

Power Words for Sales and Marketing

By Don Cooper, The Sales Heretic™

Mark Twain famously said, “The difference between the right word and the almost-right word is the difference between lightning and the lightning bug.” The “right” words make all the difference in your sales and marketing efforts.

The words in this list are particularly effective at attracting prospects and moving them to action. Use them in all your marketing efforts to get more leads and more sales. Whether you’re crafting a brochure, an advertisement, a web site, a sales letter or a live presentation, the more of these words you use, the better your results will be.

Ego Words

These words appeal to people’s need to feel important, special and loved. They boost our self-esteem and make us feel good about ourselves. They also make us want to buy.

You & Your

The absolute, most powerful words in sales and marketing.

The issue you care most about is you. You’re interested in your wants and needs, your family, your job, your future, your house, etc.

Most salespeople and marketers focus WAY too much on themselves and nowhere near enough on their prospects. Brochures, web sites, advertisements and sales presentations that drone on and on about the company, its history, its mission statement and its products and services are actually *counter-productive* because they turn off prospects.

Instead, engage your prospect in a *dialogue*. (Yes, even in print.) Talk about what’s important to *them*. Address their needs, desires, goals, concerns, priorities, challenges and so on. Then segue into how your product or service relates to and impacts them.

As you're creating your marketing piece, sales letter or presentation, aim for a 2-to-1 or even a 3-to-1 ratio between second-person pronouns (you, your) and first-person pronouns (I, me, my, us, our, we). And always tie everything back to the prospect.

Discover

There's a certain thrill to "discovering" something. It implies you're the first to experience it. A popular science magazine and a major credit card share the name "Discover" for this reason.

New

Things that are "new" are typically perceived as being different and, therefore, better. (Even though, in reality, they often aren't.) As a result, "new" has a powerful cachet.

Many people will even pay a hefty premium to be among the first to acquire a new product, as the Chrysler PT Cruiser, Toyota Prius, Microsoft Xbox and Apple iPhone have demonstrated.

Secret

A secret is something privileged. It's knowledge that not everyone is supposed to have. As such, it takes on a "forbidden fruit" aspect. And anything that is forbidden, or controlled, or guarded, becomes desirable.

We want to know what it is we don't already know. Our egos demand that we be a part of the select group of people who have this "insider" knowledge.

Love

It's a many-splendored thing. It makes the world go 'round. And it motivates people to spend two months' salary on a tiny rock, because people will pay a lot of money to feel loved or to express their love.

NOTE: "Hate" is also a powerful word because it conjures up such strong emotions. (Keep in mind that all purchases are emotionally-based.) Use "hate" to describe a situation your prospect wants to avoid, when you're offering the solution.

Confidence Words

Confidence is the number one buying factor in customers' minds. When your prospect feels they can trust you and your product, they will buy it. These words alleviate the fear of risk, failure, and loss.

Guaranteed

The greatest fear prospects have is that what they buy won't perform as they expect. A guarantee eliminates the worry that their money will be lost if they're not satisfied.

Proven

A track record is invaluable. If your product or service has worked for others, your prospects can feel assured it will work for them, too.

NOTE: If you can offer the *actual* proof, your case is even stronger. (Which is why testimonials are so powerful.)

Safe

Whether it's a drug, a toy, a new technology or virtually any other product or service, people worry about its safety. Buyers want to be confident that no harm will come to them or anyone else impacted by its use. This is especially important when it comes to children and pets.

Number One

If your company, product or service is number one, the thinking goes, there must be a good reason. In other words, prospects believe that if lots of other people like you, odds are they will as well.

If you can't be number one in a category, perhaps you can claim that distinction in a sub-category. Notice that every week, one movie trumpets that it's the "Number One Movie in the Country." (Based on ticket sales.) But others make statements like "Number One Family Movie" or "Number One Comedy." Look for qualifiers you can use to create your own "number one" status.

NOTE: You must be able to back up your "number one" claim with some kind of data!

Original

As a general rule, knockoffs and copycats are lower quality. So something that's an "original" is typically perceived to be better and more trustworthy. The word can also be used to position something as not being derivative, and therefore, unique.

Abundance Words

We are constantly trying to improve our lives. We want more money, more time, more friends and more security. These words address our desire for enrichment.

More

Abundance in a word. What does your company, product or service offer more of? A few ideas:

- Taste
- Features
- Choices
- Power
- Capacity
- Information
- Brands
- People
- Accuracy
- Storage
- Items in stock
- Flexibility
- Seating
- Options
- In-depth
- Support
- Energy
- Time to relax
- Uses
- Active ingredients
- Listings

- Coverage
- Freedom
- Protection
- Opportunities

Less/Fewer

The flip side to having more of what we want is having less of what we *don't* want. (Remember that “fewer” typically refers to items that can be counted and “less” refers to quantities that are measured in other ways, e.g. mass, volume, degrees or levels. In other words, “less stuff” and “fewer things.”)

Some items your prospects want fewer or less of in their lives include:

- Side effects
- Stress
- Cost
- Waiting
- Paperwork
- Wrinkles
- Shrinkage
- Errors
- Fat

Zero

Even less than “less” and fewer than “fewer.” For the things we *really* despise. Things like:

- Calories
- Additives
- Emissions
- Waste
- Downtime
- Effort
- Caffeine
- Risk
- Cost
- Trans Fat

Fast

Customers don't just want everything now, they want it yesterday. People hate to wait because waiting wastes our most valuable commodity: time. Waiting often costs us actual money as well. Federal Express created an entire industry by catering to our need for speed.

Other words that convey speed include "quick," "instant" and "immediately." It can also be helpful to specify the exact amount of time involved. For example: "1-hour service" or "24-hour turnaround."

