

Twenty23

11 THINGS

ELIMINATE THESE 11 PHRASES THAT
MAKE PEOPLE QUESTION YOUR
CREDIBILITY



“UM”

THIS IS THE MOST COMMON CRUTCH WORD. IT SUGGESTS THAT YOU'RE UNPREPARED, LACK CONFIDENCE, OR AT LOSS OF WHAT TO SAY NEXT.



“IN ALL HONESTY”

PEOPLE USE “IN ALL HONESTY” OR “I’M NOT GOING TO LIE TO YOU” TO CONVEY SINCERITY, ALTHOUGH IT COULD BE READ AS THE OPPOSITE.

THE AUDIENCE ALREADY KNOWS THAT YOUR INTENTION IS TO TELL THE TRUTH. REITERATING IT WILL ONLY MAKE THEM QUESTION WHY YOU’RE TRYING TO ASSURE THEM OF YOUR HONESTY.



“I THINK”

THIS PHRASE MAKES YOU SOUND TENTATIVE AND UNSURE OF WHAT YOU’RE SAYING — IT’S NOT A FACT, BUT A THOUGHT. IF YOU KNOW YOU ARE PRESENTING A WELL-RESEARCHED ARGUMENT, LEAD WITH CONFIDENCE AND CONVICTION.



“SORT OF”

“SORT OF” IS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO MEASURE. IT LEAVES YOUR LISTENER IN LIMBO BECAUSE IT WEAKENS THE IMPACT OF YOUR MESSAGE. ANOTHER PHRASE THAT HAS THE SAME EFFECT IS “KIND OF.”

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“JUST”

I UNDERSTAND THE FEAR OF BEING BOLD. BUT USING WEAK WORDS LIKE “JUST” MINIMIZES YOUR MESSAGE BY MAKING YOUR STATEMENT FEEL LESS IMPORTANT.

A stylized, handwritten signature of Luke Joyce in white ink.

LUKE JOYCE

“LIKE”

WE’VE ALL HEARD THIS SPRINKLED IN SENTENCES: “SO, LIKE, I WAS THINKING WE COULD, LIKE, START THE SESSION WITH A ROUND OF INTRODUCTIONS.”

BUT, SIMILAR TO “UM” AND “UH,” IT CAUSES YOU TO SOUND LESS PREPARED OR LESS CONFIDENT.



“I’M NO EXPERT, BUT”

WHEN YOU USE THIS PHRASE, YOU ARE
DIRECTLY UNDERMINING YOUR OWN
KNOWLEDGE. IN ATTEMPT TO SOUND
COOL AND CONFIDENT, YOU’RE
ACTUALLY DOING THE OPPOSITE.



“IN MY OPINION”

THIS IS THE MOST COMMON CRUTCH
WORD. IT SUGGESTS THAT YOU’RE
UNPREPARED, LACK CONFIDENCE, OR AT
LOSS OF WHAT TO SAY NEXT.



“I’LL TRY”

ARE YOU FULLY COMMITTED IF YOU SAY YOU’LL TRY? MAYBE. BUT THIS PHRASE MAKES YOU SOUND ONLY PARTIALLY COMMITTED, OR THAT YOU LACK THE CONFIDENCE TO COMPLETE THE TASK AT HAND.

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“I’M SORRY, BUT”

WHEN YOU OVERUSE APOLOGETIC
PHRASES, YOU CAN COME ACROSS AS
WEAK OR OVERLY SUBSERVIENT.

AND IF YOU’RE GOING TO MAKE AN
APOLOGY, DO IT WITH CONVICTION.
DON’T QUALIFY IT WITH INSINCERE
FILLER WORDS LIKE “BUT.”

“DID THAT MAKE SENSE”

I’VE SEEN PEOPLE SAY THIS AFTER THEY’VE TRIED TO EXPLAIN SOMETHING, BUT DIDN’T FEEL LIKE THEY DID A GOOD JOB. A BETTER PHRASE WOULD BE: “I HOPE THAT MADE SENSE.” GIVE PEOPLE AT LEAST 15 TO 30 SECONDS TO DIGEST, THEN ASK IF THEY HAVE QUESTIONS.

VISUALIZED FROM CNBC ARTICLE

ELIMINATE THESE 11 PHRASES THAT ‘MAKE PEOPLE QUESTION YOUR CREDIBILITY,’ SAYS PUBLIC SPEAKING EXPERT

CHRISTINA HELENA, CONTRIBUTOR

Eliminate these 11 phrases that ‘make people question your credibility,’ says public speaking expert

Even the most successful people struggle to speak clearly, says Christina Helena, a public speaking coach who has worked with leaders at Google, Facebook and LinkedIn. She shares the words and phrases to ditch if you want more respect at work.

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