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10 Worst Things to Say at Work

"During my 23 years in management, I heard many comments from colleagues that reduced their credibility and damaged morale," says Bill Lampton, Ph.D. and author of "The Complete Communicator: Change Your Communication, Change Your Life!"

1. "That's not my job."

If somebody comes to you with an issue, there's probably a reason. It might be your responsibility to deal with it or your input is valued. Either way, use the situation to prove you're a team player and a problem solver. Plus, it pays to earn some good office karma because you never know when you'll need help from other colleagues.

2. "Yeah, no problem." (If you don't mean it.)

If you take on a task with a smile but have no intention of actually completing it, you're going to earn a reputation as an unreliable person. If you know you can't or won't complete the project, be honest about it. Your colleagues are relying on you, so your decision not to follow through impacts their jobs, too.

3. "Don't tell anyone I said this, but ..."

If it's really a secret, keep it to yourself. Whether you know someone's about to get fired or what the boss' salary is, you're going to get credit for spreading the news. You're not exempt from being the subject of office chatter, either. Don't expect your gossip-loving co-worker to suddenly have tight lips when it comes to divulging your secrets.

4. "I haven't had a raise in four years."

"Most savvy supervisors don't think longevity merits a raise – only high productivity does," Lampton states. Asking for a raise because of how long it's been since your last one will tell your boss only that you want more money, not that you deserve it. Instead, highlight the accomplishments you've made in the last four years. Prove the raise is merited.

5. "It's not my fault."

When your boss comes to you with a problem, the last thing you want to do is to deflect blame to someone else. Maybe it isn't your fault, but remember that you're not in a courtroom and nobody's looking for the culprit right now. All that matters is making sure the problem is solved and doesn't happen again. You can deal with the real issue later, but you'll just make yourself look worse if you spend more time finger-pointing than problem solving.

6. "To be honest with you ..."

First, any time this phrase is used, you know something negative is going to follow. More important is the message it sends to others. "Does this colleague have to identify when he or she is being honest

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with you? When that phrase is not used, should you then doubt the integrity of the statement?" Lampton asks. Instead, without being rude, say what you need to say in a straightforward manner.

7. "Whom did you vote for?"

The old adage that you shouldn't discuss politics is as true today as ever before. While it's great that you're an active citizen performing your civic duty, save the political talk for your personal blog. Even if the conversation doesn't result in an argument, you never know whom you're making uncomfortable or who will hold your views against you. In a sea of cubicles, there are more people listening to your conversation than you think.

8. "I got so trashed last night ..."

You're probably not the only person in the office to indulge in a drink (or a keg) now and then, but you're probably the only one bragging about it to your boss. Although your night of binge drinking didn't force you to call in sick this morning, it can create the image of an unreliable partier who forgot to leave the beer bong in the dorm room.

9. "I just didn't have enough time for that."

In case you didn't realize, everybody's pretty busy these days. When your boss asks you to do something, chances are it's not really an option. If your main concern is accomplishing the task on time, Lampton suggests you explain the situation. Mention how busy your schedule is but that you can accommodate the request if some other projects are rearranged. You'll show that you take each assignment seriously and only want to turn in your best work.

10. "... or else."

Giving anyone in the office an ultimatum rarely ends in success. Whether you say it to a colleague or your new intern, you'll only gain enemies and earn a reputation for being difficult. If cordial requests don't work and threats are the only way to get things done in the office, you need to re-evaluate your work environment.

Anthony Balderrama is a writer and blogger for CareerBuilder.com.

HOW TO BECOME THE EMPLOYEE NO ONE CAN AFFORD TO LOSE

By Selena Dehne, JIST Publishing

At one time, workers were often rewarded for staying with their employer for several years. Many felt secure in their jobs and didn't worry about factors beyond their control dictating their employment status.

In today's work world, that sense of job security is a luxury few people possess.

Although today's workers can't expect the kind of widespread job security that past generations enjoyed during most of the preceding century, there are steps workers can take to protect themselves, says Laurence Shatkin, Ph.D., author of "2011 Career Plan."

