

6 Words You Need to Eliminate From Your Professional Vocabulary

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By Lisa Quast
Forbes

Everyone wants to be seen as eloquent, intelligent and credible. Whether it's through emails, phone calls, meetings or interviews, we have a daily opportunity to support this goal or detract from it. To ensure you're being perceived in the way you want, begin eliminating these words from your professional vocabulary.

Honestly. Many job seekers use this word when they're hung up on how to kick off an interview answer. However, beginning a sentence this way can give hiring managers the impression that maybe your previous responses weren't so honest.

Just. This seemingly simple word is often used but rarely needed. It also packs a big punch to detract from your credibility and confidence and negates from the importance of your message. Instead of sending an email that begins with "Just wanted to check in..." say "I'm checking in on X, Y and Z." The adjustment is small, but there is a big difference in the resulting impression you leave.

Things. This is a valueless word that can be replaced with more descriptive and meaningful expressions. Instead of "How are things going with our project?" a question positioned as "Can you share an update on how our project timeline is progressing" is clearer and will likely give you the real answer you need. Another example: In an interview or cover letter, instead of saying "there are many things that make me a great candidate," say the things!

Sorry. How familiar does this sound – "Sorry, Wednesday doesn't work for me." Women are the most frequent culprits in the overuse of this word, but everyone should stop apologizing for anything they're not *really* sorry for. Offer a solution or counterpoint: "Wednesday is booked for me. Are you available Y or Z?" – and save the apologies for when you mean them.

Hopefully. In the workplace, don't hope – deliver. Instead of "Hopefully, we'll hear back about this by Monday," say "I asked for an answer by Monday morning, and if I don't hear back, I will follow up."

Your speech disfluencies. Everyone has these – it could be an um, ah, like, right or 'you know what I mean.' These are the phrases or words used to fill up dead air and end sentences, but they are also credibility killers. Further, these words are usually said involuntarily, meaning most people are unaware they're using them. For my coaching clients, I always recommend they videotape themselves at least once during an interview prep or when practicing a presentation. You'll catch your "likes" and "ums" immediately and can begin practicing speaking without them.



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