

Most if not all of us have tried an idea out and heard a response along the lines

□ *“YES, I understand what you’re saying BUT here’s how your idea is wrong / broken / flawed”.*

Think of what happens next.... and then think of what your response would be if instead you heard a response along the lines

□ *“YES, I understand what you’re saying AND if we were to do X then we’d could make it even better....”*

Now let’s look in detail at what’s going on here in more detail.

In the first case, the response is negative, closed,. If the discussion continues the tone of the conversation is set on a hostile footing with the idea’s proposer likely defending the criticism while the person providing the feedback will likely be intent on defending their view of what’s wrong with the idea. The likely outcome is either the discussion stops or an argument ensues.

In the second case, the response is fundamentally different. It doesn’t criticise and even better its constructive nature attempts to make the original idea better moves the interaction from what could have been an adversarial one to collaborative one. In this scenario, the chances that the idea grows with two people helping it mature and the likelihood that the two people involved will collaborate together in the future are greatly enhanced.

It’s not hard to see that if you make a habit of saying “Yes And” instead of “Yes But” you’ll get a reputation of being someone who listens AND adds value. Further, you’ll see that consistently do this are easier to work with, get more done, and have more opportunities.