



# How to Use the Right Words to Gain Respect At Work, In Meetings and While Networking

A Special Report By Leesa Barnes

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## **Schmooze Your Way To Success**

This special report may be  
**GIVEN AWAY**

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# How to Use the Right Words to Gain Respect At Work, In Meetings and While Networking

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You're in meeting explaining an idea when one of your colleagues interrupts you mid-sentence. You clam up, waiting for your boss to ask your colleague to let you finish your thoughts, but you can see that your boss is very interested in what your colleague has to say. You slump back in the chair, look downward and shake your head as once again, you've been silenced.

You may feel confident inside, but the words you use are telling a different story. Wimpy words clutter your message and are unnecessary fillers. Knowing how to convey your thoughts and how to project your voice to convey your confidence is essential to being seen as a leader at work, in meetings or while networking at an event. This chapter will guide you on how to use the right words to strengthen your position in many situations.

## Strong Words Equal Confidence

You should aim to follow these techniques so you can be taken more seriously at work, in meetings and while networking at an event:

1. **Always graciously accept praise.** If someone acknowledges a job that you did well, don't dismiss it. Recently, I moved up in the ranks as a basketball official. One of the board members said "Congratulations, Leesa. You worked hard this season." My response? "Thanks so much for the compliment. I'm happy that my hard work paid off." Most people would respond with "Oh, it's nothing." There's a way to accept praise without bragging or boasting. However, it's equally important not to brush off praise, especially if it's well deserved. First, thank the person for their compliment. Then, end it off by saying that you worked hard and you're happy with the results.
2. **Be unapologetic.** Sometimes, people unknowingly start off a sentence with "Sorry to bother you..." or "I'm sorry, but..." Using the word "sorry" removes the power from your statements and makes you appear weak. Instead, can the apology and just say what you need to say.
3. **Try not to mumble, stammer or fumble your words.** Doing so makes you look dishonest or uncomfortable. When you stumble over your words, it usually means that you're nervous. Try slowing your pace as you talk. This will help you to stop stammering. If you suffer from stuttering, locate a speech specialist who can help you further.

4. **Talk without missing a beat.** This is a difficult skill, but if you master it, you'll find that your comments are appreciated more. If you talk by taking excessively long pauses, not only does this make it difficult for people to follow what you're saying, it also gives ample opportunity for someone to interrupt you. Pausing is good, but ensure that it's not longer than 2-seconds. To get familiar with the timing, practice talking in front of your mirror until that 2-second pause becomes innate.
5. **Don't preface your statement with a disclaimer.** Author Connie Glaser, a leading expert on patterns of communication, says that disclaimers take the legs out from under what you say so there is no foundation. For example, if you start your sentence with "You may think this sounds stupid, but..." you're actually asking the person to agree that what you are saying is stupid. They won't focus on what you're trying to say. When you're tempted to start your thoughts with a disclaimer, try to use words that strengthen your statement.
6. **End your statements without raising your voice at the end.** People often have a way of ending a statement like they're asking a question. You may want to say "I would like you to approve my budget before 5pm today," but instead, you say "I would like you to approve my budget before 5pm today?" Be aware that ending your statements in the form of a question removes the power from what you're trying to say. If you have a habit of raising the tone of your voice when you're finished your thoughts, practice lowering your tone instead.
7. **Use definite words.** Statements that include definite words, such as "can" and "will", show that you're confident in your decisions. You should avoid using "try", "should", "could", "would", "maybe", "think" and other less powerful words. Recently, I asked a colleague to do something for me. She said, "I will try to send this out." Her statement certainly didn't raise my confidence. Instead, I found someone else to do the task and she lost out on a paid opportunity.
8. **Looking for validation.** Some people have the habit of ending their statements with "You know?", "Right?" and other words used to seek validation. Eliminate those words from your vocabulary. The listener will focus on the reason why you're looking for approval instead on the thoughts you're trying to convey. When you feel tempted to look for validation by ending your statement with these words, bite your tongue, pause, and then start your next sentence.
9. **Accept criticism with grace.** Part of your ability to communicate effectively is to accept criticism with grace. Too often, people take criticism personally. We are crushed by someone's aloofness and we become paralyzed with feelings of self-doubt. We cry, we argue and when we receive negative comments, we believe that person is attacking who we are as a person.

