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Most Shared

3 phrases you may not know are rude



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It's interesting how the little things we say in our day-to-day conversations can sometimes seem harsh, even without us meaning to be. Sometimes, even when trying to be friendly, we can say the wrong thing and come off as passive-aggressive or condescending.

John Bowe, a speech trainer, award-winning journalist, and author of "I Have Something to Say: Mastering the Art of Public Speaking in an Age of Disconnection," recently wrote an article for CNBC on commonly heard phrases, especially in the professional world, that can unintentionally make us come off as rude or condescending.

Here are 3 of those phrases people commonly use that may be considered rude.

1. "Do you want to ...?"

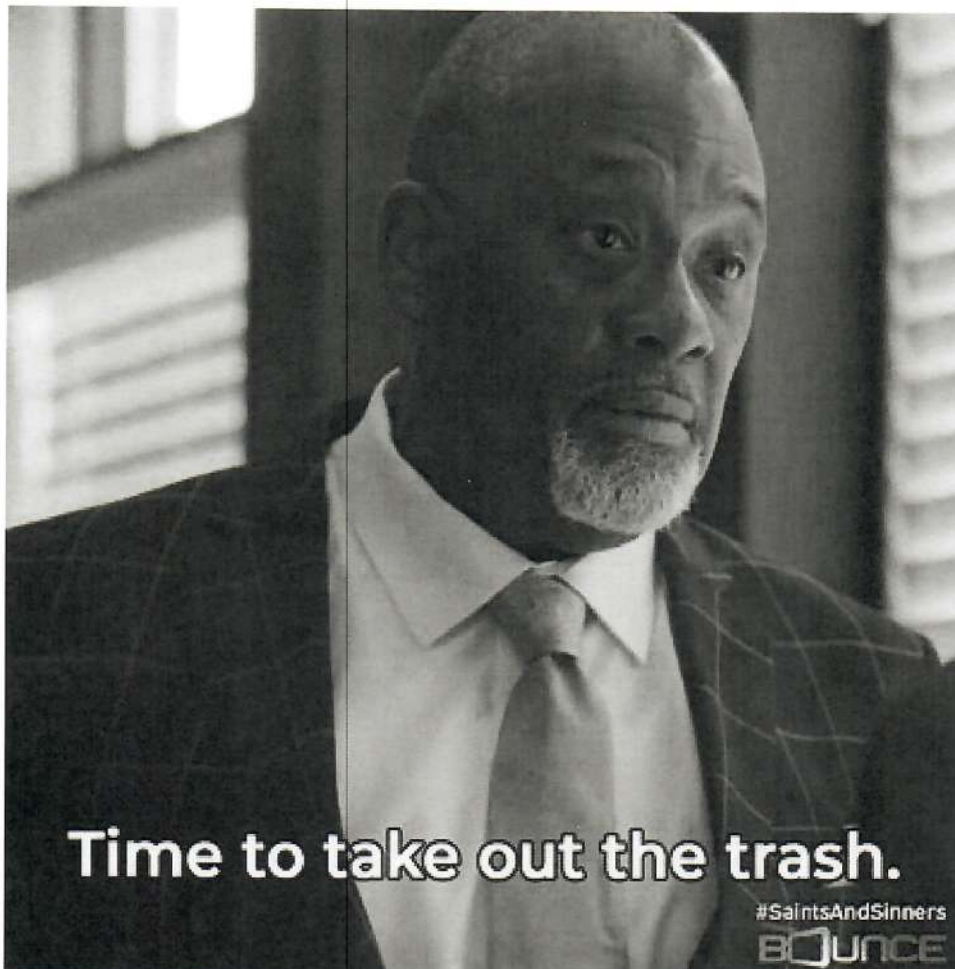
"This phrase is great when you're offering someone a choice ("Do you want to go to lunch with me?"). But as a way of delivering orders ("Do you want to take out the trash?"), its indirect fake-politeness comes across as belittling," Bowe told CNBC.

He adds that it is more polite to state your request "directly." If your spouse asked you to take out the trash, how would you like to be told?

"Will you do me a favor and take out the trash when you have a second?"

Or:

"Do you want to take out the trash?"

