

It Is All in How You Say It ©copyright by Robert (Bob) W. Lucas

You have probably heard the saying, "It's not what you say, but how you say it." When you think about it, this has a lot of validity. Many times in dealing with customers or others in the workplace, the tone of voice or the words you choose to use can elicit cooperation and a friendly response or can inflame others to the point of verbal or physical altercations.

Often the way we communicate is learned at a very young age. For example, can you remember an incident on the school playground where you or someone else got involved in a shouting match with another child? This often led to the infamous "did too/did not" argument. That often escalated into someone pushing or hitting the other person, which in turn led to either hitting back or running away crying in embarrassment. In such instances, who won? The answer is no one and the result was often damaged relationships.

Fast forward to today's workplace in which you have to deal with a diverse number of people face-to-face or over the telephone every day. With cultural, gender, and language barriers communication can easily unravel. This is especially true when you consider that most people are stretched to their limit with priorities and work tasks, coupled with stressors from home.

So how do you help create a kinder, gentler workplace in which people show more respect? The answer is simple. Watch what you say.

Here are some powerful phrases that can assist you in strengthening relationships within your workplace environment or at home. Such language reinforces your integrity and encourages others to trust and respect you more.

Please	You're right
Thank you	May I...?
I can/will...	Have you considered...?
How may I help?	I'm sorry
I'm sorry/ apologize for...	However, and, or yet (instead of <i>but</i>)
I was wrong	It's my/our fault
I understand/appreciate how you feel	Would you mind...
Situation, issue, concern (<i>instead of problem</i>)	What do you think?
Often, many times, some (instead of always or everyone)	

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