

# MASTERING THE POWER OF WORDS

## Module 7

We began the last module talking about the word “but.” Now, we know that words like “but” make any statement weaker. So, first thing’s first: You must remove the following words when you communicate with others. “but,” “just,” and “only” Remove them out of your vocabulary. Deal? Great. You’ve just made your spoken language about 30% more effective. However, this is only the tip of the iceberg.

Certain types of phrases have a profound impact on the way a message is received. While you can’t control the way someone thinks, you can definitely customize your message to have desirable effects. It’s a matter of taking what you *want* to say and putting it through a filter that gives it a kind of resonance. It makes the message more likely to be received in the way you want it to be received.

One important point here is that people don’t like to be *told* things. You might have heard, “People don’t like to be sold to, but they like to buy.” It’s that same concept. People like to figure things out because it makes them feel empowered and gives them a sense of control over their environment. There’s an old saying, “When the student is ready, the teacher will appear.” It’s that simple. Telling isn’t selling.

Your goal is to get them to receive your message without telling them.

In the previous module, I mentioned that conditional statements are weaker than binary statements. This is true, but conditional phrasing has a major leg-up on binary statements: it leaves room for the subject to *wonder*. When I say “wonder,” I mean it gives them a chance to interpret your message differently than someone else. I’ll share an example:

If I say, “I’ll be there at 3:00,” there’s no real room for interpretation. I’ll be there at 3 o’clock or I won’t. But if I say, “If all goes well, I’ll be there at 3:00,” I’ve opened up a whole slew of implications. It’s possible that I might *not* be there at 3:00. If not, I might be there earlier, later, or not at all. On the flip side to that, when I do show up at 3:00, you will already know one thing and it’s going to prime your thoughts. Since I was there at 3:00, you can conclude it all went well - whatever that is.

What you've done is primed your subject and let them connect the dots themselves. You didn't instruct them and you didn't tell them "it all went well." They might not even *remember* you said that in the first place but deep down, they'll know.

Here's another example: If you saw someone walking down the street with what looks like a security detail, you'll connect the dots to what you may believe to be true. No one "sells you on the notion of" it's a security detail, rather you came to that conclusion. This concept works both verbally and through just simple perceptions.

This kind of priming is something you can consciously do to alter your language or even share it with actions. We discussed opinion hooks before and this is the place where those hooks become important to success. If you understand someone's opinion hooks, you can turn them into phrases that elicit positive responses. Using phrases like "I understand that..." and "I'm sure we can agree that..." those statements prime the subject to agree with you, even on something they may not normally consider.

Let's take this a step further in this next example. You're a property owner, talking to a local business owner, Jim, about moving his business location further away to a property you own. You know that one of Jim's opinion hooks is that the downtown location gets more foot traffic.

One example of priming with an opinion anchor might be to say:

*"Jim, I think it's great that this place has people walking in front of it all day, every day. Imagine if more foot traffic came into the store because it was related to their interests."*

What you've said is:

- You agree with Jim's opinion hook
- Foot traffic doesn't mean people are coming in, and
- There's somewhere else that might turn different foot traffic into paying customers

What you haven't said is that the foot traffic is bad, or that the new location has less foot traffic. You've simply *implied* a few important points and let Jim connect the dots himself. We call that Manipulation with GOOD intent. We have his best interests in mind and sometimes we need to guide people to choices outside of their perceived reality.

You also haven't used any of those pesky diminishers from the last module. Instead, you've replaced "but," "just," and "only" with positive, forward words like "and," "so," and "because." This makes your whole message sound positive, encouraging, and ultimately... *sincere*.

In short: you've connected to Jim. It's a lot like dominoes. You place them in a specific way and you let your subject knock them over. When they come to the conclusion you've set up in their head, they won't feel like you've *told* them something.

They've bought your idea because you haven't sold it to them. You guided them to make a decision based on what they believe to be true. Perhaps it's a different perspective, but you leveraged language to allow them to see this new view.

## **EXERCISE**

**1. Replace all the diminishers in your vocabulary with stronger words.** You can always download the classes in the resource section.

**2. Practice phrasing your messages with your subject's opinion hooks in mind.** Take note of how your interactions change for the better. By the way, it's normal when you keep hearing yourself say diminisher words. When you catch yourself, just realign to stronger statements.

You're going to be surprised how people will respond.