

2-word phrase that hurts your image

A quick way to undermine your professionalism is to fill your presentations with “ya know,” says communication expert Carmine Gallo.

“You’re leaving the impression that you’re nervous, uncertain or seeking validation for your idea,” he says. He recommends these tips to eliminate the phrase—and other fillers—from your remarks:

Record yourself—with people watching. The pressure of an audience often causes people to inject more filler. Watch the recording, and tally how many times you say “ya know” and other similar phrases. Doing so will make you cognizant of your habit going forward.

Call in a friend to “tap the glass.” Gallo says he used this tactic with a client who used filler words in every sentence. Every time the client used a filler word, Gallo would tap his drink glass loudly, which was enough to convince the person to stop the habit.

Think about what you’re going to say. When you finish a thought, purposely pause before you deliver your next comment.

—Adapted from [“These 2 Words Make You Sound Unprofessional—So Stop Saying Them,”](#) Carmine Gallo, *Inc.*, [www.inc.com](#).