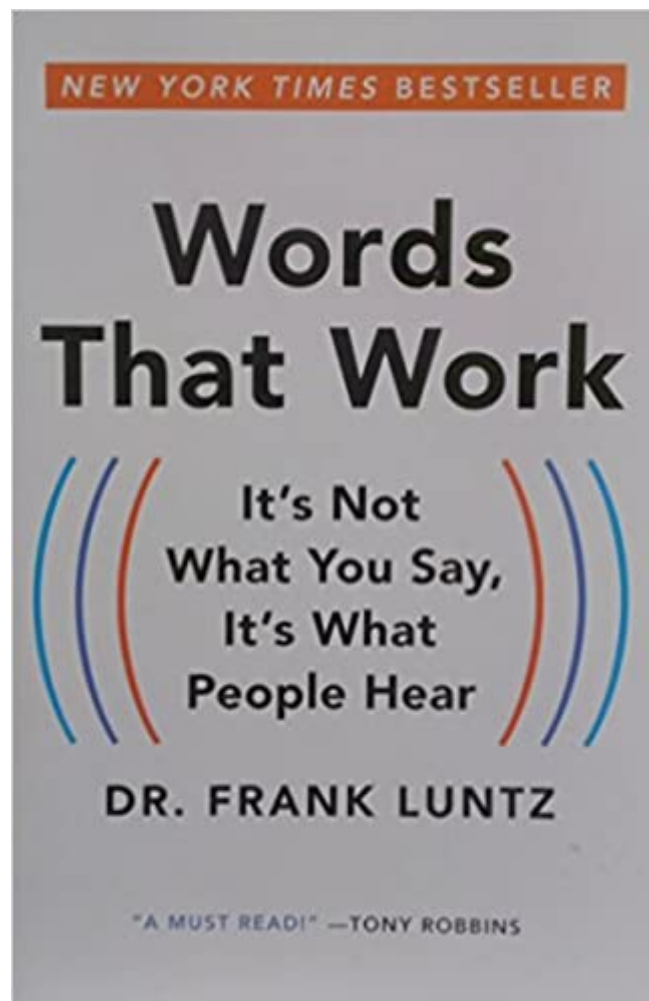




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# Words That Work: It's Not What You Say, It's What People Hear



## Synopsis

The nation's premier communications expert shares his wisdom on how the words we choose can change the course of business, of politics, and of life in this country. In *Words That Work*, Luntz offers a behind-the-scenes look at how the tactical use of words and phrases affects what we buy, who we vote for, and even what we believe in. With chapters like "The Ten Rules of Successful Communication" and "The 21 Words and Phrases for the 21st Century," he examines how choosing the right words is essential. Nobody is in a better position to explain than Frank Luntz: He has used his knowledge of words to help more than two dozen Fortune 500 companies grow. He'll tell us why Rupert Murdoch's six-billion-dollar decision to buy DirectTV was smart because satellite was more cutting edge than "digital cable," and why pharmaceutical companies transitioned their message from "treatment" to "prevention" and "wellness." If you ever wanted to learn how to talk your way out of a traffic ticket or talk your way into a raise, this book's for you.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

After repeating his mantra "it's not what you say, it's what people hear" so often in this book, you'd think that Republican pollster Luntz would have taken his own advice to heart. Yet in spite of an opening anecdote that superficially attempts a balanced tone, the book as a whole truly reads more like a manual for right-wing positioning. Even in the sections where he is less partisan, Luntz's advice is not particularly insightful. For instance, his first chapter, on "Ten Rules of Effective Language," starts by instructing readers to use small words and short sentences in their communications. The least effective section in the book is the chapter on "Personal Language for

Personal Scenarios," where Luntz advocates manipulative strategies for getting out of traffic tickets, boarding airplanes at the last minute and apologizing to one's wife with the "miracle elixir" of flowers. The most readable and redeeming feature is the two case studies, where Luntz demonstrates his skill as a communicator by identifying real-world communications successes and failures. Unfortunately, by the time nonpartisan readers reach these chapters, they will have already lost patience. (Jan.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"Words That Work deserves an attentive read. Mr. Luntz offers a fair amount of good advice to anyone who must communicate publicly--most important, "be the message." By this he means that if you want to talk the talk and be believed, you must walk the walk--which is to say, you must mean what you say and act on it. Integrity sells. "As the book develops, Mr. Luntz's "words that work" turn out to be portals for his clients to think hard about what they and their opponents stand for and how to align their positions more closely with what their audiences actually care about. This isn't hocus-pocus. It's just the result of hard work, careful thought and empathy--the staples of all intelligent public discourse." -- Wall Street Journal"Dr. Luntz, you are a freaking genius. The book is called Words That Work and you're always right." -- Chris Matthews"Few political consultants can boast as many strings to their bow at such a young age as Frank Luntz. When he was barely in his thirties, the Republican wordsmith played a critical role in devising the Contract With America, which helped Newt Gingrich's Republican party win control of both houses of Congress for the first time in more than a generation.... "It is a fair bet that Luntz will play an influential role in the 2008 election, possibly in service of his old friend the former mayor of New York. "Words That Work is Luntz's attempt to distil what he insists is his intrinsically honourable profession between two covers. To a large extent it works. Even where Luntz is protesting a bit too loudly - that negative attacks on political opponents rarely work, for example, and that, by implication, Luntz has never been involved in such skulduggery - he is always readable. "Part lexicographic memoir, part self-help book, Words That Work shines when the accent is on the former. It is hard to think of any other political consultant in America who has coined as many effective slogans as Luntz. Some, such as his branding of the estate, or inheritance, tax as the "death tax", have remoulded conventional wisdom with devastating effect on their principally Democratic defenders. "Others have crept into common usage less dramatically but just as effectively. Take "exploring for energy" instead of "drilling for oil", "tax relief" in place of "tax cuts", or "not giving" emergency hospital care to "illegal aliens" instead of "denying" it to "undocumented workers". Words, or rather the slicing and dicing of them to fashion

