

TP TOP PERFORMANCE®

Helping You Be Your Best.

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Things **Not to Say** at Work

What you say affects how your coworkers and supervisors perceive you and your ability to get the job done. Stop undermining yourself with phrases such as the ones below:

“We’ve always done it that way.” Part of staying productive and relevant at work is a willingness to try new ways of getting the job done more accurately and efficiently. Be open to new procedures and approaches.

“I think.” Ideas and statements sound stronger when you don’t preface them with “I think” or other extra words such as “actually” or “kind of.” Simply state what you need to communicate with certainty.

“I’ll try.” When promising something, a definitive “yes” will show your commitment and professionalism. If the request is something you cannot honor, say “no” and explain why you can’t do it.

“It’s not my fault” or *“It’s your fault.”* Instead of avoiding or assigning blame for errors, use mistakes to learn and grow. Finding fault doesn’t solve problems. If you are at fault for something, own up to it — “I take responsibility” or “I can do better” — and find a way to fix it.

“That’s not my job” or *“I’m too busy.”* Today’s dynamic workplace requires everyone to go the extra mile. Find ways to be more efficient and productive (the tips in TopPerformance can help). If you truly need help, delegate or collaborate constructively.



Avoiding these phrases boosts your image as a top performer, and using more positive language at work can help you feel more positive on the inside, too.

MAXIMIZE Online Learning

Online learning is a convenient way to learn new skills and stay up-to-date on the knowledge you need for your job. Go ahead — log on and let learning come to you on your laptop or tablet. Follow these guidelines to get the most from the online learning experience.

Set up a schedule. Online courses and training sessions often encompass hours of work. Decide before you start how much you can realistically absorb while sitting at the computer and create a schedule, perhaps setting up a couple of one- to two-hour sessions a week when you are alert and ready to learn.

Stay engaged. Since you are learning in front of a screen rather than in a live classroom environment, it can be easy to tune out. Follow along with downloadable classroom materials, engage in virtual discussions with classmates and instructors, take longhand notes, and do whatever else it takes to remain focused.

Review. Go over your notes or repeat sections of the online coursework if you feel you missed something or cannot remember what you’ve learned.

Apply what you’ve learned. Take the lessons from online training and identify ways you can use them in your everyday work to improve procedures, sharpen skills, become more efficient, advance in your job and keep productivity high.

Family dinners are key to a productive home life. When busy families find work, school and activities taking everyone in different directions, nothing fosters connection and closeness like gathering around the table. Family meals provide a forum for sharing important news, achievements and worries, and can teach children patience, respect and social skills.



Creating the Job of Your Dreams

There are people out there who wake up every day and can't wait to get to work. Why not join them?

Problem solve instead of complaining. Think about what opportunities might be right in front of you. Do you have special skills, interests or passions your employer could use? For example, if you write well, perhaps you can help create procedural manuals or marketing materials. If you excel at organizing or visual arts, maybe you can participate in event planning, training or client services.

Know yourself. A true dream job combines your passions, interests and talents so that you feel fulfilled. At the same time, every job has pros and cons, and no one spends 100% of their time pursuing passions — even great artists and inventors have to spend time talking with clients, invoicing and doing less glamorous



work. Seek projects that make you feel motivated and energized so that you can handle the less exciting aspects more easily.

Focus on the positive. Review what you like about your job.

- ✓ Do you get to solve problems or add value for customers?
- ✓ Do you have a unique skill or service that sets you apart?
- ✓ Do you enjoy organizing schedules and processes?

Find ways to streamline routine tasks and spend more time using your unique skills and talents. You will feel more passionate about your job as a result.

“If you **don't have time to do it right,** when will you have time to do it **over?**”

– John Wooden

Building TRUST

Trust is critical to productive relationships at work. When your colleagues and supervisors know they can rely on you — and you, them — the entire work environment thrives. **Take these steps to foster trust in the workplace:**



Following your conscience and using common sense help you maintain and cultivate positive working relationships.

- ✓ Confront problems head on. Communicate all the details of difficult situations, such as a client who has concerns about a service or a product.
- ✓ Protect private or proprietary information, whether it belongs to customers, fellow employees, the company or a competitor.
- ✓ Give constructive feedback.
- ✓ Evaluate the project or the skill set, not the employee's personality.
- ✓ Play it safe. Do not post any work-related information on social media. Protect yourself, your coworkers, your employer and your clients.
- ✓ Keep your promises and avoid making promises you can't keep.
- ✓ Praise more often than you criticize.
- ✓ Accept feedback from others gracefully and use it to improve your skills, your job or your attitude.

Note: Due to production lead time, this issue may not reflect the current COVID-19 situation in some or all regions of the U.S. For the most up-to-date information visit [coronavirus.gov](https://www.coronavirus.gov).

The **Smart Moves Toolkit**, including this issue's printable download, **Garden Shape-Up**, is at personalbest.com/extras/22V3tools.



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