

Blue Language At Work

Blue language (or called "cursing a blue streak") includes: 1) cursing, 2) cussing, 3) dirty talk, 4) evil speaking, 5) obscenity, 6) swearing, and 7) vulgar language. John Cusick (agent for writers) said, "Teens love blue language. It's fun, funny, taboo, and often the way teenagers speak to one another." But Cusick continues, "That's the real problem with extreme language — it steals focus. I don't want my readers thinking about my leading character's foul mouth when they should be thinking about her broken heart."

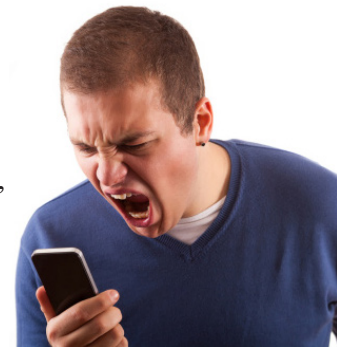
The same is true in the work world. Blue language steals the focus from you and your work skills. You do not want the manager thinking about your blue language — you want the manager thinking about the good job you are doing.



Careerfinder job website surveyed over 2,000 hiring managers and found:

- 64% of employers think less of a worker who repeatedly uses curse words
- 57% of employers said they are less likely to promote someone who swears while at work
- 81% of employers believe that use of curse words brings a worker's professionalism into question
- 71% of employers worry that a worker who uses blue language lacks self-control
- 68% of employers say workers who use blue language lack maturity (judgement/good work habits)
- 54% of employers say that blue language makes workers appear less intelligent (less smart)

As the saying goes: **You are as good as your word.** At work, blue language words may: 1) Lower your professional appearance; 2) Harm work relationships; 3) Be considered harassment; 4) Be considered safety threat (mental or physical); 5) Create a work environment of disrespect; 6) Get you fired. One employer said, "Cursing in the workplace is a one-way ticket to an exit interview. Managers worry if your behavior is going to invite lawsuits. Workers who use blue language are seen as an employer's nightmare."



Therefore, appropriate and good work world language: 1) Helps you receive raises and promotions. 2) Shows that you have grace under pressure (know how to handle yourself in stressful situations). 3) Lets you serve as a role model for new workers and coworkers. Employers reward good role models with raises and promotions! 4) Shows that you have respect for the work site, workers, and customers. 5) Shows others that you are mature and have self-control. 6) Shows that you are smart and can think of good ways to say your thoughts.

Today, many workers are on video while at work. Who are these workers? Police officers, fire fighters, bankers, customer service representatives, stock brokers, cashiers, dispatchers, and others. If these workers use blue language during a situation, the video may end up as evidence in court or a story on the news. Workers who on video must use professional language at all times! These workers must learn and use the habit of excellent communication skills.

How can you stop using blue language? Here are some ideas:

Retrain your brain. If you have nothing nice to say, close your mouth and say nothing. While your mouth is closed, **think** of an acceptable way to say what you want to say. As you practice closing your mouth while thinking, you will actively retrain your brain to act differently to situations. **With practice**, the correct words will come to your brain quickly allowing you to talk and not offend others. You will be seen as smart for having an acceptable vocabulary (words) and way of talking.



Control your temper. Often what is behind blue language is anger and an outburst of emotions. High paid workers (such as supervisors and managers) have learned to control anger and outbursts of emotions. High paid workers feel anger, but **learned by experience** that blue language does not help a situation — blue language only creates more problems for themselves and others.

Look above you. For success, think ahead to the next level of your job by acting and talking like the workers who are the level above you. If you are restaurant crew member who wants to be crew leader — dress, act, and talk like a crew leader. When you are crew leader and want to be shift supervisor — dress, act, and talk like a shift supervisor. When you are shift supervisor and want to be restaurant manager — dress, act, and talk like a manager. When you respectfully do this, others will see you as a worker who is ready to be promoted.

"Why?" Is your blue language a leftover habit from high school? Make a list of **reasons** why it is not good to use blue language. Knowledge is power. By understanding and listing reasons for not using blue language at work, you can take steps to stop using blue language.



Reward yourself for changing your ways! You may even ask your friends and family to help you remember to use acceptable language. Celebrate with a visit to a special restaurant or theater at the end of a successful "good talking" week.

QUICK CHECK:

1. a) What is blue language often called? b) Give 5 examples of what blue language includes.
2. a) What did John Cusick say about teens? b) What did Cusick say is the real problem of extreme language?
3. a) From what does blue language steal focus? b) About what do you NOT want the manager to think? b) About what do you want the manager to think?
4. What did: a) 57% of employers say? b) 68% of employers say? c) 54% of employers say?
5. a) What is the saying? b) List 3 of the 6 things blue language words may do.
6. a) What did Raz think cursing in the work place is a ticket to? b) About what do managers worry? c) What is an employer's nightmare?
7. What is "grace under pressure"?
8. List 3 of the 6 things that appropriate/good work world language will do for you.
9. a) Give 3 examples of workers who may be on video. b) What may happen if these workers use blue language during a situation? c) What habit must these workers learn/use?
10. a) If you have nothing nice to say, what should you do? b) What should you think? c) What happens with practice?
11. a) What is behind blue language? b) What have high paid workers learned by experience?
12. a) Describe what is meant by "Look above you." b) What happens when you respectfully do this?
13. a) What should you list? b) Knowledge is what? c) By understanding, what can you take?
14. a) If you were a supervisor, would you fire a worker who uses blue language? b) In essay of 25 words or more give reasons why or why not.