

BECOME

WHAT

YOU SAY



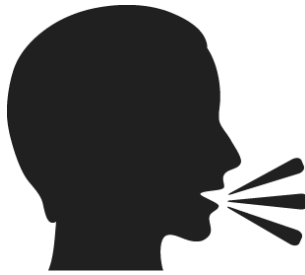
How your **positive** words, thoughts and actions
shape your accomplishments

Second Edition

Gabe Hamda
Ph.D., SPHR

Become What You Say, Second Edition:

*How Your Positive Words, Thoughts, and Actions
Shape Your Accomplishments*



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ICATT Consulting

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Second Edition

Become What You Say 2nd Edition: How Your Positive Words, Thoughts, and Actions Shape Your Accomplishments

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Dedication

Become What You Say, Second Edition:

How Your Positive Words, Thoughts, and Actions Shape Your Accomplishments



This book is dedicated to two worthy community service initiatives.

Go Pro21 Community is dedicated to inspiring you to achieve your highest human potential so that (a) you have a decent quality of life; (b) you are capable of contributing to your community; and (c) you are a positive force as a global citizen.



Access Growing Business Council fosters growing businesses to create good paying jobs to grow the local economy. Access Growing Business Council creates synergy for accelerated business growth that positively contributes to the local community and to society at large.

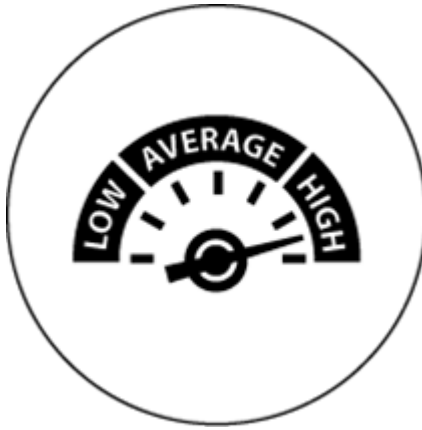


100% of sales profits from this book will be dedicated to the advancement of the mission of these two worthy community initiatives.

Chapter 1

Introduction: Become What You Say, Second Edition

*How Your Positive Words, Thoughts, and Actions
Shape Your Accomplishments*



Book Selected Quotes



The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit.
— Proverbs 18:21

You have been criticising yourself for years and it has not worked. Try approving of yourself and see what happens.
— Louise Hay

A goal without a plan is just a wish.
— Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give.
— Winston Churchill

It's not happiness that brings us gratitude; it's gratitude that brings us happiness.
— Unknown.

The successful networkers I know, the ones receiving tons of referrals and feeling truly happy about themselves, continually put the other person's needs ahead of their own.
— Bob Burg

Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence wins championships.
— Michael Jordan

A flower does not think of competing to the flower next to it. It just blooms.
— Zen Chin

Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile.
— Albert Einstein

Book Abstract

Positive Self-Talk: Positive self-talk means using words that are self-fulfilling, self-affirming, and self-encouragement in your communications. Positive self-talk produces optimistic outcomes in your immediate actions as well as your long-term life. Why? Research shows that positive self-talk provides positive energy, determination, and persistent effort that yields outcomes you wish to achieve.

Reflective Planning: The beginning of a new season is a good time for planning what to accomplish in the time ahead. A new season can be a new year, a birthday, an anniversary, or a life changing situation. Reflective planning is a friendly tool for gently reflecting on your past successes and your values in order to map out a successful future.

Generosity: Acts of generosity make our world a better place. If we all only look out for ourselves and our own kind, our world will be a miserable place. Giving time and being emotionally generous can be as valuable as giving money. Acts of generosity make a difference in the lives of recipients whether the recipients are individuals or organizations or communities. There is extensive research that demonstrates the benefits of generosity to the giver. For example, one of the notable researchers on generosity, Dr. Stephen Post, writes: "The remarkable bottom line of the science of love is that giving protects overall health twice as much as aspirin protects against heart disease." Post reports that giving to others has been shown to increase health benefits in people with chronic illness including HIV, multiple sclerosis, and heart problems.

