SPEAK WITH DARSHANA

The Senior English Switch Kit

Small word changes that make you sound senior at work

7
words that make you sound junior

8
senior lines for meetings

3
sentence opener for client calls

7
day challenge to make it stick

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FOR INDIAN PROFESSIONALS IN CORPORATE

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Your English is not the problem

You know your work. You know the numbers. But in meetings and emails, a few small words make you sound less sure than you are. Your manager hears doubt. Your client hears a junior.

This kit fixes that. Not with perfect grammar. With small, clear switches you can use from tomorrow morning.

PART 1	7 Words to Delete	3
PART 2	8 Senior Lines for Meetings	5
PART 3	The Client Call Kit	7
PART 4	Office English Swaps	9
PART 5	Senior Emails: Before and After	10
PART 6	Your 7-Day Challenge	11

How to use this kit

- [ ] Read it once, fully. It takes 15 minutes.
- [ ] Pick ONE switch. Use it for a full day.
- [ ] Keep this PDF open before meetings and calls.

PART 1 · WORDS 1 TO 4

7 Words to Delete Today

You are not junior. Your words are. These 7 words make you apologise for your own ideas. Remove them and you sound more senior by tomorrow.

1 Just

✕ I just wanted to check on the update...

✓ **Following up on the update. Where do we stand?**

Why: "Just" makes your own request sound small.

2 Maybe

✕ Maybe we can try a different approach?

✓ **I suggest we try a different approach.**

Why: "Maybe" kills your idea before anyone else can.

3 Sorry

✕ Sorry, can you repeat that?

✓ **Could you say that once more, so I get it right?**

Why: Saying sorry all day tells people you feel like a burden. Keep "sorry" for real mistakes.

4 Actually

✕ Actually, I think we should...

✓ **From my perspective, we should...**

Why: "Actually" can sound like you are correcting someone.

PART 1 · WORDS 5 TO 7

5 Kind of / Sort of

✕ I kind of finished the report.

✓ **The first draft is done. Final version by 4 pm.**

Why: Vague words make you sound unsure of your own work.

6 I think

✕ I think maybe we should try...

✓ **My recommendation is...**

Why: One "I think" is fine. Three in one email sounds like self-doubt.

7 Try

✕ I'll try to send it today.

✓ **I'll send it by 3 pm today.**

Why: "Try" tells your manager you might fail. Commit to a time.

Quick self-check

Open the last email you sent. Count these words:

- [ ] just · maybe · sorry · actually
- [ ] kind of · sort of · I think · try

0 to 1: You already sound senior. **2 to 3:** Easy fix. **4 or more:** Start the 7-day challenge on page 11.

Remember

Senior people are not more confident inside. They simply remove the words that show doubt.

PART 2 · LINES 1 TO 4

8 Senior Lines for Meetings

You don't need perfect English to speak up. You need a ready first line. Learn these and the rest will follow.

1 · WHEN YOUR MIND FREEZES

You: Stay silent because your English "isn't perfect".

> "From my perspective, there are two points here. First..."

Why it works: It buys you ten seconds to think, and everyone waits to hear point one.

2 · WHEN YOU WANT TO SUGGEST AN IDEA

You: "I think maybe we should try..."

> "I recommend we try this approach."

Why it works: Same idea. It just sounds ten years more senior.

3 · WHEN YOU DISAGREE

You: "No, no, that is wrong."

> "I see it a little differently. Can I share another view?"

Why it works: You disagree with the idea, not the person.

4 · WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW THE ANSWER

You: "Sorry, I don't know."

> "Good question. Let me check and come back to you by 3 pm."

Why it works: Not knowing is fine. A clear next step is what sounds senior.

PART 2 · LINES 5 TO 8

5 · WHEN SOMEONE TALKS OVER YOU

You: Stop talking and never finish your point.

> "One moment, let me finish this point. Then I'd like your view."

Why it works: Calm and polite, and you keep the floor.

6 · WHEN THE DEADLINE IS NOT POSSIBLE

You: "Okay, I will manage." (And then you work till midnight.)

> "I can deliver A by Friday. B will need till Tuesday. Which matters more?"

Why it works: You are not saying no. You are helping them choose.

7 · WHEN YOU DIDN'T UNDERSTAND

You: Nod and hope to figure it out later.

> "To make sure I've understood, you mean..."

Why it works: Checking your understanding is a leadership habit, not a weakness.

