

WORDS MATTER

KEEP TRUST & VALUE ALIVE

Words are powerful. They either build trust and emotion, or destroy it. In sales, your words are your weapons, and your tone is your armor. Every phrase you speak either adds value or subtracts it. The wrong words can crush your gross faster than any negotiation ever will because they shift the customer's psychology from emotion to logic, from relationship to transaction.

The truth is, people don't buy cars with their wallets, they buy with their hearts. When your words pull them out of that emotional zone, you lose the power of momentum and the strength of belief. Let's dive into the deadly words that kill your closes, and how to replace them with language that builds confidence, ownership, and excitement.

“What do you think?” → “Which works best for you?”

This one seems harmless, but it's a silent killer. The moment you ask, “What do you think?” you've handed control of the sale to the customer's logical brain, the part that starts doing math, comparing prices, and talking themselves right into an objection. You've just invited them to think their way out of the deal.

Instead, give two confident, assumptive options that lead to action, not analysis:

“Would you prefer the white or the black one?”

“Does Thursday or Friday work better for delivery?”

“Would you like to handle everything here, or do you want to handle the paperwork at home?”

This keeps them in a state of emotional decision-making. People love choice, but they hate confusion. You're leading them without pushing them.

“But” → “And”

The word “but” is a trust eraser. The moment you say it, everything before it gets deleted from their mind.

“I understand what you're saying, but...”

What they hear is: “Forget what you just said, I'm right.”

Replace “but” with “and” to keep your empathy connected and your tone positive:

“I completely understand what you're saying, and that's exactly why this makes sense for you.”

The psychology here is powerful—“and” keeps the conversation collaborative. It builds a bridge instead of a wall.

“I'll try” or “Unfortunately” → Speak With Certainty and Positivity

“I'll try” screams doubt, and “unfortunately” screams apology. Both lower your authority and transfer uncertainty to the customer. When you say “I'll try,” the customer hears, “He's not confident.” When you say “Unfortunately,” they hear, “Something bad is coming.”

Instead, replace both with strength and optimism:

“Let me see what I can make happen for you.”

“Here's the good news, this is something we can absolutely work on together.”

Confidence breeds confidence. The customer mirrors your belief. John Maxwell said, “People buy into the leader before they buy into the vision.” Speak like a leader.

“Can't” and “Buy” → “Flexible” and “Own”

The two most toxic words in sales are “can't” and “buy.” When you tell a customer what you can't do, they instantly push back, it's human nature. Tell someone they can't, and they'll show you they can. And when you use the word “buy,” you trigger what psychologists call buyer's pain, the emotional resistance tied to losing money. People love the idea of owning something, but they hate the thought of buying it.

WORDS MATTER

KEEP TRUST & VALUE ALIVE

Instead, reframe:

“That option isn’t feasible, and here’s how we can make this work.”

“When you own this vehicle, you’re going to feel the difference immediately.”

The words feasible and flexible invite conversation and curiosity. They create opportunity instead of confrontation..

“Payment” → “Amount” or “Investment”

No one wants another payment. The word alone triggers tension. Payment means pain, it’s money leaving their pocket. Instead, use words that reflect value, comfort, and ownership.

“The good news is, that works out to only \$548 a month.”

“This vehicle will fit perfectly within your budget at around \$548.”

You’re communicating the same number, but in a way that feels positive, not painful.

Payment = Pain

Investment = Pride.

“Sign” → “Okay” or “Approve”

How many times in your life have you heard, “Don’t sign anything until you’re sure”? That’s why the word “sign” creates hesitation and second-guessing. It triggers fear and caution. Instead, replace it with softer, affirming words that signal comfort and progress:

“If you’ll just okay this here, we’ll get it prepped for you.”

“Go ahead and approve this section, and I’ll get everything ready for delivery.”

Bonus tip: replace those big X marks on contracts with checkmarks or circles. Psychologically, a checkmark means completion and success, while an X means wrong or rejection.

“Discount” and “Cheap” → “Savings” and “Cost-Effective”

“Discount” sounds like desperation, and “cheap” sounds like low quality. They both devalue your product, and your professionalism. Instead, use words that create excitement and gratitude:

“We’re including a special saving of \$400 for you today.”

“That option is really cost-effective—it gives you more without sacrificing quality.”

When you use positive language, you reinforce value instead of lowering it. Remember, you’re not the cheapest, you’re the best value.

“I Believe” → “Here’s What We’ll Do”

The phrase “I believe” is weak because it implies uncertainty. You don’t need to believe, you need to know. Confidence closes deals; hesitation kills them.

Instead of:

“I believe we can make that work...”

Say:

“Here’s what we can do for you...”

Your customer doesn’t need your opinion, they need your leadership. Speak in absolutes. Lead with clarity.

WORDS MATTER

KEEP TRUST & VALUE ALIVE

“I Understand How You Feel” → “I Completely Get Where You’re Coming From, And Here’s What I’ve Found Helps Most People in Your Situation...”

This one sneaks into almost every salesperson’s vocabulary, and at first, it sounds like empathy, but it’s actually surface-level sympathy. When you say, “I understand how you feel,” the customer subconsciously knows you don’t. You haven’t lived their exact experience, so it feels generic, rehearsed, and transactional. In their mind, they’re thinking, “No, you don’t. You just want to sell me something.”

The phrase creates distance instead of connection. Instead, demonstrate real empathy through understanding and action.

Say this instead:

“I completely get where you’re coming from, and I’ve worked with a lot of clients who felt the same way. What they found was that once they experienced [insert feature/value], it actually solved that exact concern.”

This shows emotional intelligence, you’re validating their feelings and guiding them toward a solution. Remember: empathy doesn’t mean agreement; it means alignment. Customers buy from people who make them feel understood, not pitied.

John Maxwell said it best: “Leaders touch a heart before they ask for a hand.” Use your words to connect to the heart, and the close will take care of itself.

“No Problem” → “Absolutely, My Pleasure” or “Of Course, I’ll Take Care of That for You”

This phrase kills gross because it unconsciously minimizes the value of what you’re doing. When you say “No problem,” you make your effort sound like it costs nothing, as if your time, your service, or your flexibility aren’t valuable. You’re teaching the customer to expect concessions, favors, and freebies without gratitude or respect.

The psychology here is subtle but deadly: “No problem” shifts the emotional frame from service and professionalism to casual compliance. You’re giving away authority and value with two careless words.

Instead, elevate your language with affirmation and pride:

“Absolutely, my pleasure.”

“Of course, I’ll take care of that for you.”

“I’m happy to make that happen for you.”

These responses reinforce service with strength, a posture of confidence, not servitude. You’re saying, “I’ve got you,” not “I owe you.”

Words like “Absolutely,” “Of course,” and “My pleasure” send a powerful subconscious message: this professional cares, they’re in control, and I’m in good hands. It builds credibility, deepens trust, and maintains your authority throughout the process.

“Is there anything I can do to get you to buy today?” → “What would make this the right decision for you today?”

This is the most dangerous phrase in sales. It smells like desperation and tells the customer you’ve got more money in your sleeve. You’ve just undone all your trust-building.

Instead, keep control and stay in service mode:

“What would make this the perfect fit for you today?”

“Is there anything still missing that would make you 100% comfortable moving forward?”

This communicates care and leadership without triggering the customer’s guard.