If the criticism is valid, agree with it and address only the criticism. Then, address how you will do things differently in the future. For example, if you had to write a report and after reviewing it, your boss says it wasn't well done, you can say, "I agree with you. This is not my best work. I'll ensure that in the future, I manage my time better."

Now if you disagree with the criticism, say so, but state only the facts. Recently, I was officiating a basketball game and an off-duty referee, who was sitting in the stands, told me at half time that one of my calls was not correct. The feminist in me saw his criticism as a way to put me down as a woman. But the fearless networker in me approached his criticism with class and diplomacy. I responded by saying "I disagree. I was the closest to the play and I saw the kid go out of bounds. That means that I made the best call since I was nearest to the action."

**A word of caution** – Never accept abuse and never respond to abusive statements in a fit of rage or in tears. Instead, keep your cool and respond in diplomatic way. At a software development company I worked for, I needed a group of beta testers for about an hour. I approached the Development Manager to ask for his help. He freed up about 15 of his direct reports, but not without a fuss. As I was printing off the test plans, he approached me and said "It's 2-minutes before you told me you would start and you're still unprepared. You're incompetent." In a calm voice and without moving my eyes away from the printer, I said "I've been planning these tests for 2-days, so I'm definitely not incompetent. Just working with a slow printer." Then, raising my eyes and looking directly into his, I said "And I expect that you will never talk to me like that again. It's unacceptable." He got my point.

10. **Always finish what you're saying.** There are many meetings that I attend where people are cut off in mid-sentence. I've had it happen to me many times. A trick I use is when someone tries to cut me off, I continue talking by raising the tone of my voice. This is usually enough for the other person to realize what they've done. However, if this doesn't work, feel free to say, "I'm not finished my point..." or "Give me a few more seconds to finish my thought." This will definitely quiet the interrupter until you get through to the last word.
11. **Reclaim your idea.** Another complaint I hear often from my clients is that they state an idea, no one comments, then the star on their team will re-state my client's idea in his own words and everyone will congratulate him for introducing a new concept. I've had this happen to me a few times.

There are many tricks you can use to ensure that proper credit is given back to you. One technique is to use a strong statement, such as "I'm glad that Rob brought up the idea I introduced earlier. Let me elaborate on my thoughts."

Another technique is to write your thoughts on a whiteboard or flip chart, if one is available in the meeting room. As you begin to introduce your idea, say, “I’m going to write down my idea to illustrate my thoughts better.” Then, grab a marker and start scribbling. If anyone tries to claim your ideas as his or her own, everyone can see the written evidence that you introduced the idea first.

## Get Rid of Your Wimpy Dictionary

Wondering which words you’re currently using that is weakening your credibility? Here’s a list of weak, feeble and fragile words that could be damaging the way people view you. Challenge yourself to remove these words and make your dictionary much more stronger.

Weak Statement	Strong Statement
“ <b>I was just</b> calling to confirm our appointment next Tuesday.”	“ <b>I’m calling</b> to confirm our appointment next Tuesday.”
“ <b>I think</b> this report would look much better without the first 2 pages.”	“This report would look much better without the first 2 pages.”
“ <b>Sorry to bother you</b> , but can I get your signature on this expense report?”	“Can I get your signature on this expense report?”
“ <b>I should</b> tell my boss about my upcoming vacation.”	“ <b>I will</b> tell my boss about my upcoming vacation.”
“ <b>I’ll try</b> to make the meeting tomorrow.”	“ <b>I will</b> (or <b>I will not</b> ) make the meeting tomorrow.”
“ <b>Basically</b> , the Power Point slides are ready to go.”	“The Power Point slides are ready to go.”
“ <b>Like</b> , I need some printing paper.”	“I need some printing paper.”
“ <b>I can’t</b> give you the deadline.”	“ <b>I will not</b> give you the deadline.”
“The chocolate cake is preferred by our CEO, <b>you know?</b> ”	“The chocolate cake is preferred by our CEO.”
“ <b>I kind of</b> want that promotion.”	“I want that promotion.”
“ <b>I usually</b> drink coffee every morning.”	“I drink coffee every morning.”
“The printer <b>practically</b> runs itself.”	“The printer runs itself.”
“ <b>Maybe</b> I can work late tonight to get the proposal done.”	“I can work late tonight to get the proposal done.”
“ <b>I might be able to</b> send you a project plan.”	“ <b>I will</b> (or <b>I will not</b> ) send you a project plan.”
“ <b>I don’t really</b> have a logo to send to you.”	“I don’t have a logo to send to you.”

