

Umm...Like Guide

How to lose “umm,” “like,” “I mean,” and “you know” from your vocabulary



Introduction

Almost everyone uses filler words or verbal pauses while communicating their thoughts. Whether it's at work, in class or during a job interview, these verbal tics are often involuntary.

The challenge is that many of us can't even make it through one sentence without using "umm," "like," "I mean," and "you know" as a verbal crutch to transition onto our next thought. Filler words then become distractions - they can make us sound unprepared, unclear, or even irritating.

After studying thousands of video interviews, InterviewStream has developed six strategies to assist you in reducing your subconscious desire to use America's most overused words:

UMM, LIKE, I MEAN, & YOU KNOW

After putting some of the below strategies in place, you will hopefully develop a new found self-awareness of your verbal communication skills.

So read below, plug in a webcam, and challenge yourself to answer at least one interview question without using filler words. After you finish, your interview will automatically upload into your account, allowing you to review your video responses online.

Practice! It may seem awkward or even scary, but practice makes perfect! Count your filler words on InterviewStream's exclusive Umm...Like Counter. Soon, your filler words will be used less and less. Your potential employer will appreciate the difference!

Six Strategies

Be Prepared

- People seem to use “umm,” “like,” “I mean,” and “you know” as crutches when they’re not prepared. Think about possible interview topics or questions and practice your talking points. Have a point of view and well-thought out answer.
- Be sure to communicate your thoughts in a clear and concise way. Write out your talking points on an index card, and practice communicating responses to frequently asked questions briefly.

Be Passionate

- When you have something to say and you’re passionate about it, “umm,” “like,” “I mean,” and “you know” will be less frequent.
- Practice communicating about topics of high interest or those in which you’re very knowledgeable about. These are topics in which you won’t typically have to search for words.

Silence Is Golden

- Become comfortable with silence. Employers like to see composed, thoughtful responses, and silence is usually expected.
- It’s acceptable to pause and think before you speak instead of filling the space with fluff such as umm, like, I mean, or you know.

Six Strategies

Repeat or Paraphrase

- Repeat back a paraphrased version of the question. This gives you several seconds to formulate your answers and tighten your thoughts.
- DO NOT use this strategy with every response.

Enlist the Help of Others

- Enlist the help of co-workers, career coaches, classmates, and friends.
- Have them raise their hand, cut you off, or pinch you every time you say "umm," "like," "I mean," and "you know."
- Alternatively, give your co-worker, career coach, friend or classmate a nickel every time you use fillers.

Record Yourself

This is a step you should not skip! Record yourself so that you can reflect upon your communication patterns and reduce your use of filler words.

Also, with InterviewStream, you'll be able to upload your responses and e-mail them to others for feedback. In addition, InterviewStream's exclusive Umm...Like Counter allows you to count your filler words while you watch your video interview.

Get Started in Five STEPS



STEP 1

Get Started (Free)
Log In and create an account



STEP 2

Select Interview Questions
Choose up to 10 interview questions
Click Submit



STEP 3

Interview
Plug in your webcam, and begin your interview!
Review and retry after each response



STEP 4

Upload, Watch & Share
Upload and review responses
e-mail to others for feedback



STEP 5

Umm...Like Counter
Listen and count your filler words
Retry interview and track your progress



About InterviewStream

InterviewStream helps companies generate great candidate experiences and remarkable returns through Web-based video screening, interviewing and preparation. InterviewStream pioneered the category in 2003, and today more than five million users have access to products to transform the most-demanding hiring environments and perfect the practice of video interviewing. InterviewStream is part of a growing suite of video apps that go beyond hiring and include employee communications:

RolePlayPRO for training and best practices, and ivMessage for one-way messaging.

InterviewStream provides a best-practice-based approach and a flexible adoption model that works with customers' unique needs and business goals to achieve breakthrough results. Clients rely on InterviewStream for the perfect combination of proven value and endless possibility.

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