last minute work. They know the rules. **Explore the possibility for a reciprocal favor.** You don't have to grumble or turn them away. Try to ask for a discount on their products for you in exchange for the rush job at the regular price. They may not have enough budget to cover your extra fee, and this would be an elegant way to get what you deserve. Even if it becomes impossible, by suggesting an exchange you communicate your value as well.

You've been asked to speak for a conference. The offer would give you very valuable exposure, but it would be a volunteer engagement (something you don't usually do) and is scheduled for the one Sunday you committed to spend shopping with your teens this month. Should you accept? **Ask for time to check.** Giving yourself time to reconsider the options and possibly free up time makes it more likely you will be able to accommodate the request. Even if the other party is pressured to get an answer, explaining that taking the time you need will make it more likely that you'll be able to accede to their request will give you the space you need and the goodwill and understanding of others.

Your immediate manager's boss stops by your cubicle and asks you to prepare a report for a confidential meeting. This is highly unusual and you are worried about the implications of saying either yes or no. Seems like a lose-lose situation. Graciously say you'll check to see if it is possible and then **discuss the pros and cons with a trusted confidante.** It will be easier to make a clear-headed decision as well as formulate a professional and polite response either way you decide once you do.

When No Is No

Other times, we have no choice but to

refuse the request being made. Perhaps it is too taxing and will impinge on our ability to function in critical parts of our lives, perhaps we are not at liberty to grant the request. Whatever the reason, saying no with proper etiquette protects your relationship and your reputation, and enables you to leave the door open for future interactions, despite the refusal now.

As a well-known specialty cake baker you find that you are getting frequent requests for "just one small, easy cake" from friends, neighbors and the parents of your kids' classmates. While you'd love to help everyone, you need the time to focus on paying clients. **Establish public boundaries and stick to them.** If everyone in your neighborhood knows that you offer each grade one cake for a *siyum* or *chagigah* each year for free, it will be easier to refer them to your pro bono work and turn down excessive requests during the rest of the year.

Your very best friend asks you to watch her kids while she and her husband get away for the weekend. This is your best friend – and she has certainly done the same for you many times over the years. You'd love to accommodate, but after months of hectic schedules that felt like you and your spouse were "ships passing in the night" you've committed this weekend to quality couple time to recharge. Your husband needs to be away for an extended period starting Sunday, so it isn't possible to change the timing. **Say yes to the person and no to the request.** You'll have to say no, but make sure that you tell her how much you value and appreciate her and your relationship even though you must say no this once. Remind her that you will be pleased to do it another time because she is so important to you.

You are traveling for business to New

York. Everyone in your Yerushalayim community has a friend or family member they need to send a package to. You are going straight from the airport to a series of meetings until late at night, followed by a full day conference the next, leaving straight back to the airport. Much as you'd love to accommodate, you aren't even going to have time to visit your sister! She'll meet you for coffee during one of your breaks at the conference hall. The way you say no will soften the disappointment and help your community understand why you are refusing. **By explaining your constraints and clearly stating what you can or can't do without being defensive or offensive,** you'll be pleasantly surprised at the understanding and empathy you'll get instead of disappointment and complaints.

By offering a quality no when one is called for, you empower yourself to say yes when you can while buffering any negative fallout now.



Temech is a nonprofit organization that promotes employment, entrepreneurship and professional development for women in Israel. Shaindy Babad is the CEO of Temech. Shaindy joined Temech in 2008 after working in high-tech and as a serial social entrepreneur. She also advises women, companies and organizations aiming for success.

We want to hear from you! This discourse is for and about you, me, all of us. Please send your comments and thoughts to hamodia@temech.org