

The Articulate Professional's Unique Features

This book will help you acquire the wide and vivid vocabulary used by America's most articulate when emphasizing accomplishments, highlighting challenges, asserting views, inciting others to action, and injecting humor. An equally important function of the book is to help you make your distinctive vocabulary versatile, i.e., to give you the ability to use each featured word in a variety of contexts and situations. Finally, this publication is designed expressly for those who are required to play vital communication roles, such as in meetings, presentations and speeches, interviews, important conversations, and of course, emails and letters.

On what do I base my bold claims? On this book's many unique features!

1. Words in the book have not been culled from the innermost recesses of the dictionary.

Nor are they the type only known to and used by the late William F. Buckley Jr. Instead, they are selected from a proprietary and extensive database which, since the 1980s, has been amassing the words and phrases used by articulate Americans, especially thought leaders, in virtually all fields--including business, government, politics, education, science, and the arts. An important aspect of this prized database is that it not only establishes *which* high-caliber words are currently in use, but also *how* they are used.

2. Each entry meets stringent criteria for inclusion. Each featured word is (i) of sufficient caliber to help make one's communications strong and vibrant, and (ii) it passes my litmus test--while it is within the lexicon of articulate professionals, it lies *outside* the conversational vocabulary of the average well-educated American. It is for these reasons that users of the book's previous editions have had high praise for the quality of the featured words.

3. Designed to help implant the words in your mind. Skim the page of any featured word, and you'll notice that in the *Main Example* and at least one of the *Other Examples* the word is linked to a headline-making event or some well-known person or thing. The objective is to trigger graphic recall of something that might already be familiar to you and thereby embed the word in your memory. Of course, it also helps make the content interesting and fun to read. Incidentally, many users tell me that several of the workplace examples remind them vividly of situations they have personally encountered in the past, thus further cementing the word into their lexicon.

4. The focus is the workplace and on-the-job situations. Each page contains *Workplace Examples* illustrating both formal/semiformal use (such as during presentations, meetings, and email) and informal, off-the-cuff, or casual conversations (such as during lunch, around the coffee maker, or at the water cooler). Note that these workplace examples illustrate the actual speaking patterns of highly successful professionals. And to help you become adept in using a featured word when in the company of colleagues and friends, this new edition goes even further: for several of the entries, the first one or two *Other Examples* are really workplace examples, beginning with something similar to "this author saying," or "an employee saying."

5. Numerous and diverse examples to help you use the words with confidence. Thanks to our proprietary database also documenting *how* each high-caliber word is being used by

articulate Americans, the body of examples for each word is painstakingly designed to cover all of the various senses that are currently being employed, thus providing you insight into the word's usage so that you can virtually "own" that word and begin using it with confidence. Additionally, if you study all the examples on a particular page *closely* and more than once, chances are that you will indeed internalize that word and find yourself using it from time to time when the occasion demands or when the situation is apt.

Also, because of the diversity of examples on each page, you are likely to learn many new uses for words that you might already be familiar with. For instance, the word "lionize" can be used not only in reference to a person but also for a thing, an idea, a quality, or an action; or that "strident" can be used not only to describe a person's criticism or style of speaking but also for a color, a piece of clothing, an advertisement, or to describe differences. You will similarly learn that "Olympian" can be used to describe somebody's manner, attitude, responsibilities, intellect, and performance standards. And when you study the page for "opprobrium," you'll learn that it is something that can be *earned*; it can be *attached to* something or *heaped on* somebody; a person or thing can *exist in a state of* opprobrium or become a *target* of it; and that a word or phrase can become a *term* of opprobrium. That is how "The Articulate Professional" will help you build a vocabulary that is not only wide and vivid but also versatile! You'll be able to apply a particular word in numerous situations and, alternately, you'll have many more word options to use in any given situation.

6. To facilitate relatively quick use, words are grouped according to their most closely related workplace theme. One category contains words to describe accomplishments and justify actions, another category comprises words to specify criticism or disapproval, a third to praise somebody, and so on. More on this in the next section.

Category Descriptions

To provide a context for their introduction, the featured words are divided into nine categories, the grouping having been done according to their most relevant workplace function. However, the categories are by no means mutually exclusive. For example, the term "imprimatur," featured in Category I, could very well be used while discussing a company's shortcomings (the theme of Category II), or equally well while praising a person (Category VII). Finally, note that the words within each category are organized in the order of most common to least common.

