

Introduction

In reality, business has changed little. Work still involves small victories and slow progress, often ambiguous and rarely permanent. That said, what drives workers has changed little too. Besides money, they want a voice. They dream of receiving a fair shot to make a difference. And they long to feel special. And all that starts with communication. These days, we're taught that tone and body language are the message. But words – and what they signify – matter too. Over time, your character, competence, and caring may be revealed by your actions. In a micro world, it is the right words used at the right moments that spark conversations and build bridges between people.. Want to tap into the deepest yearnings of your peers and employees? Consider sprinkling these phrases into your daily conversations:

Source: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jeffschmitt/2012/12/03/15-phrases-that-build-bridges-between-people/>

1) Thank You

Common courtesy? Sure. But tell me this: When was the last time you forgot (or rejected) gratitude? Whether given in private or public, a sincere 'thanks' creates goodwill. Don't forget your mother's advice: "Say please." People are always happier doing a favor than taking an order.

2) I Trust Your Judgment

Translation: "You have my permission. I believe in you. Now, go make it happen." Feels pretty uplifting to hear that, doesn't it? And I'll bet you'd do almost anything to please someone who makes you feel that way. Your employees and peers are no different.

3) I Don't Know

We don't have all the answers. And it scares us to death. That's a perfect point to start a dialogue...over facts and fears. Facing the unknown – and seeking assurances and answers – bonds people like nothing else. All you have to do is first admit what you don't know.

4) Tell Me More

"I'm all ears." It's the ultimate conversation starter! When you signal that you're open and intrigued, the other party will respond in kind. And who can resist flattery? Use phrases like "What do you think" or "What would you do" to acknowledge someone's expertise. In doing so, you're courting authentic suggestions, even if they challenge convention or skewer a sacred cow. If your interest is genuine, you may just fuel a productive exchange.

5) What I Hear You Saying Is

Ever wonder if someone has been listening to you? Be assured the person speaking to you is. So here's a way to keep the ideas flowing. Step back and rephrase what someone says. In fact, vaguely distort or stray from it. This offers two benefits. It implies that you're engaged, increasing the likelihood you'll get more detail. It also helps you gauge the other person's preparation, reasoning, and seriousness. It's a win-win for everyone.

6) I'm On It

You're giving your full attention. You're saying, "Relax. Don't worry about a thing. I'll see to it personally." That response can disarm just about anyone. To express a deeper commitment, use "You have my word." This makes you more accountable to someone, conveying that you're on board and will make it happen...whatever it takes.

7) How Else Can I Help You

It takes guts to speak up. People risk rejection, ridicule, or retaliation. Sure, you've discussed one issue. Chances are, this was just a test balloon to see how you'd react. This person probably wants to cover more; he's just hesitant to ask. Make it easy on him. Extend the proverbial "what can I do" invitation to widen the conversation. And don't be afraid to ask for help occasionally, either. People love to lend a hand. It provides purpose. When you're humble and vulnerable, it humanizes you. It makes you one of them. And people trust those with whom they can identify..

8) I've Got Your Back

We've all made big mistakes. When we've recognized the gravity, the same question automatically pops up: "Am I getting fired for this?" It's natural for co-workers and reports to imagine worst case scenarios. In those times, step in with a reassurance: "I'm not judging you. You're going to get through this. You're not alone. We'll figure this out together. It's going to be OK."

9) My Pleasure

This subtle reminder reinforces a key point. You're here to help others. You have all the time they need. And you're happy to do it.

11) Let Me Play Devil's Advocate

Looking for a subtle way to critique? Turn the conversation into an exercise where you're a detached party performing a function: Poking holes in the logic and plan of attack. Maybe you need to reel the other person back to the big picture. Maybe you want to direct him towards missing pieces, pros and cons, or alternatives. Either way, you use this strategy to stress test ideas without making the process personal.

12) Let Me Think About That

Yeah, it sounds like a cop out. And it is...sometimes. Fact is, we don't always have the authority or expertise to make decisions. This phrase buys you time and breathing space. It intimates that you're open-minded and the request merits consideration. Then, set a date and time for follow up so the other person knows you're taking him serious.

13) Well Done

It's a cliché, no doubt. Sometimes, it isn't enough just to say thanks. People want to know what they did was great and why. They pour so much sweat and soul into their projects. They need more than recognition that a task or goal was completed. They need to know their work was special and had meaning to someone.

14) You're Right

Want to get someone's attention? Tell him that he's right. Once you yield the high ground, it's much easier for the other party to swallow that the right plan and sentiment can't always overcome the absurdities and restraints we face every day.

15) I Understand

People have such an innate desire to connect. They long to know they're not alone, seeking others who've been where they are – and have successfully made it through. Helping someone doesn't always involve making suggestions or calls. It may just involve being there, paying attention to what a person has to say. Most times, that's enough to show you understand.