Save

One way for us to have more in our lives is to give up less. So we are always looking for ways to save time, save money and save energy. (And because we already have too many of them, we're also eager to save headaches.)

NOTE: "Cheap" is not a power word! On the contrary, "cheap" implies that the product or service is of low quality. Never use "cheap" in your sales or marketing efforts unless you're contrasting your premium-priced offering with someone else's "cheap" alternative.

Free

The most powerful four-letter word in sales and marketing. Everyone wants something for nothing. What can you give away? Here are some ideas:

- Samples
- Trial
- Newsletter
- Gift
- Issue
- Upgrade
- Report
- Brochure
- Consultation
- Analysis
- Inspection
- Appraisal
- Evaluation

- Buyer's guide
- Face painting
- Appetizers
- Delivery
- Book
- Video
- Food and beverages
- Downloads

Or anything else you can think of.

Environmentally Friendly

More and more, people are becoming acutely concerned about the environment. And while we still want abundance in our personal and business lives, we also want abundance in the natural world as well.

If we can enrich ourselves while minimizing our impact on the planet, we can feel better about our purchase. (One could conceivably make an argument that “environmentally friendly” are actually Ego Words, but we don't need to have that debate here. ☺ All that matters is that they're definitely Power Words.)

Scarcity Words

In sales and marketing, scarcity is not necessarily a bad thing. In fact, quite the opposite. Scarcity often increases desirability and therefore, perceived value. (Think diamonds.)

Limited

If a product is a limited edition, it can command a higher price because of its uniqueness and rarity. If your stock is limited, buyers need to act quickly to obtain one before they're gone. And if an offer is limited, prospects need to hurry to avoid losing out on the deal.

Exclusive

Are you the exclusive dealer for a particular product line or even a specific product in that line? Does your product have exclusive features no one else has? Do you

have a product, service or special offer that is available only to certain exclusive customers? (Yes, “exclusive” can also be considered an Ego Word.)

Only

The word “only” is extremely versatile as well as extremely powerful. It works three ways:

First, it conveys scarcity of opportunity.

- “We only have two left in stock.”
- “They are only available for three months out of the year.”
- “We only accept six new clients a month.”

Second, it denotes exclusivity of a feature, function or benefit.

- “This is the only product that . . .”
- “This is the only service that also . . .”
- “We are the only company that . . .”

And third, it acts as a minimizer. “Only” has the power to make numbers seem smaller. For example, psychologists have proven that people perceive “only \$25” to be less than simply “\$25.”

The word “only” implies that the price could be—and in fact, *should be*—more, but isn’t, creating the impression of savings. (Even if there aren’t any.) For that reason, whenever you’re stating a price—whether verbally or in print—be sure to precede it with “only.”

Empowerment Words

These words promise better results with fewer mistakes or problems. And often with less effort, to boot. They encourage us, embolden us, give us a sense of hope. And hope is a *huge* reason people buy so many of the things they buy.

How To

This pairing works wonders. It implies a step-by-step process that will enable the buyer to achieve the desired outcome. It makes a great headline, sub-headline, bullet point or book title.

However, for maximum results, it's critical that your phrasing refers to a *result*, not a *process*. "How to Talk to Prospects" is nowhere near as effective as "How to Make More Sales."

Imagine

Ask your prospect to imagine the result you're promising them. Or ask them to imagine themselves using your product or service. When their imaginations fire up, their minds and bodies enter a state that is highly conducive to buying.

Remember that all purchases are emotionally-driven. When your prospects can "feel" the results and benefits, they're apt to make the purchase immediately.

Magic

Everybody wishes they had a magic wand. Magic defies the natural laws that limit what can and can't be done. So when something is "magic" or "works like magic," the implication is that your results will be extraordinary and/or will require much less work.

Easy

Nobody like things complicated. After all, our lives are hard enough already. As a result, people will pay a lot for convenience and simplicity. Easy means less frustration, less effort and less chance of making a mistake. It reduces the intimidation factor.

Other good words you can use to convey ease of use include "simple" and "effortless."

Power

To "power" something implies improving its performance, so you get better results with less effort. Think "power tools," "power steering" and "power brakes."

We instinctively understand the more power you have, the more you can accomplish. The makers of the leading brand of energy bar chose the word "power" for its name to convey this very idea.

The Power Word List

- You & Your
- Discover
- New
- Secret
- Love
- Guaranteed
- Proven
- Safe
- Number One
- Original
- More
- Less/Fewer
- Zero
- Fast
- Save
- Free
- Environmentally Friendly
- Limited
- Exclusive
- Only
- How to
- Imagine
- Magic
- Easy
- Power

Print this page and keep it handy near your work space. Whenever you need to create a marketing piece or a sales presentation, review the list before you start. Refer back to it repeatedly as you write.

It may help to reread this entire report as you work on your project to stimulate your brain and get your creative juices flowing. Talk with colleagues, a consultant

or even friends and family members to brainstorm ways you can make certain words apply to what you're selling.

Make an effort to use as many of these words as possible in your project. You don't have to use them *all*, of course, but the more you use, the more persuasive (and successful) your finished product will be.

Guaranteed.



Don Cooper—The Sales Heretic™—is an internationally-acclaimed sales expert who helps salespeople, business owners and professionals dramatically increase their sales. He delivers custom seminars and keynote speeches for corporations, associations, chambers of commerce and other business organizations.

His most popular programs include:

- **The Myth of Price:** Why you should charge more and how to do it
- **Never Sell Ice to Eskimos:** A practical program for powerful prospecting
- **The Physics of Closing:** How to make the hardest part of the sale easy
- **When Bad Things Happen to Good Customers:** How to transform customers from enraged to ecstatic

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