8 · WHEN SMALL TALK DIES AFTER "HOW ARE YOU?"

You: "How are you?" They say: "Good." Dead end.

> "How's your morning going so far?"

Why it works: They can't just say "good". They say "Busy, two meetings already." Now you have a real conversation.

PART 3 · OPENING THE CALL

The 3-Sentence Call Opener

Whoever speaks first with a plan leads the call. Say these three sentences in the first 30 seconds.

1. "Thanks for joining, Sarah. We have 30 minutes today."

   Sets the time. Shows you respect theirs.

2. "I'd like to cover three things: the update, the open issue, and next steps."

   Gives a clear agenda. The client relaxes.

3. "Before we start, is there anything you'd like to add?"

   Invites them in. No surprises at minute 25.

WHEN THE LINE BREAKS

INSTEAD OF	SAY THIS
Voice is not coming.	**I lost you for a few seconds. Could you repeat the last part?**
Am I audible?	**Can you hear me clearly?**
My net is slow.	**My connection is unstable. I'll turn off my video so the audio stays clear.**

PART 3 · CLOSING THE CALL

Close Like You Own It

Most calls end with "Okay, thank you, bye." Senior people end with a summary and a next step.

1. "Let me quickly sum up. We agreed on the revised timeline and the new budget."
2. "Next steps: I'll send the updated file by Thursday. You'll confirm the budget by Monday."
3. "Thanks for your time. I'll share these notes by email today."

5-minute checklist before every call

- [ ] Know the ONE outcome you want from this call.
- [ ] Write your 3 opening sentences.
- [ ] Keep key numbers in front of you.
- [ ] Test your audio 5 minutes early.
- [ ] Prepare one question to ask the client.

PART 4

Office English Swaps

These phrases are common in Indian offices, and your Indian colleagues understand them. Global clients and managers may find them confusing or old-fashioned. Know your audience.

YOU SAY	THEY MAY HEAR	GLOBAL VERSION
Please do the needful.	Do what, exactly?	**Could you please approve this by Friday?**
Please revert back.	Go back to an old version?	**Please reply when you can.**
I have a doubt.	You don't trust me?	**I have a question.**
Can we prepone the call?	Not a word outside India.	**Can we move the call earlier?**
Kindly adjust.	Adjust what?	**Thank you for your patience.**
Do one thing...	Sounds like an order.	**Could you please...**
I am out of station.	Which station?	**I'm travelling until Monday.**
Send it today itself.	Sounds unusual.	**Please send it by end of day today.**

PART 5

Senior Emails: Before and After

BEFORE · STATUS UPDATE

Hi Sir, Sorry for the delay. I just wanted to inform that I am kind of stuck as data is not received. I will try to send by tomorrow. Kindly adjust.

AFTER

Hi Rahul, a quick update on the Q3 report. The draft is 80% done. I'm waiting for sales data from Priya's team, due at 2 pm today. You'll have the final report by 11 am tomorrow.

No apology | A clear number | The reason | An exact time

BEFORE · FOLLOW-UP

Hi, sorry to disturb. Just a gentle reminder regarding my previous mail. Please revert at the earliest.

AFTER

Hi Meera, following up on the budget approval I sent on Monday. Could you confirm by Thursday? That keeps us on track for the November launch.

Says what it is about | One clear ask | Gives a reason to act

PART 6

Your 7-Day Challenge

Don't change everything at once. One small switch a day. Tick each box when it's done.

DAY 1	Search **"just"** in your Sent folder. Delete it from every new email today.	☐
DAY 2	Replace **"I'll try"** with a time: "I'll send it by 3 pm."	☐
DAY 3	Use the **3-sentence opener** in one call or meeting.	☐
DAY 4	Say **"I recommend..."** once in a meeting.	☐
DAY 5	Use **one global swap** from Part 4 in an email.	☐
DAY 6	Rewrite **one old email** using the senior moves from Part 5.	☐
DAY 7	Ask one colleague **"How's your week going so far?"** Notice how the conversation opens up.	☐

One switch a day is enough.

In 7 days, people will notice you sound clearer and calmer, even if they can't say why.

SPEAK WITH DARSHANA

You already have the skills. Now let your words show it.

Want me to check your sentence?

DM me one line with the word **SENIOR** and I'll rewrite it to sound senior for you.

Want 100 more phrases for meetings, emails and calls?
Comment **100** on any post to get **100 Ways to Say It Better**.

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