"The best way to hang on to your job is to be irreplaceable. You need to be so vital to the business that it can't go on without you," Shatkin says.

To help you implement this job-saving strategy, Shatkin offers the following advice:

Focus on the core mission of the business. Many businesses diversify and serve several functions, but usually there's a central mission that makes money and determines whether the business will succeed or fail. Identify that central function and play a role in it. Identify the skills the business needs to further develop this function and acquire them.

Be exceptionally productive. This doesn't necessarily mean working longer hours. It's more important to find a task or role you can handle that goes beyond your job description. Here again, skills are important because they are the key to productivity.

Be visible. In many businesses, the person whose office is next to the boss's tends to get the best performance appraisals. If you don't have that office, find ways to make your accomplishments known; don't wait for performance-appraisal season. For example, start an in-house **Web page**, newsletter or bulletin board showcasing the project you're working on and soliciting suggestions from people outside the project. This will encourage them to buy into the project and make your efforts look not purely self-promotional. If you have a work-at-home arrangement, find reasons to show up at the office regularly or make lunch dates.

Acquire a mentor. Find someone who really knows the business, be helpful and ask a lot of specific questions, including questions about how to improve your work. Give public credit to the mentor for the advice you get.

Be pleasant. Back-stabbing may seem like a way to get ahead, but it can hurt you in the long run. Abrasiveness may make you stand out, but for the wrong reasons. If you really can't get along with some people in your work group, try to get transferred to one where you'll fit in better.

Ways to Make Extra Money

1. Make ad supported web sites or blogs. Here is my personal favorite: make web sites on your favorite topics and put ads or affiliate links on your sites for some extra cash. A great way to get started is to use Google's blogger site, and then put their AdSense ads on your blog to generate income.

2. Try freelance article writing. If you aren't comfortable making your own blog, there are existing web sites where you can make money by writing articles that go on established sites.

3. Clean out your closets. Have a garage sale, take your goods to a consignment store or sell your unwanted goods online. You know the old saying; one man's trash is another man's treasure. If you are a college student, you can sell your used text books online. Often you can get a better deal than at the campus book store where they have somewhat of a captive market.

4. Resell items. Go to other people's garage sales, look for bargains and then resell the items online through places like eBay. It helps to specialize in one area so you get to know the market very well and get a good feel for what will sell online and for how much.

5. Go to library book sales, especially on the last day when they are trying to get rid of the books. You can often get a whole bag of books for \$1 or \$2. Then resell the books online through Amazon Marketplace or Ebay. You can get an edge by becoming a library member, or better yet a volunteer, and possibly getting a chance to purchase books before they go on sale to the general public.

6. Sell handmade items. If you have a hobby such as sewing or woodworking, instead of just making items for yourself and your friends, make items to sell either at craft fairs, consignment shops or online. One of my friends is an artist and sells her oil paintings, so it gives her both a relaxing hobby and a second income.

7. Offer your services to others. Even if you don't have a craft type hobby, if you have a talent you can often do services for others who either don't have the skill or the time to do chores themselves. Some of my friends who are otherwise stay at home moms do services such as pet care, child care, sewing and typing for some extra money.

8. Turn Your Hobby Into a Business. Turning any hobby into a business can often "earn" extra money just from tax savings.

9. Sign up for consumer focus groups. One of our friends makes an extra few hundred dollars a month just by going to consumer focus groups

10. Use or Sell Your Gift Cards. Recent news reports claim that there are billions of dollars of unused gift cards going to waste. This is a boon for retailers and a financial setback for millions of U.S. households. So dig up those old gift cards and either use them or sell them on eBay.

www.alwaysfrugal.com

I Know I'm not Qualified for the Job, But Should I Still Apply?

One frustrating but common predicament job seekers encounter is deciding whether or not to apply for a job if they don't meet the employer's qualifications. It is a frustrating but common occurrence many workers can relate to.

While browsing job postings, you see a job that has the responsibilities and duties that match your interests. The day-to-day role is exactly what you've been hoping to find. Then you see the minimal requirements and, although you have some of the necessary skills and plenty of passion, you don't have the qualifications the company demands.

