

ELEVEN PHRASES THAT WILL HURT YOUR CAREER

Sylvester Onyemalechi

Sometimes leaders and staff make statements that produce opposite and negative effect of what was intended. These phrases might be well intended, but the interpretation can be very damaging. Instead of leading to efficiency and productivity gains, these phrases can result in destructive consequences. Use the phrases below with great caution. Instead of being helpful, you are apt to find negative outcomes, including resentment, lowered creativity, reduced engagement, and lower turnover.

DO NOT SAY THIS AT WORK:

1. We already tried that:

This is a statement borne out of something that did not work in the past. Maybe it was an idea that was ahead of its time, or maybe it wasn't executed properly. Regardless of how it was implemented and the negative result attained at that time, it should not forever be used as an excuse not to try again. Particularly as the time gap widens, what once failed may now be a wild success.

Never close your mind to an idea that has the possibility of success because of past failures. Never allow the fear of failure to get into you and seize you. Remain an optimist no matter what. Rather than reject an idea because you already tried it before, find out why it didn't work the time you tried it.

2. That's not your job:

Role clarity is essential, and none of us like it when someone meddles into our area without asking. At the same time, this statement prevents people from stretching themselves to do more. It's important to encourage people to make the most of their ability, and allowing them to take on extra assignments and projects outside their immediate area can advance this.

It is common knowledge that people sometimes are given roles and responsibilities in areas they have no strength or passion for. Such people usually seek opportunities to do something in the area of their interest and passion. So, when opportunity presents itself, they quickly seize it and they do very well. All hands should be on deck to get the job done and move the organization forward; as a result no one should be stopped from doing what is helpful and needful simply because it is not his or her core responsibility.

3. Whose job is on the line if this doesn't work or who gets fired if this doesn't work?

With any goal or project, there needs to be a person that is accountable for its success. But this can be done in a positive way. Statements like this create an atmosphere of negativity and fear. This will prevent people from taking strategic risks that can set your business apart.

It is a fact that threat pushes people to work hard, but people tend to do more when motivated than when threatened with a punishment of one kind or the other. Rather than threaten your

employees with a sack, find a way to motivate them with incentives. People work more when there is something to gain at the end of the day than when there is something to lose.

4. Don't reinvent the wheel:

Improvement and innovation is the key to progress and relevance. If the wheel was never "reinvented" Lamborghinis and Porsches would be driving on top of 4 wooden disks! Many market leading companies lost their edge – or even went bankrupt – when they failed to try to make their products better. Think Kodak, Blockbuster Video, AOL, etc. Other dangerous variations of this phrase are "If it ain't broke don't fix it", "keep the tradition" and "We've always done it that way."

Tradition kills good ideas, and good ideas make things better. Remember that stagnant water stinks. Any organization that is not improving will become irrelevant, die and disappear very soon. Do not insist on, "That's the way we have always done it." Open the window and let fresh air come in.

5. That won't work:

Don't just shut someone down. Ask the right questions to get at the heart of what they were trying to do or propose. Provide suggestions and engage in an interactive dialogue and you may soon find something that will work.

- Never reject an idea because you see something wrong with it.
- Never reject an idea because you won't get the credit.
- Never reject an idea because it's impossible.
- Never reject an idea because your mind is made up.
- Never reject an idea because it's illegal.
- Never reject an idea because you don't have the money, manpower or muscle to achieve it.
- Never reject an idea because it will create conflict.
- Never reject an idea because it's not your way of doing things.
- Never reject an idea because it might fail.
- Never reject an idea because it's sure to succeed.

A deeper and diligent research on how to implement the idea to achieve success is what is required and not rejecting the idea.

6. Just get it done.

This is another phrase that leads to a culture of fear. As a result, people feel immense pressure to deliver, regardless of how it gets done. Employees don't treat each other well as the race to deliver on the timeline given them heats up the organization; at its worst, people begin to delve into practices that might be borderline unethical, or even illegal. This creates infighting, backbiting, slander, treachery and sabotage.

Instead of putting your employees or subordinates under pressure, ask them what they need in order to get the job done and make it available.

7. I already knew that.

Sure you may have, but a "shut up" statement like this will make people feel little. They are subsequently less inclined to speak up next time they have an idea. Thank them for the suggestion, or better still, give them credit for the idea.

8. I need a raise.

Your compensation should never be about what you need or want -- it should be about what value you offer to the company. Rather than nag your employer on your raise, see what you can do to improve the organization. It is your services that determine your compensation. It is your input into the company that determines the companies output into your life.

9. I can't work with him or her.

It's unfortunate, but complaining about a coworker actually indicates a lack of professional maturity on your part. A strong employee finds ways to get along with problematic coworkers. Do everything you can at your own level to see eye-to-eye with your coworkers. And if you must take up a colleague, be sure to keep it professional and about work styles and behavior, not about personalities.

10. That's not my job.

If your boss asks you to perform a task, it's your job now. Never refuse an assignment because it is not part of your original schedule of duties based on your employment contract. Bear in mind that every new assignment increases and improves you and makes you a more skillful and experienced person. Focus on the gains rather than schedule of duties. Your concern should now be, "How should I prioritize this compared with my other responsibilities?"

11. I am only a staff and not the owner.

Words like this reveal a lack of commitment to the growth and success of the company or organization you are working for. Once you sign up to work for a company, you are to take that company as your own and work with all your heart as you will work for your own company. This positive attitude will make your superiors to notice and reward you. It will make God to promote and make you an owner of your own business someday.

Luke 16:12

12 And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own?

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