

## Positive Self Talk

# Model Answer

This model answer has been created to help you to critique your own answer. See if you can enhance any of the positive statements you developed using the examples below. For some of us, it is easier to identify and engage in negative self-talk. We encourage you to commit to creating a habit of positive self-talk across all aspects of your life. This requires building an awareness of your negative self-talk and recognizing every time you are giving yourself a negative message. Being focused at recognizing your thought pattern, stopping negative thoughts and reframing them into positive self-talk will make a difference. Be mindful of what triggers your negative self-talk (social media, comparing yourself to others, etc.) and actively seek to minimize those triggers or think differently about them.

Please read this scenario:

## Scenario

Your manager has asked you to deliver a presentation to the senior leadership team, updating them on progress of the new software that is being designed by your team. You are actively involved in this software development and are enjoying your work. You don't feel that delivering a presentation is the best use of your skill set and you don't enjoy giving presentations. You are a technical expert with very practical skills. You think someone else in the team would be better suited to this task. You've only been part of this team for three months and you are keen to make a good impression. You would prefer not to do the presentation as it may impact the impression you give to the senior leadership team.

# Task

## Step 1:

Even if it is not personally how you would feel about this task, record all the negative self-talk you consider this person (or yourself) would engage in, in relation to this scenario. Write these in the first column.

## Step 2:

Then go back through each negative self-talk statement and re-frame it to be a positive self-talk statement and write that in the second column.

NEGATIVE self-talk statement	POSITIVE self-talk statement
Example: I'm not experienced enough to give a presentation to the senior leadership team	Example: This is an opportunity to impress the senior leadership team and make an impact with people I don't usually get an audience with.
Example: I will just talk too fast like I normally do when I'm nervous	Example: I will practice the presentation and get feedback from others to help me slow my pace
I don't know how to deliver a good presentation	I can research the skills required to deliver an effective presentation that meets the audience's needs
I won't be able to do this	I will be able to do this once I seek help and guidance from more experienced colleagues
My strengths are my technical skills not delivering presentations	I need to develop my presentation skills if I want to progress in my career so I might as well start now
Why me? I didn't ask to do this!	It is a privilege and an opportunity to have been chosen to complete an

	important task. They must have confidence in me if they are willing to put me in front of the senior leadership team.
Am I being tested? They are trying to make me do something I can't do.	I've had good feedback so far about my work, which must be why I'm being trusted with this piece of work
I'm not good at speaking in front of people	This is an opportunity to improve my public speaking
I don't want to do this	This is a new skill I can develop and will be necessary for the future
This doesn't interest me	This is a great challenge to increase my skill set
I've never done this before and I will be bad at it	I will ensure I seek guidance from experienced colleagues and use this as an opportunity to learn from others and grow
I'm being set up to fail	This is a great chance to get in front of the senior leaders and show them what I can do

All these are natural negative thoughts that we may hear ourselves saying when faced with an unfamiliar opportunity. If you reflect back on a time when you've been asked to do something new and outside your skill set, it is likely that you may have heard yourself saying some of these things. But these negative inner thoughts will hinder you from progress. We need to make sure we 'cancel out' these thoughts and replace them with more helpful positive inner talk instead.

If you look at the positive statements, they are reframed to project a more positive attitude, which is a Learning Mindset. This means that we are more likely to achieve this new task as we've set ourselves up for success. It creates a more positive message to our brain and 'tricks' us to change how we feel about the task. The more we get used to thinking in this way, the more natural it becomes, and the less we have to 'trick' our brain as it becomes the 'normal' way of thinking or having inner narrative.

## Here are some top tips to help you re-frame that negative inner narrative:

- The next time you hear yourself with a negative inner narrative, write down the statement straight away, then re-write it to be positive.
- Keep an ongoing record of these, then choose one or two positive statements at the end of each week to practice the following week (it could be saying it to yourself every morning or saying it out loud to somebody). This will help to build a new habit of this behavior if you consciously address negative narrative regularly.
- Take time to reflect on what actually happened, and not how you felt in that moment. Give the situation some context and re-visit it from a different point of view. This will help you to change the way you think about it.
- Be aware of your own feelings. If you are having a bad day, then acknowledge this, as you will be prone to more negative inner narrative.
- If you are having a bad day, be aware that your brain is subconsciously looking for evidence to make your bad day 'true', so you will be viewing events in a more negative manner, therefore, increasing the 'volume' of your negative inner narrative. It's called unconscious bias.
- Be kind to yourself – would you say any of your negative thoughts to one of your friends? If not, then don't say it to yourself either. Be as kind to yourself as you would someone else.

- Surround yourself with positive people, as you naturally become more positive in everything you do.
- Try speaking to yourself in the third person, as this will help you say more positive words to yourself. It may feel odd at first doing this, but it is amazing how well this works.
- Use positive vocabulary at all times – when speaking to yourself and others.
- Think with a Learning Mindset and turn challenges in to opportunities. This will not only make it easier to have positive inner dialogue/statements, but it will also genuinely change how you actually view challenges.