Category I: Highlighting Accomplishments and Justifying Efforts & Goals. These words help you highlight your accomplishments and strengths with specificity and in a dignified manner, without sounding like a braggart or being shrill about it. They also help you describe or justify your actions, efforts, objectives, and goals. Finally, many of these words can even be used to cast a positive light on your struggles, setbacks, and disappointments.

Category II: Defining Problems. The words in this category offer a variety of ways to define problems and complicated situations, and why or how the odds are stacked against you. Using a robust and vivid word often elicits a stronger appreciation of your difficulties, helping you gain more empathy and patience. A crisp description of your handicap, burdens, or obstacles begets more support from others.

Category III: Describing State of Mind and Feelings. These words refer to people's attitudes, likes and dislikes, as well as state of mind and feelings. An accurate depiction of your reactions and inclinations can give the audience a keener insight into the state of affairs, and thus a better appreciation of both your difficulties and opportunities.

Category IV: Describing Extremes. Entries in this category describe extremes such as too much or too little; very big or very small; unlimited or severely limited; harsh or mild; and so on. By highlighting problems and opportunities, the words can draw attention to the need for necessary action.

Category V: Specifying Criticism or Disapproval. The words featured here help you specify the true nature of your criticism, indignation, or unhappiness. They enable you to express your strong or vehement disapproval of what's going on. They can also be invaluable when cautioning somebody against a course of action.

Category VI: Describing Interpersonal Behavior and Style. These words help describe one's behavior, stance, attitude, action, style, and approach when dealing with people. Some may also help define a management style or characterize the overall climate of a workplace.

Category VII: Praising a Person or Thing. Here is a rich collection of words to deliver emphatic praise, such as when highlighting a person's accomplishments, habits, determination, judgment, foresight, and other qualities. In a world in which bosses and colleagues are often at a loss for stirring words to use when commending an employee, this section offers a potpourri of fresh and vibrant terms to emphasize somebody's contributions.

Category VIII: Delineating Cause and Effect. The words in this category are ideal for describing cause-and-effect relationships, forecasts, predictions, and expectations. These words can be extremely useful when discussing your hopes and fears.

Category IX: Words for Other Uses. This last category includes high-caliber words that do not fit neatly into any of the previous categories, but which apply to a variety of situations encountered in the workplace.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. Why don't you feature harder words in "The Articulate Professional"?

Well, if we were to significantly elevate the level of difficulty of the average word in this book, I'd have to start including words such as nimiety, alterity, fugacious, inspissate, prestidigitation, ratiocination--words so obscure that they would qualify for the higher rounds of a spelling bee. It would be an understatement to say that using such words in the workplace or at social events would be unwise, pompous, and purposeless. Not only would your listeners not understand you, they would be turned off from the get-go.

2. What's the point in having words that I mostly recognize?

Sometimes, as they flip through the book's pages for the first time, people comment: "Oh, I recognize most of the words in the book, so I guess it's not going to be of much use to me." I have two responses to that: First, I would expect most well-educated people to recognize many of the featured words, considering that the words are heard or read in the media from time to time, otherwise they wouldn't be included in our database and therefore have no place in this book! Second and most importantly, just recognizing a word is not enough. Ask yourself the following two questions: "Can I use that word *confidently* and in *a variety of contexts or situations*?" and "Can I recall ever using that word?" What good is being able to "recognize" a word if you've never had the confidence to use it? I designed the content--especially the subject matter and diversity of the examples--with the objective to help lodge that word into your conversational vocabulary, thus raising the probability that you will end up using it, when the occasion and the intensity of feeling merit it.

3. Why do you use incomplete sentences in *Other Examples*?

For economy of space, just as in most dictionaries, almost all of the *Other Examples* have been written as sentence fragments. **In other words, they are NOT designed to be complete sentences, which is why they don't begin with a capital letter.**

Conclusion

As I am sure you'll agree, a critical ingredient of influence and persuasion is the ability to affect people, and to create **lasting impressions** and **indelible images** when speaking at key moments. The carefully selected words and conscientiously designed examples in "The Articulate Professional" are designed to help you do just that.