

Weasel Words

What is a weasel word?

We all have little words or phrases that we use far too often. Usually these are filler words that have little or know meaning and I can guarantee that you have them and use them ALL THE TIME! We call these **weasel words** because they just tend to sneak into your language without you really noticing.

You'll notice these in others before you notice them in yourself so to identify your own you may have to ask the person sat next to you what yours are. You may think and think what yours are and not be able to come up with anything but the person next to you will be able to tell you straight away!

Examples

Common examples of these are, 'obviously', 'definitely', 'okay', 'right' and phrases such as 'no problem' and 'do you know what I mean?' (one that drives me mad personally!). They tend to be words that don't really contribute to the sentence and wouldn't be missed if they weren't there.

Why is this a problem?

The reason this becomes a problem, particularly when selling, is because you tend to say the same one(s) time and time again, which is quite distracting to the person you're talking to and makes you sound rather inarticulate. Nothing snobbish about this, I've been as guilty as anyone and have had to work hard to stamp my own weasel words out of my speech but even if you are really articulate, weasel words can be your unravelling. Have you ever come out of a meeting and said, 'he kept saying...' or 'did you notice how many times she said...'. I've had people tally up their colleague's weasel words before and quiz them when they came off the phone:

'How many times do you think you said 'okay' on that call?'

'I don't know, 4?'

'It was 17!'

What can be done?

Once you've identified your own you will hear yourself saying them more often and catch yourself out. The best thing to do is make a list of synonyms (similar alternatives) and try to introduce these into your speech. You will find that you are able to replace the weasel words with a variety of diction that makes you sound more articulate and therefore subconsciously to your customer, more interesting.

'Great, super, lovely, smashing, fantastic, wonderful, ideal', is far better than, 'Great, great, great, great, great, great, great.....'!

Happy Selling!