INTERNSHIP ARCHITECTS

STRATEGIES TO AVOID FILLER WORDS

When speaking and especially when interviewing, it's not only what you say, but also how you say something that makes an impact. Interviewers are not impressed when a candidate uses filler words too much. They are especially distracting at the beginning of your answers or statements. Try these strategies to avoid filler words.

Don't use these strategies only when interviewing. Use them all the time, so you overcome the bad habit of using filler words. Practice makes us better.

Strategy #1

Be okay with silence. Most people use filler words when they are thinking, formulating thoughts or a response. It's similar to a reflex or a natural response. Train yourself to be okay with quiet when you are thinking.

Strategy #2

Pause, take a breath. If you sense you will use a filler word, pause. Don't say anything. Take a breath if you need to. Once you are confident that you will speak words, proceed.

Strategy #3

Repeat the question as the beginning of your answer. This will give you time to think, and it gives your answer a frame of reference.

Strategy #4

Say, "That's a good question, may I have a moment to think about it?". Then in your head, formulate your answer. When you are ready to speak, make eye contact which indicates that you are ready. You can't do this too frequently, but it's a great strategy when you are stumped.

Strategy #5

This only works at the very beginning of your interview. **Have a prepared sentence that you will say.** That way regardless of the first question asked, you have practiced and can recite a statement. It can be something like, "I am very excited to be talking with you today." or "Thank you for this opportunity, I'm excited to share more about what I can offer x company."