## Final Words of Advice

Replacing wimpy, weak words with strong ones will help you to feel and sound more confident. Be more conscious of the words you're using and you're well on your way to career success. Have fun as you improve your vocabulary!

# About the Author

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Leesa Barnes is a **career transition expert** who inspires women to **create the career they deserve** without fear, regret or worry. Through her coaching programs and interactive workshops, Leesa helps women in the workplace **find their passion** and develop winning career strategies to **make a successful career switch**.

## From Project Management to Self-Employment in Less Than 12-Months

For the past ten years, Leesa worked in the technology industry as a project manager. Most recently, she was a project management consultant at **Sun Microsystems**, a global computer hardware company. Between 2000-2004, Leesa managed a team of programmers, graphic designers and business analysts in 8 different time zones, speaking 12 different languages. Her projects totalled in the millions of dollars and had timelines of 6-months to 2-years.

Although the industry kept her challenged, she became restless because her job didn't tap into her key strengths. Her **entrepreneurial passion** led her to launch a women's sports website, participate in a couple of network marketing companies and even launch an online store selling pleasure products.

However, it wasn't until learning from her failed business ventures that Leesa discovered a secret. It didn't happen overnight, but Leesa learned a strategy that helped her to not only **leave her full-time job in under 12-months**, but also develop a plan that would ensure she wouldn't return to working under someone else's thumb. And now, she's **teaching these winning techniques** to women across North America through her company, [Savia Lane](#).

## "Energetic, Animated and Has A Wonderful Sense of Humour"

Leesa's career advice has been featured in countless magazines, newspapers and other media including **Toronto1**, **CBC RadioOne**, the **Globe & Mail** and **Choice Magazine**. She has a regular column in **Esteem Magazine** called Cubicle Divas where she provides career advice to women.

Leesa is also a **sought after speaker**. According to one audience member who attended one of her speeches, Leesa is "energetic, animated and has a wonderful sense of humour." She has **spoken to numerous groups** including Women In A Home Office, CABJ, Ryze Toronto, SX Marketing and has been called upon to moderate and host many events due to her wit and humour.

### Author, Coach and Lifelong Learner

A **graduate of York University** with a Bachelor of Arts degree in History, Barnes is currently working on her **coaching certificate** through the International Association of Coaches. She is a member of the International Association of Coaches, the Project Management Institute and she's an 8-year member of Digital Eve, a women's technology association. She's author of ***Schmooze Your Way to Success: 9 Fearless Networking Tips for the Shy, Timid, Introverted and Just Plain Clueless*** and has written countless articles on making a career switch, business networking and what women in the workplace want.

### Praised for Being Innovative & Filling a Void

Barnes **actively volunteers** her time to many community-based initiatives. In 2000, Barnes founded BITePRO, a non-profit association geared to young professionals employed in the technology sector. She is on the **selection committee** for the BBPA Harry Jerome Awards, and for these achievements, Barnes is profiled in *Who's Who in Black Canada*. Leesa was the recipient of an Achievement Award presented by *Pride Magazine* for her leadership skills.

She currently resides in Toronto, Canada and in her leisure time, Leesa referees high school basketball games and enjoys reading, writing, spending time outdoors and learning about new technology gadgets. Her favourite season of the year is winter due to her 8-year obsession with skiing.

# Avoid Cold Calling With This Ebook

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Would you rather get your eyebrows plucked than go to a networking event?

Are your nerves jumping every time you think about schmoozing with strangers?

If you enjoyed this special report, you'll definitely love the 80-page ebook. You'll learn how to avoid cold calling by using the art of networking, even if you're shy or an introvert.