Perhaps you have three years of relevant experience, not five. Or you have a bachelor's degree, not a master's. You've been in a managerial role but haven't drawn up a budget before. You know you can do the job, but you don't know if you'll even be considered without satisfying each of the requirements. Should you apply?

Gauge your options

The decision to apply seems like an obvious choice. On the surface, you have nothing to lose by submitting your résumé and everything to gain if you are called in for an interview. Yet, you need to look beyond the immediate outcomes and ask yourself a few questions:

1. How close am I to being qualified?

Some hiring managers won't consider any applicant who doesn't meet the minimum requirements, even if they are a perfect fit save for having one too few years of experience. However, many hiring managers will look at all the candidate has to offer, so the right education, work history and skills can make up for other shortcomings. Give yourself an honest estimate of how close you are to the employer's ideal applicant.

2. Am I wasting the employer's (and my) time?

Wanting the job -- even if you're a quick learner -- is significantly different than being qualified and capable. A job seeker with years of experience in another industry might be a skilled worker, but that doesn't necessarily translate to a good match for this job. Use your cover letter and résumé to make a strong case for your ability to do the job; otherwise the hiring manager won't view you as a serious candidate.

3. Do I have a plan?

Taking the previous two points into consideration, ask yourself what your next step is. If you are one course from completing your degree and being qualified for this job (and others like it), will you return to school next semester? Is working for this specific company a priority?

If so, you don't want to repeatedly apply for jobs until the HR

department has flagged you as a nuisance. Instead, only apply to jobs for which you are a contender. Take some time to gain experience and skills that give you the right qualifications. As frustrating as the long process might be, it can transform you from a long shot to a frontrunner if this particular industry or company is important to you.

Look at the situation from the employer's perspective

According to a recent CareerBuilder survey, only 18 percent of hiring managers spend more than two minutes looking at a résumé and 5 percent spend 15 seconds or less. You need to make a positive impression quickly if you want to get noticed for any job, but especially for one where your qualifications fall short of the employer's expectations.

Imagine yourself sitting on the other side of the desk and look at your résumé and cover letter from the boss' perspective. If you were choosing from the pool of applicants, would you pick your application out of the pile or would it go in the waste bin? Consider some of the ways you could boost your chances of landing an interview and eventually the job.

Get referred

If you have a friend, colleague or relative who works at the company or knows the hiring manager, ask them to refer you for the position. A personal referral is one of the most effective ways to distinguish yourself from the stack of résumés and might prompt the employer to look more closely at your résumé.

Don't leave room for doubt

Don't send a cover letter that apologizes for your shortcomings. Instead, give examples of how your experience is relevant to the position. Rather than make broad statements about what you could do for the company, cite specific statistics or accomplishments.

Satisfy as many requirements as possible

Although you don't meet every qualification listed on the job posting, you should meet some of them. Just because you don't have managerial experience doesn't mean you're exempt from meeting the application deadline and submitting the requested documents. Do not allow the hiring manager to discount you for a preventable technicality.

By Rosemary Haefner, vice president of human resources for CareerBuilder

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20 Ways to Impress the Boss

Whether you're vying for a promotion or just want to make a good impression, here are 20 ways to show you're dream team material:

- 1. Know the mission.** Align yourself with your boss' and company's goals and values. Make your boss' priorities your priorities.
- 2. Understand how you'll be evaluated.** Know precisely which skills, behaviors and accomplishments you will be judged on and rewarded. Focus on them like a laser.
- 3. Be dependable.** Do what you say you're going to do. Better yet, under-promise and over-deliver.
- 4. Project positive energy.** Don't be the one to whine or criticize the boss or company direction. Be a motivator: the person everyone wants to be around.
- 5. Make your boss look good.** Finish your work on time and with a high level of professionalism. Bring your boss ideas that will help him and the department and offer to take charge and implement them.
- 6. Own up.** Take responsibility for your mistakes by focusing on what you've learned rather than what you've done wrong. For example, "I think this project could have been better if we'd gotten the group's buy-in early on," or "Next time I would talk more with the end-users up-front..."
- 7. Be organized.** Plan your next day before you leave work. Rank your tasks by urgency and importance and make a point of doing at least the top two items on your list.
- 8. Be punctual.** Arriving for work or meetings on time (even early) shows you're enthusiastic, dependable and able to manage your life effectively.
- 9. Be resourceful.** Don't run to the boss with every question you have or setback you encounter. Think things through first. If you must report a problem to the boss, develop possible solutions to present.
- 10. Broaden your horizons.** Take advantage of company-sponsored training courses and volunteer for projects in areas outside your everyday expertise.
- 11. Stay informed.** Keep abreast of industry and company trends by reading trade journals and attending professional association events.
- 12. Be trendy.** Stay current with technological, legal and knowledge advances in your area. Upgrade your skills and learn new ones.
- 13. Be courteous.** Show respect and loyalty to your boss and speak well of her to others. (At the very least don't bad mouth her to anyone.)
- 14. Be flexible.** Change is inevitable. Companies need people who can adapt and go with the flow.
- 15. Take care of your health.** When you're run-down, productivity and ambition suffer -- as does your image.
- 16. Leave your personal life at the door.** Using your co-workers as therapists not only hurts productivity; it damages your credibility and can contaminate your work relationships (even if people seem sympathetic).
- 17. Go beyond the call of duty.** Take on added challenges, put in extra hours, and never use the phrase, "That's not in my job description."
- 18. Be a team player.** Show your boss and co-workers you have their best interests at heart by being empathetic and offering to help out when they need it.
- 19. Take a break now and then.** A clear head and balanced life can give you energy and perspective.
- 20. Look and act promotable.** Don't let anyone think you work because you have to.

DOES YOUR JOB SEARCH NEED A TIME OUT?

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Famous Celebrity Mothers Around the World

- * Rose Kennedy (strong mother of President John F. Kennedy)
- * Margaret Thatcher (mother, first woman Prime Minister of Britain)
 - * Celine Dion ("test tube" mom, music star)
- * Barbra Streisand (mother, singer, actor, director, producer)
- * Marie Osmond (biological and adoptive mother of 7, singer)
 - * Bobbi McCaughey (mother of sextuplets)
- * Anne Morrow Lindbergh (mother of 6, writer, wife of aviator Charles Lindbergh)
- * Julia Roberts (new mother of twins, Academy Award-winning actor)
 - * Barbara Walters (adoptive mother, TV journalist)
 - * Lucille Ball (funny mom, TV star, business woman)
 - * Chris Evert (athlete mom, three-time Wimbledon champ)
- * Florence Griffith Joyner (athlete mom, triple Olympic gold medalist)
- * Toni Morrison (mother, writer, first African American to win the Nobel Prize in literature)
 - * Ruth Bader Ginsburg (mother, Supreme Court Justice)
- * Wilma Mankiller (mother, first woman Chief of the Cherokee Nation)
 - * "Mother" (Mary Harris) Jones (mother, labor leader)
- * Clara Barton (founder of the Red Cross and "mother" to thousands of wounded soldiers)
- * "Mother" (Clara McBride) Hale (mother, started Hale House in Harlem to care for infants born to drug-addicted mothers)
- * Grandma Moses (mother and grandmother, and a famous painter who started painting in her 70s)

Pass it on, America..... **BUY AMERICAN!**

If every American spent just \$64 more than normal on USA made items this year, it would create something like 200,000 new jobs!

Simply look on the bottom of every product you buy, and if it says 'Made in China ' or 'PRC' (and that now includes Hong Kong), simply choose another product, or none at all. You will be amazed at how dependent you are on Chinese products, and you will be equally amazed at what you can do without.

THINK ABOUT THIS: If 200 million Americans refuse to buy just \$20 each of Chinese goods, that's a billion dollar trade imbalance resolved in our favor...fast!!

If everyone would do this for one month, it will impact Chinese exports to America by 8%.

Think about this and buy American whenever you can.

Happy Mother's Day to all the moms and all those that have moms!

Mother's Day is Sunday, May 8th

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