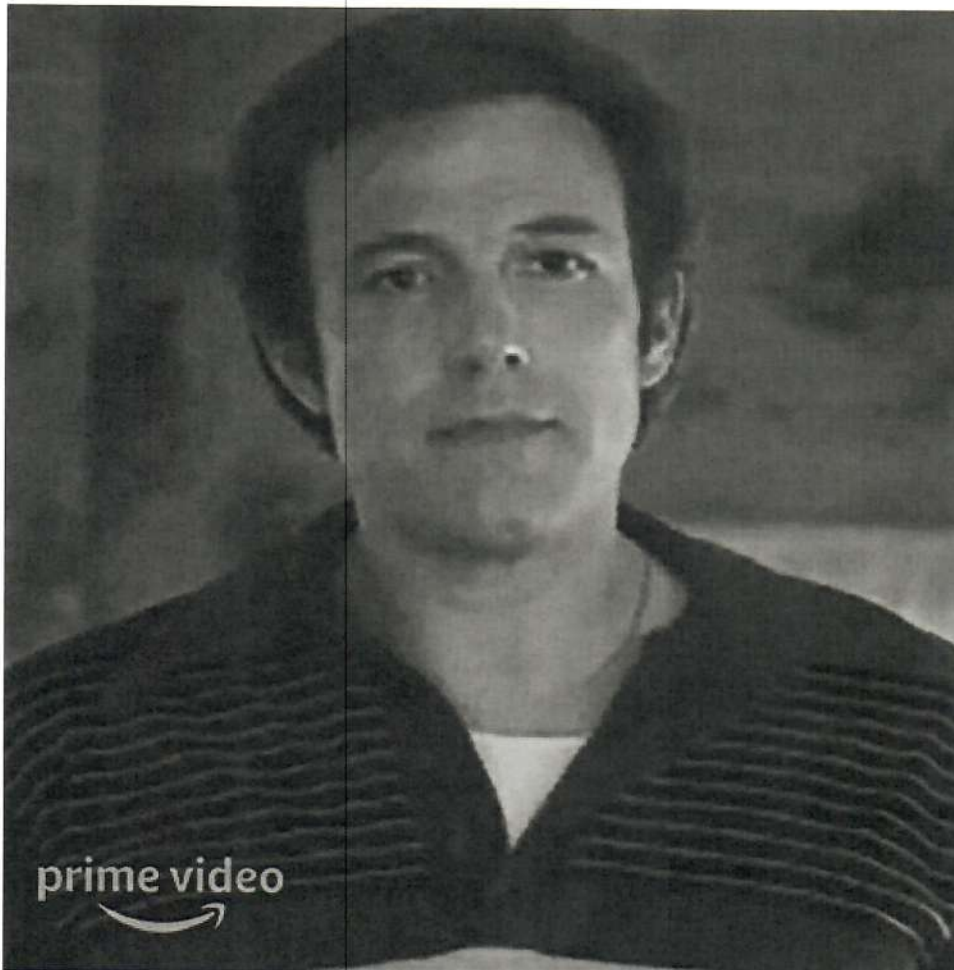


2. "Here's the thing ..."

"This phrase insists that whatever follows will be the final, authoritative take on the subject at hand. Even when used inadvertently, it can sound a bit self-important. Truly authoritative people don't tend to waste time on throat-clearing statements," Bowe told CNBC.

When people give their opinion by starting with, "Here's the thing..." they are making a declarative statement that what they have to say is the objective truth. When, in reality, they are probably just sharing an opinion. By making a declarative statement, they are pumping themselves up while also diminishing the opinions of others.

As Chris Illuminati humorously points out in Brobible, there is "no specific thing." People say "Here's the thing" to introduce a fact or observation, but the phrase serves no purpose. One could easily lead with the fact or observation without the unnecessary puffery.



3. "Obviously ..."

"This word subtly or not-so-subtly conveys that anyone disagreeing with the speaker is wrong. Even if you don't realize it, using it can make you seem arrogant," Bowe writes.

Dianna Booher, founder and CEO of Dallas-based communication firm Booher Research Institute, agrees. "It sounds as though the writer is pointing out that the information that follows should be obvious, but you, the reader, are not smart enough to grasp it," Booher tells Monster.

Sometimes, it can be hard to know how we are coming off to other people. The best way to find out if we're being rude, arrogant, or belittling is to put ourselves in other people's shoes and ask ourselves, "How would I feel if someone spoke to me that way?" It's also good to record ourselves in meetings or on the phone from time to time to make sure that we are communicating as effectively and politely as we can.