

50 Phrases that Pay[©]

by Jeff Mowatt

On the Telephone

1. Instead of: Good morning (or afternoon) Use: *Thank you for calling...*
2. Instead of: This is Jane speaking. Use: This is Jane. (people remember the word spoken last)
3. When cold calling, instead of: How are you? Use: *We've never met. The reason I'm calling is...*
4. Instead of: Hi, it's Bob. When appropriate use: Hi, it's _____, *returning your call.*
5. When transferring a call instead of: One moment please. Use: *Certainly, I'll put you right through.*
6. Instead of: I'll have to take a message. Use: *I'll be happy to take a message.*

In Service and Selling Scenarios

7. Instead of: Ok, I'll do it. Use: *I'll take care of it for you.*
8. Instead of: Can I help you? Use: *Hi, have you been here before?*
9. Instead of: Would you like to look at alternatives? Use: *Would it make sense to look at alternatives?*
10. Eliminate: to tell you the truth... to be honest with you... I mean this... trust me... really... believe me...
11. Instead of: I'll check. Use: *I'll check for you.*
12. Avoid telling the world your problems when someone simply asks, "How are you?"
13. In most cases avoid using the terms *sir* and *ma'am*.
14. Translate features into benefits. *What that means to you is...*
15. Verify your understanding of the other person's situation or need. *Let me make sure I've got this straight...*
16. Instead of: Would you like to hear about...? Use: *Would it be useful if I outlined...?*
17. Tell the other person why you are asking a question *before* you ask the question.
18. When responding to a direct question, answer the question directly, *then* provide the explanation.
19. Instead of: Perhaps we should bring in your wife/husband Use: *Perhaps we should have a family meeting.*
20. Instead of: Maybe we should have a meeting. Use: *Maybe we should sit down...*
21. Instead of: Let's see if you're interested. Use: *Let's see if there's a fit.*
22. Instead of: What's your budget? Use: *Is there a budget I should be aware of?*
23. Instead of asking a question with uncertainty in your voice, ask a question *as a statement.*
24. Instead of: You're welcome. Use: *My pleasure.*
25. Use: *I gave those instructions quickly. So, could you repeat them your own words to make sure I haven't skimmed over anything.*
26. Instead of: Here's what I'm willing to pay (or charge). Use: *Here's what I had in mind.*
27. Instead of just listening and then talking, paraphrase your understanding of their situation. *It sounds like...*
28. Instead of: I agree with you *but...* Use: *I agree with you *and*...*
29. Instead of: Are you the decision maker? Use: *Will you be making a recommendation or giving the final go-ahead?*
30. Instead of: You can buy it for one hundred and ninety-five dollars. Use: *It's yours for one ninety-five.*
31. Instead of: If you buy this, you'll receive... Use: *When you buy this, you receive ...*
32. Rather than: Do you want to buy it? Use: *What are your thoughts on it.*
33. When asking for a referral, begin your request with: *Could you give me some advice?*
34. Handling objections (credit to Ron Willingham): *I understand how you feel. Others have felt the same way. What they found was...*
35. Instead of merely responding to a request, ask: *Anything else I can do for you?*
36. Instead of merely asking: How is our service? Follow that question with: *What can we do to improve our service?*
37. Use: *We want to arrive at an arrangement that will work for you and us. You do agree that both parties need to have their needs met, correct? So, if we do that for you, then a way you can help us is...*

When Things Go Wrong

38. Instead of: Please bear with us. Use: *I appreciate your patience.*
39. Instead of: Looks like the shipping department messed up. Use: *Looks like we messed up.*
40. Instead of: It won't be here until Tuesday. Use: *It will be here as soon as Tuesday.*
41. Instead of just making a request, preface your request with: *I wonder if you might help me.*
42. Instead of yelling or swearing, quietly and slowly state, *I am furious.*
43. Upset customers – Ask who, what, where, when and how questions. Don't ask *why* questions.
44. When people are being borderline rude (talking in a theatre) begin with: *I wonder, if I asked you politely...*
45. Instead of handling customer complaints, *address customer concerns.*
46. Instead of: What do you want us to do? Instead use: *What will work best for you?*
47. Use: *We don't just want to regain your business, we want to regain your trust. What will it take for you to trust us again - you tell me.*
48. Instead of: Do you want the good news or the bad news? Begin with the *good news.* That way they begin with some perspective.
49. Instead of: Our policy is... Explain *why* the policy is there: *We can't overlook...*
50. Rather than debating irrelevant points of fact, empathize with: *I see your point, or That sounds frustrating!*
51. (lagniappe) Use: *Your problem just became my problem. I'm going to pursue this until it's resolved and you tell me you're satisfied.*