

## Communicating Verbally - "Please" and "Thank You"

As a child, you may have read, Richard Scarry's *Please and Thank You* book that describes why these three words are important in daily life. While the book was written for children, its message applies to communicating at work.

### Say "Please" and "Thank you."

"Please" and "Thank you" signal your good manners on the job. They identify you as a professional who knows how to build relationships by showing appreciation.

With "Please," a request will be viewed in a more positive way. By not being generous with "Thank you," you appear rude. You are unlikely to leave a good impression with your boss and coworkers if you avoid saying "Please" and "Thank You."

### What are other powerful words and terms?

"Sorry" or "I'm sorry" are power terms that show you are confident enough in your ability to accept accountability. "I was wrong" is similar to "I'm sorry." It's the willingness to swallow personal pride and own up to being mistaken. Failing to say "I'm sorry," leaves a perception of immaturity.

### Avoid these power words.

Negative words are powerful, too, but you do not want to be known for them. Because they imply a problem, you should avoid common negative words and phrases:

"Unfortunately" "I am unable" "We can't" "Too busy" "No" "Obstacle"

Even neutral words, not intended to be negative, cause problems when used the wrong way. For example, while "you" is an excellent word to point out another person's good points, "you" becomes a negative when it is used to imply that another person is wrong.

"You didn't tell me" "You told me to" "You don't understand" "Let me explain to you"

### Do the twist!

You can express a negative thought by making a positive twist. For instance, instead of saying "We can't do that," say "Can we try this?" Instead of a negative, "That's not a good idea," say "Let's look at our alternatives."

**Action:** Assume a coworker asks you to help him meet a deadline, and your fast response is, "Unfortunately, I can't help because I'm too busy." Turn these negative power words into positive words.

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*Note to instructors:* Verbal communication is an obvious example of an individual's overall communication ability. These ten *Job Ready Career Skills* lessons called "Presenting Yourself" teach students to communicate professionally.

### Job Ready Career Skills Presenting Yourself Lessons

Using a Pleasant Voice  
Looking Professional  
Showing a Professional Attitude  
Using Good Posture  
Presenting Yourself to Associates

Writing Documents  
Dealing with Conflict  
Giving Constructive Criticism  
Accepting Criticism  
Demonstrating Leadership



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