

Words at Work & Raises

At work, the words you use in talking, texts, e-mails, on the phone, and in meetings can help you earn raises and promotions to leadership jobs such as supervisor or manager.

Leaders in the work world eliminate "weak" words and replace with "positive" words. Workers who use positive words can create their image (picture) as a future leader. Here are some suggestions on how you can change your words to create your image as a future leader.



WEAK WORD — BUT

Creates a negative twist to your talking

- #1 I will help you find a blue shirt, **but** I need to finish this customer first.
- #2 This new phone has a long-lasting battery, **but** the phone will not be in stock until March.
- #3 We want our customers to be happy, **but** we cannot please everyone.

Positive word to replace BUT --

- I will help you find a blue shirt after I finish with this customer.
- This new phone has a long-lasting battery, and it will be available in March.
- We want our customers to be happy, so we try to please everyone.



WEAK WORD — FINE

Used to cover up or brush someone off

- #4 How are you today? I'm **fine**.
- #5 Will the project be complete? It's doing **fine**.

Positive words to replace FINE --

- How are you today? Very well, thank you.
- Will the project be complete? The project is on time. If there is a problem, I will let you know.

WEAK WORD — TRY

May indicate failure

- #6 I'll **try** to get the project finished by Friday.
- #7 I'll **try** to find these shoes in size 12 for yo

Positive words to replace TRY --

- I will get the project finished by Friday. If there is problem, I will text you.
- I will go to the stockroom to look for these shoes in size 12 for you.

WEAK WORD — JUST

- #8 I **just** have to change the tape in the register.
- #9 I **just** came over to see if you are finding the correct size.
- #10 I **just** went to Starbucks to use the internet.

Positive words to replace JUST --

- I need to change the tape in the cash register.
- Are you finding the correct size?
- I went to Starbucks to use the internet.

WEAK WORD — PROBABLY

Creates uncertainty

- #11 I **probably** can get that job done by noon.
- #12 Phone battery will **probably** last 24 hours.
- #13 The shirt size you need will **probably** arrive in tomorrow's shipment

Positive words to replace PROBABLY --

- I expect to get that job done by noon.
- Phone battery is expected to last 24 hours.
- Shirt size you need is scheduled to arrive in tomorrow's shipment.

WEAK WORD — WHATEVER

Sounds inaccurate

- #14 We can give a discount or **whatever**.
- #15 **Whatever** you decide is fine.
- #16 Can you order cake or **whatever**?

Positive words to replace WHATEVER --

- We can give all the customers a discount or coupon.
- Please let me know what you decide.
- Can you order a cake for the birthday party?



WEAK WORD — BASICALLY**Useless word that adds nothing**

#17 What I **basically** want you to do is to clean the customer dining area.

#18 **Basically**, our store offers two color choices in smart phones.

#19 The project is **basically** on time.

Positive words to replace BASICALLY --

- I want you to clean the customer dining area.
- There are 2 choice in smart phones — black or white case.
- The project is on schedule. I will text you if there are any problems.

**WEAK WORD — LIKE****Most hated word when used wrong**

#20 He was **like**, "Where are you going?"

#21 Are you, **like** happy with your new TV?

#22 **Like**, you'll need about 3 batteries with this model truck..

Positive words to replace LIKE --

- He asked Jason, "Where are you going?"
- Are you happy with your new TV?
- You'll need 3 AA batteries with this model truck.

Examples of how to use LIKE correctly:

- I like the Amazon Echo.
(YOU ENJOY SOMETHING)
- Amazon Echo is like Google Home.
(YOU COMPARE THINGS)

QUICK CHECK:

1. At work, what can your words help you earn?
 2. a) What do leaders eliminate? b) What do they replace with? c) What can workers who use positive words create?
 3. What twist to your talking does the word BUT create?
 4. List the word that replaced the word BUT in:
 - a) #1 sentence. b) #2 sentence. c) #3 sentence.
 5. a) What is the word FINE used to do?
 - b) Instead of FINE, what words can you use to answer the question: *How are you today?*
 6. a) What may the word TRY indicate? b) Give example of a better way to say: *I'll try to find these shoes in size 12 for you.*
 7. a) Give example of a better way to say: a) *I just wanted to see if you were finding the correct size.* b) *I just went to Starbucks.*
 8. a) What does the word PROBABLY create?
 - b) Give an example of a better way to say: *I probably can get that job done by noon.*
 9. a) How does the word WHATEVER sound?
 - b) Do you agree or disagree? c) Give a reason for your opinion.
 10. What do you need to STOP SAYING at work?
 11. a) Why is BASICALLY a useless word?
 - b) Give an example of a better way to say: *What I basically want you to do is to clean the*
 12. a) What is the most hated word when used incorrectly? b) Why do you think supervisors dislike workers using LIKE incorrectly?
 13. Change the following weak sentences into positive sentences:
 - a) We serve regular fries, **but** we sell sweet potato fries also.
 - b) Is the hot chocolate **fine**?
 - c) I'll **try** to get the cook to add extra onions to your burger.
 - d) If you would **just** try on the red sweater, you may like it.
 - e) The pink shirt **probably** looks perfect under the red sweater.
 - f) You can use the black sandals, or **whatever**, with that dress.
 - g) I think that outfit is **basically** perfect for the job interview.
 14. a) Do you think it will be hard for you to stop using weak words and start using positive words at work?
 - b) Give a reason for your answer.
- For fun: Listen to how workers talk when you are at school or shopping. Can you spot workers who are using weak words — and workers who are using positive words that may earn raises or promotions for that worker?