

MTD Quick Tips

Mind Your Language!

MTD Training, 5 Orchard Court, Binley Business Park, Coventry, CV3 2TQ
Web: www.managementtrainingonline.co.uk Phone: 0800 849 6732 Email: info@managementtrainingonline.co.uk

Mind Your Language!

Growing up in the 70's and 80's I always remember that my Nan always used to love watching a comedy programme called "Mind Your Language".

For those of you who do not remember the show it was about a night school class that taught English to ethnic minorities.

For those of you who do remember the show you are showing your age along with me!

Thinking back about the show I don't think you would get away with airing the programme now in our very politically correct environment.

The reason why I mentioned that is because I was driving back home from Capital One Bank in Nottingham having just had a successful one on one coaching session and I was reviewing over in my mind what we had just covered.

We were talking about the language patterns that he was using when communicating to people and how to improve this.

I said to him "You need to mind your language!" and hence I thought of that show!

Now, it's not language as in swearing or slang or anything like that.

The language I mean is the intensity of the words that you use.

Let me give you an example from the session:

My client said to me that he wanted to talk about how good his team were to his boss and what their current workloads were like so that he could ask for an additional member of staff.

"I'm going to show him all of the work we complete and what achievements we have made and then I am going to ask him to attend an issues meeting with me to discuss the additional headcount"

"Issues meeting?" I said "That sounds like trouble to me?"

"Oh no" replied the client "I just want to go over my plan of what additional resource we need and why"

"So why are you calling it an issues meeting?" I said "Issues to me mean problems and BIG PROBLEMS at that"

"I don't view issues as problems" said the client

"I appreciate that, but I DO and your boss might do as well"

The learning from that example:

You need to be very careful with the terminology that you use when communicating with people.

What do issues mean to you?

Small problems?

Big problems?

A challenge?

Niggly problems?

There are no right or wrong answers here It all depends on the meaning that you give to the word.

You see, if I were asked to an issues meeting I would think that we are going to cover some major issues!!!

If I were asked to attend "A meeting to discuss resourcing" I would know why I was attending and would have some idea of what we would be covering.

Let me give you an additional example of where the use of the wrong word can lead to all sorts of assumptions!

Many years ago, just before I set up MTD Ltd, I was project manager for a new company launch. Everything went so smoothly it was too good to be true and to be honest I was the talking point of the company of how well the team had done under my leadership.

The Chief Exec flew over from Canada and sat me down to review what I had done.

"Yes, well done" he said "You did a reasonable job"

At that point I had to bite my lip!

"REASONABLE?" I thought "Is that all he can say REASONABLE?"

I was so angry it was unreal!!

"What sort of a word is reasonable?" I thought afterwards

Reasonable to me was never good enough, reasonable was not even a good job to me.

Well, to cut a long story short, I went to one of the break out areas for a "calming down coffee" and proceeded to tell one of my fellow Directors what had just happened who replied with..

"Reasonable? Is that what he said Sean?"

"Yes!" I said in a really miffed voice

"You got a reasonable out of MR X? - WOW, you must have done an awesome job! He never gives praise to anyone and when he says reasonable it's the equivalent of AWESOME to us".

And with that I learned a lesson and I would like you to learn the same lesson as well.....

MIND YOUR LANGUAGE!

Be careful with the words that you personally use and be mindful of the words that others use to you.

What does good mean to you?

What does excellent mean to you?

What about reasonable?!

By saying the right words with the right tonality and inflection in your voice you can literally move mountains or start wars within your company.

And on that note, all that's left to be said is to have a great day.....if great means anything to you that is?

;-)

Live, love and laugh!

Sean

Sean McPheat
Managing Director
MTD Training

About Sean McPheat



Sean McPheat

Managing Director at MTD Training

Tel: 0800 849 6732
Web: www.m-t-d.co.uk
Email: sean.mcpheat@ m-t-d.co.uk

Founder and MD of international management development firm MTD Training, Sean McPheat is widely regarded as a leading authority on modern day management and leadership.

Sean is a bestselling author, and has been recognised for his own business building skills through the **British Business Awards** and has been featured in the **Who's Who Of Britain's Business Elite**.

He has been a regular judge for the UK's Young Enterprise Programme but was not as horrible as Simon Cowell (well almost!)



Sean has been featured on **CNN International, the BBC, SKY, ITV, The Guardian, Forbes, Arena Magazine, Marketing Weekly, Business Zone, Winning Edge** and radio stations such as BBC WM and LBC (London's Big Conversation).

Sean has over **250 media credits** to his name and his weekly email tips go out to over **60,000 people** interested in management and development strategies.

Sean is also a **much sought after media figure and motivational speaker** on all topics related to management, HR, business improvement and entrepreneurialism.