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## 5 Words to Avoid

by Passkey Partner KDVM Communications

Make a New Year's resolution to eliminate flabby writing in 2021 - trim these five words to produce tighter, fitter prose.

**1** **Very.** In almost every situation, another word exists to convey the stronger sentiment you intend. Don't be "very happy," be "ecstatic." Don't be "very pleased," be "delighted."

**2** **Just.** People tend to use "just" to underplay what they're saying or asking, but it's superfluous and it weakens your message. "I'm reminding you" takes more ownership than "I'm just reminding you." Using "just" can also be counter-productive - consider how "Oh, it's just something I made" or even "I just answer the phones here" makes it sound like your efforts are unworthy. Don't be "just" anything!

**3** **Honestly.** Trying to strengthen a point by using "honestly" implies that you weren't being honest before, and may not be in the future. Instead, actually be honest and tell things like they are. People will likely believe you without any reassurance.

**4** **Beautiful.** Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and vague adjectives like "beautiful," "lovely," or even "valuable" aren't descriptive...so why use them? Instead, convey more specific benefits or attributes and let your customers form their own opinions.

**5** **Totally.** Along with completely, utterly and other absolutes...including absolutely. It's rare for such adverbs to be accurate, so using them can easily undermine your message. Use them with care, and only if they are totally true.

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