Did you know that:

- Having the right game plan, and not a magnetic attitude, will save you loads of time and lots of cash. (Tip #1 in the ebook)
- Avoiding just one color when you dress will help you to send the right message to the opposite sex. (Tip #2 in the ebook)
- Crafting a Memorable Interest Pitch, and not a 30-second elevator pitch, will get you more attention. (Tip #3 in the ebook)
- Avoiding 4 sticky topics at a networking event will help you to build relationships faster. (Tip #5 in the ebook)
- Following up is the #1 thing your competitor is not doing and how you can do this without being a pest. (Tip #7 in the ebook)
- Using the 55 rule can help you to avoid being an ankle hugger. (Tip #8 in the ebook)

These **proven networking tips** will allow you to become more confident while gaining more clients, more contracts and the job of your dreams. Even if you're shy, you will learn how easy it is to **become a fearless networker** while pushing your fears aside.

Click on the link below to read more about this powerful resource.

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**Schmooze Your Way To Success**

Read what others had to say about this ebook.

## "Timely, Relevant & Easy to Use Tips"

"I've been recognized as one of Canada's best when it comes to networking - and when I read *Schmooze Your Way to Success*, I knew that I would soon be **sharing that recognition** with a gal called Leesa Barnes.

"Her book is **fun to read**, and provides the reader with timely, relevant and **easy to use tips** and techniques.

*"A candle loses nothing by lighting another candle - the darkness fades, the room grows brighter and everyone glows"* - Leesa's book **illuminates the world of networking.**"



**Donna Messer**  
[Connect Us International](#)

## "Wealth of Practical, Profitable Tips!"

"I cannot imagine anyone -- including the most seasoned networking pro -- reading your book and not finding a **wealth of practical, profitable tips** that will **dramatically improve results**.

"I particularly like your explanation about **why people should NOT develop a 30-second elevator pitch**, and what they should do instead to be remembered.

"Your book is much more than a **wonderful guide** to better networking. Your bonus tips shows readers how to **boost their confidence** and effectiveness in virtually any situation, including during an interview, on the job, or at a networking event.

"I **love your book** and feel it should be **required reading** for everyone entering the job market and/or the business world!"



**Bonnie Lowe**  
[NetworkaholicsRevealed.com](#)

## "Very Practical How-To's"

"The best networkers **appear totally natural**, to the point that you don't even really notice that they're "networking" -- it's simply part of who they are and what they do.

"Too often people get caught up in following a particular system and forget to interact with people **as real human beings**, not just prospects. The **great strength** of Leesa's book is that it reminds us all to "act naturally", and **gives some very practical how-to's** for doing so.

"Paradoxical though it may sound, **follow the advice** in her book, and you won't come across as someone who just read a networking book and is awkwardly trying to apply it, but rather as someone who is **totally at ease** meeting and relating to new people."



**Scott Allen**  
[TheVirtualHandshake.com](http://TheVirtualHandshake.com)

## "Excellent Information, Fun to Read!"

"Having been coached by other, world-class networking experts, I can truthfully say I am **amazed at how much excellent information** Leesa has packed into this book and how **clearly it's presented**.

"If you heed and implement Leesa's advice, I can't see how your business will not benefit in **new clients, quality referrals and lovely new numbers** in your bottom line.

"My observation, over many years of networking, is that where most people 'fail' at networking is in simply failing to follow up. Leesa's **excellent, detailed tips** on follow-up are alone **worth the price of the book** and more.

"If you've read other networking books and think, 'Oh, I know that stuff', think again. For one thing, I'll bet the others weren't as much **fun to read** as this one!

"Grab it now - you won't be disappointed."



**Des Walsh**  
[ThinkingHomeBusiness.com](http://ThinkingHomeBusiness.com)

## "Great & Informative"

"**RUN**, don't walk, to buy Leesa Barnes' book. This is a **great and informative book** that teaches people what it takes to **network successfully** in this dog eat dog world of business networking.

"As a businessman who values the art of professional networking, I truly believe people need to **invest a few bucks** into Leesa's book so that they know what it takes to **build a successful business network.**"



**H. Dean Hua**  
[SachiStudio.com](http://SachiStudio.com)

To purchase this ebook right now, click on the link below to read more about this powerful resource.

**[Schmooze Your Way To Success](http://schmoozeyourwaytosuccess.com)**