



# POWER UP YOUR LANGUAGE

LOOK SOUND AND LOOK MORE CONFIDENT  
USING THIS POWERFUL LANGUAGE CHEATSHEET



1. Avoid Hedges – You are hedging when you qualify a statement or a word with one that minimizes the strength of your message.

“To me...”

“In my opinion...”

“I just want to say...”

“Basically...”

“I guess...”

“I feel...”

“... sort of...”

2. Avoid uptalk – Another type of hedging occurs when your vocal inflection (pitch of your voice) goes up at the end of a thought and sounds like a question. This is known as “uptalk.”

Read these sentences out loud as a question to hear uptalk.

“It is nice to meet you?”

“I am the marketing director?”

“I have a degree in Engineering?”

“I want your vote?”

“I need your answer today?”

Now read the sentences without the uptalk. Your inflection (pitch of your voice) should stay the same or go down.

“It is nice to meet you.”

“I am the marketing director.”

“I have a degree in Engineering”

“I want your vote!”

“I need your answer today!”

3. Eliminate tags – Tags imply a question and are used at the end of a statement. They make you sound uncertain, indecisive, or like you need permission.

“...Right“ or “ Am I right?”

“Don't you think?”

“Do you agree?”

“If that's ok with you.”

“You know what I mean?”

“This is a good offer, isn't it?”



4. Use concrete language - Using concrete language will help you eliminate unnecessary words and help your listener focus on what's most important about your message.

Vague -> Concrete

Animal -> Horse

Game -> Golf

Plant -> Carrot

Client -> Samantha

**Vague:** I gave a presentation last week.

**Concrete:** I presented our department's strategy for increasing retention at the board meeting last Monday.

**Vague:** Three people died.

**Concrete:** Three HS athletes in our community died on Wednesday within the same hour from a heroine overdose.

**Vague:** We need better communication.

**Concrete:** Members in the marketing department need to improve their presentation skills to provide an efficient, clear, and enjoyable experience for the client.



**Increase your self-awareness and create habits for change, by using these tracking sheets:**

On form 1, list the weak words or phrases you find in your writing or speaking.

On form 2, list the number of times you turned a weak phrase into a powerful one. Write the powerful word or phrase on your tracking sheet so that you remember the better phrase.

Weak Words or Phrases	Replacement Power Word/Phrase	Rank frequency of use (1-10 )

## Tracking powerful words Form 2

Choose one or two weak words or phrases from your list on Form 1 you want to change in Week 1 List it at the top.

Week 1: Words or phrases I want to change this week

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Day	Weak Words or Phrases	Replacement Power Word/Phrase	Frequency <small>(tally each time you made the change)</small>
Day 1			
Day 2			
Day 3			
Day 4			
Day 5			
Day 6			
Day 7			