our subliminal responses, do work, particularly when tried and tested in Luntz's two-hour "dial sessions", where volunteers convey their responses by turning a dial up or down in reaction to what they are seeing and hearing. "Luntz has produced a fine book that teaches us a great deal about politics in today's America and about the minutely analysed mindset of the electorate. That Luntz's words are effective there can be little doubt." -- Financial Times "Frank Luntz understands the power of words to move public opinion and communicate big ideas." -- Senator John Kerry "If you can't afford to hire Frank Luntz, you have to read Words that Work." -- Steve Wynn "One of the nation's leading pollsters and political language specialists." -- Washington Post.com "The pollster has a long track record of identifying the phrases that make or break political and corporate campaigns . . ." -- The (London) Sunday Telegraph "a MUST read!" -- Tony Robbins -- This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

What we say to each other and how we say it conditions how people respond to each other. Frank Luntz' book is an easy to read "textbook" on how to achieve your personal goals using "words that work." I have always believed that using negative words, such as "regret" or "problem," should be avoided. But Luntz tells us not only what words or phrases to use but why. This book should be a textbook used in a course offered in any communications curriculum.

I'm a Democrat, Luntz a Republican. Often you can learn more from the opposition than your friends. Luntz knows his craft, although his cynicism about manipulating people through words is a little disturbing. Words matter, and Luntz understands words.

It's a good book. It certainly has a few very good points. However, I find its message to be repetitive. I have the feeling you could say in one chapter what the author conveyed in many (yes, he should've stick to some of his own rules: be brief, etc.) :-)) It will raise your awareness on the need to calculate which words to use and how to convey them. Also, I found it reads easily for the most part.

Really excellent, interesting book from Frank Luntz, the famous pollster. He conducts so many interesting polls that provide a lot of insight into human behavior, and this read provides even more revealing analysis.

Kuntz has been in the business of communications for a long time and he really knows what he's talking about. He explains the nuances of words in writing and speaking and how a certain word or

phrase can reach an audience in a most effective way. He provides many examples in the areas of politics and business to illustrate examples of getting your message across in a clear and convincing manner. His theme is that it's not what you say but what people hear that matters and he's very convincing.

I bought this out of curiosity. I have seen Frank Luntz dozens of times on TV, especially after a debate, where he has his own polling group which he uses to rate the debate and how the candidates did based on their responses to questions asked and their interactions with other candidates. Frank Luntz is able to draw incredible results based on what people say. That's because, as he tells us repeatedly in this book, "It's not what you say, but what people hear." I think the most beneficial aspect of the book is the chapter on The Ten Rules of Effective Language. It encourages things like simplicity and using small words, even short sentences for that matter. This makes a lot of sense. We have all sat through things that were not understandable. Our vocabulary can hardly impress anyone if they have no idea of what we are talking about. Additionally, he shows us the impact of reinforcing our words with something visual or imagery that can play on one's imagination. He tells us about words we like to hear and those we don't--those that have a favorable impact and those that don't. There are phrases also which have negative consequences with the hearer like "drilling for oil" where "energy exploration" evokes a much more positive response. Something like "estate tax" can be a hot button, where saying "death tax" can be more effective. Luntz tends to be very repetitive, using many of the same examples over and over and bringing up the same point in multiple chapters. I found that ineffective. I will give him the benefit of the doubt, though. Possibly he is using the same technique he stresses about using the same words or phrases over and over; making sure that our audience gets the point and knows what we're all about. I do not think this book is for everyone. Unless a person spends a great deal of time in front of the public and being recorded, I don't think this book is an essential read. Nonetheless, Luntz can help each of us to communicate more effectively. This can only help in our day to day dealings with others like with family members, at home, at work, with our friends, etc. If nothing else he can make us aware of things that matter and things that don't when we are talking, especially when we want to make a point.

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