

# Your Words Matter: Choose Them Well!

*Your words matter. Choose them well. They define you for the world!*

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## **Word selection is the foundation of positive self-talk and effective interpersonal relationships. Positive word selection is a choice!**

**Spoken words "set up" or "upset" individual and group actions, feelings, and verbal responses.** Understanding the meaning and knowing how to offer words to create positive actions is vital for success. When you find words or phrases you would like to remember, reset your mind, and improve your word selections to create a positive experience. All of us working together is smarter than any one of us alone. Choosing words and phrases that create and promote positive interactions will help you build and maintain good personal relationships.

This improvement will not happen overnight. Look through these words and find others to improve your life and the lives of others. Positive word selection will make social interactions more comfortable and productive. Learning them is very important. Just focus on one per day. You'll see! Check these out:

### **Problem**

Lose this word because it often causes others to be afraid. Instead of offering fear, see the situation as an opportunity, situation, or challenge. Your reaction to words is controlled by you – choose ones that inspire you to learn and succeed. Pick one of the powerful three and get started.

### **Don't**

Avoid "DON'T" and be clear about what you want to have happen. For example: Instead of saying, "Don't do that," say, "Consider doing this." or "How would it be if we..." or "Could you do ..... instead?" or "Be very careful."

### **Change**

Don't fear change; welcome it. Consider thinking or saying: "Let's improve that..." or "Let's rethink this" to create better opportunities and outcomes. It's all about making things better. "Let's figure out a better way to build or perfect or learn or act or correct or replace or redo.

## **Fail or Failing**

Effective wise risking can be the foundation of learning. Think of FAILING as an acronym: Finding An Important Lesson Inviting Needed Growth. Instead of the word “fail,” try these words or phrases: “struggle,” “encountering challenges,” or even “learning.”

## **Try**

When giving instructions that influence actions, do not use “try”. Make sure you provide clear, positive requests for action. Pick words that motivate success. Even if things don't go as planned, valuable lessons will be learned for next time.

For best results use phrases like these: “Give it your best.” Or “I believe you can...” Or “Consider doing this ..... instead.” “I know you will give it your best shot.”

## **I'll try**

Lose the phrase. As Yoda from Star Wars once said, “Do or do not. There is no try!” If it looks too challenging remember the effort will increase your education.

## **But**

Avoid using “But” when giving praise and feedback; it takes away the positive things. Consider using: And, So, Nonetheless, Nevertheless, and Even so. It really makes a difference.

## **Yes, But**

When this thought comes up, consider using one of these: “Please consider...”, “That might be true yet...”, “Have you thought about...”, “No, thank you”, or “No, I don't think so.”

## **I Can't**

Lose saying or thinking “I can't.” If you don't want to do something, then tell them why! If you are not sure, get more information so you can decide. Tell them yes or no and why you decided that. Taking responsibility leads to more opportunities and growth.

## **You Can't**

Lose saying "You can't." Instead discuss with them the "WHY" if you believe they should not get involved with the experience or action.

## **You're Wrong**

When there is a difference of opinion look carefully to see it as a chance to learn and improve, even if it's not what you wanted or thought you knew. The word "Wrong" often creates anger. Know that different experiences bring different approaches to challenges. Use phrases like: "That's Different." Or "I don't agree because..." or "Have you considered..." Use 'wrong' wisely; it often means simply 'not my way.'

## **Bad**

Be aware of judgment when using this word. Not everything labeled 'bad' truly is. Pick alternate words wisely and use phrases that promote learning. Consider phrases like: "Not quite good enough and here is why...", "That was not our best effort." "I have learned that won't work." "Ok, let's figure out what went wrong."

## **You should ... or should have ...**

Should and should have can't turn back time. "What's done is history. Let's learn from it and move on." Use: "Next time, let's... for a better outcome" or "Let's consider ....". or "Maybe we could..."

## **I'm Bored**

Boredom is self-driven and simply a poor excuse. We control our choices. Throw away that phrase and realize you need to be doing something or anything else!

## **How you say "No" when you need to!**

We all have social and emotional limits. Learn and know what yours are so you can protect your future using your chosen limits and actions. When you need to say 'No,' use phrases like: "Thanks for thinking of me and I am not interested in..." or "No thank you, I (have to do something else)" "Oh, no thank you. It is not what I do."

## **You! (accusatory)**

When someone makes a mistake that affects you it is best to realize you have made a few in your experience as well. There is no point in being angry and yelling. Acknowledge the mistake and work to show an understanding manner. Consider: 'Many of us have made that mistake and learned from it,' or 'I've done it too and discovered..' That helps them understand without making them defensive. Use phrases like "We human beings often..." or "Many people..." and "I have been known to..."

## **We'll see!**

This usually is taken as a NO or Maybe to avoid argument. It's not a satisfying answer. It's better to say 'no' if that's your answer. But if you're not sure, say "Maybe." "I'm not sure" or "I'll get back to you by..."

## **We Tried That**

When you believe this is true, make sure by using one of these statements: "Didn't we try that?", "What did we learn last time?", or "Does this look familiar?"

## **Not right now!**

"Not right now" often means 'probably never.' Instead, schedule a time to talk about it with the person. While planning, consider what needs to be done before tackling the task and schedule that too.

## **Why Did You...?**

When something comes up that triggers this remark in your head, be sure to use one of these: "Help me understand...", "What caused you to do that?", or "What reaction were you expecting?"