

Improve Your Golf Game with These Ten Power Words **By Rick Semple**

It was Henry Ford who said, "Whether you think you can or think you can't, you are right." The wisdom of these words can be used to improve your golf game as well as your life.

The essential idea behind Ford's wisdom is that the words we think and say have an affect on the outcome of our lives. When we think negative thoughts and use negative words, we get negative experiences. Likewise, when we think positive thoughts and use positive words, we tend to get positive experiences.

Many golfers don't realize that this basic principle of thinking applies to their golf game just as it does to life. It is an essential tenet of the practice of mental golf. Basically, consistent use of negative words and thoughts (both verbal and nonverbal) along the lines of "I can't" or "I won't" or "I'll never" are sure to result in a negative golf experience. In the same way, a more positive outcome is assured when the prevailing words and thoughts are along the lines of "I can," or "I will." When a frustrated golfer is experiencing a game full of errant drives, missed putts, and even missed swings, it is certain that negative words are being thought and said that are essentially triggering the negative outcome.

In the book, *Hidden Language Codes*, by R. Neville Johnston, the author talks about the power words that improve our lives and serve us well and words that are disempowering and limiting to us. Johnston says that any word is like a "software package" by which we help to program our experience. Some words inspire hope and productivity while others instill fear and lack. The word "can't," for example, is the "poster child" for disempowerment. By using it, we are setting ourselves up for failure. Neville encourages people to choose their words with care. For a successful life, he stresses learning to use power words regularly and giving up the disempowering words that hold us back.

The idea of using power words for success in life can be applied to golf. By changing our habits of word choice, we can take a step in helping to improve your game. We can start by monitoring our thoughts and speech and then start to replace negative or disempowering words with more positive power words. The more frequent use of these power words in our thoughts and speech can inspire more positive expectations and pleasing outcomes in our golf practices and games. We can continue the practice from there so that it becomes more consistent and natural.

A list of ten power words to help improve your golf game is provided to help you start the practice of integrating them into your speech. Sample phrases that incorporate these words are also included. Use these power words when you are thinking and speaking about the game before, during, and after your practice and

play. Being half-hearted will only drain power from the words, so say them with conviction. With consistent practice and new positive habits of thinking, you will be mastering one of the core skills of mental golf. Combine this with consistent physical practice of your mechanical skills and you will be sure to see improvement in your game.

Ten Power Words for Better Golf:

1. **Allow:** I allow the flow of a smooth swing motion. I allow myself to relax and let go.
2. **Best:** I am putting to the best of my ability. I enjoy hitting my best shot.
3. **Can;** I can succeed at improving my swing. I can swing with the perfect tempo.
4. **Enjoy:** I enjoy practicing new golf techniques. I enjoy playing this hole.
5. **Expect:** I expect a good session on the practice range. I expect to be prepared for the tournament.
6. **Have:** I have the ability to draw the ball. I have a good, smooth swing motion.
7. **Is:** My grip is relaxed and confident. My putting stroke is smooth and accurate.
8. **Know:** I know the right ideas will come to me as I play. I know I will be matched with the perfect playing partners today.
9. **Open:** I am open to feedback from my golf teacher. I am open to positive changes in my swing.
10. **Will:** I will hit great drives today. I will read the greens perfectly today.

Let this list be the start of a whole new language for you on the golf course – the language of a positive mental golf thinker and a successful player!