



## Eliminate Filler Words!

### Well With Raele Coaching Cheat Sheet

- [Discourse markers](#) in communication can be used to manage and organize what we say, share our opinions, and connect our ideas together.
- Filler words are one type of discourse marker
  - In English, it includes words like:
    - “Umm...”
    - “Like...”
    - “You know...”
    - “Just...”
    - “I mean...”
    - “So...”
    - “Literally...”
- There is a fine balance between using filler words sporadically in informal speak and overusing them to the point where that is all your listeners can hear.
- Now, how do we get rid of them or trim them from our vocabulary?

#### **1. Pretend you are writing or typing instead of speaking!**

- Think of the complete thought you'd like to share in advance, then write it out and even say it out loud
  - This exercise will help you think before you speak, so that you can present one clear, articulate thought in the moment. The more you do it, the better you will get
- Think of yourself as typing instead of speaking when interacting with others
  - it may feel robotic at first but it will help you become more aware of your filler word use



## 2. Have someone you trust hold you accountable

- Tell a friend, family member, partner, roommate, spouse etc about your effort to minimize filler words, and tell them to stop you and call you out every time you use one in your conversation
- Let them be your police officer! Have them stop you and make you start the story or dialogue over

## 3. When using filler words in the middle of your sentences, let your last “real” or meaningful word before the filler word linger.

- For example:
  - Instead of: “I’d love to go to that, um, new Michelin-rated restaurant soon.”
  - Try: “I’d love to go to that...new Michelin-rated restaurant soon.”
  - Instead of: “I want to see if, you know, if the hotel has any availability.”
  - Try: “I want to see if....the hotel has any availability.”

## 4. Take a 1-2 second pause.

- Tell yourself you will be someone who speaks **deliberately** and **with purpose**. When there is nothing to say, or you feel yourself wanting to rely on a filler word, take a pause instead.
- This may feel painfully awkward at first, but don’t worry, the other person isn’t paying attention. They are too busy focusing on themselves and what they want to say next.
- Pretend you are holding your breath for 1-2 seconds to force yourself to actually pause.

## 5. Lean into alternatives!

- When tempted to start your sentences with “Um...” or “So...” replace it with “Now...” “For example...” “On that note...” “With that said...”
- When tempted to use “like” to describe measurement or time, replace it with “about” “around” “approximately” or “close to”
- When tempted to conclude your statement with “you know?” Stop and replace that with a full question - “Did you have any questions?” “What do you think?” “How does that sound to you?”