Gratitude: Gratitude is a feeling of appreciation or thanks for what an individual receives that may be tangible or intangible. Research shows that people who practice gratitude reap the benefits of improved physical health, feeling more positive emotions, relishing good experiences, dealing with adversity, building strong relationships increased energy, optimism, and empathy. Regardless of how well you rate yourself in practicing gratefulness now, practice will increase your gratitude and expressing it will become more natural. As you become a more grateful person, your return on investment will keep increasing.

Networking: Networking is making friends at your every interaction with others. Networking is strengthening your existing relationships and making new positive relationships. Networking is the most powerful interpersonal skills you may use to accomplish your personal interest goals as well as your community interest goals. The more you learn and practice networking, the more effective you become and the more it works for you.

Coopetition-Oriented Teamwork: Coopetition-oriented teamwork is collaboration among competing and convergent groups of people in order to

achieve a common interest, mutual benefits, or higher purpose. Members of the team may be competitors, rivals, or may have divergent beliefs, backgrounds, ethnicity, skills, interests, politics, nationality, personalities, values and any combination of attributes. Coopetition-oriented teamwork is a force multiplier that can take individual efforts to new heights of accomplishment. With constant alignment of team members with the common interest and with cultivated synergies among team members, the journey and the destination of coopetition-oriented teams can be extraordinary.

Giving Back: Giving back is engaging in activities that make a difference for others. Stages of giving back include: (1) discovering your purpose; (2) volunteering; and (3) community advocacy. While giving back makes the community we live in a better place for generations to come, research studies also confirm numerous benefits for the person who gives back. Some of the benefits include: increased total health, longer life, increased happiness, and greater life fulfillment. Yes, giving back makes a real difference for others as well as for yourself.

Excellence Over Perfection: “Perfection is the enemy of good” seems counterintuitive but refers to the fact that often people freeze when trying to accomplish important tasks due to not having perfect circumstances. Ecclesiastes 11: 4 instructs “If you wait for perfect conditions, you will not get anything done.” Based on extensive research findings, this chapter advocates that “you may benefit from the pursuit of excellence rather than the pursuit of perfection.” While perfectionism is likely to jeopardize the wellbeing of individual contributors, teams, and organizations, the pursuit of excellence is likely to benefit all involved.

Rate Your Current Practice of *Become What You Say* Actions

Rate your current practice of *Become What You Say* actions on a scale of 1 to 5.
(1=Poor, 2=Below Average, 3=Average, 4=Good, 5=Excellent)

<i>Become What You Say</i> Actions	1=Poor 5=Excellent
1. When you encounter challenging situations, you tend to reframe the situation to express yourself in appreciative terms.	1 2 3 4 5
2. You frequently reflect on your successes in life to plan your future pursuits.	1 2 3 4 5
3. You believe that what and when you give makes a difference.	1 2 3 4 5
4. You readily express gratitude to people you meet in person and virtually, including online communications, emails, texts, and phone conversations.	1 2 3 4 5
5. In networking conversations, you make personal connections by trying to learn more about the person than simply what they do.	1 2 3 4 5
6. You are good at finding a common ground with your rivals.	1 2 3 4 5
7. You volunteer in at least one cause that benefits others.	1 2 3 4 5
8. You maintain positive and constructive communication with your frenemies.	1 2 3 4 5
9. You see mistakes as opportunities for growth and learning	1 2 3 4 5
10. You celebrate small achievements	1 2 3 4 5

Your total score is _____

Assess your score:

40 +	Outstanding
30 +	Very Good
25 +	Good
Below 25	Needs Improvement

“Become What You Say” Success story



Note: The purpose of this story is to illustrate the application of principles and skills covered in this book. The story is based on character elements of real people I know personally, but the details and events are my creative work designed for illustrative purposes.

Hanna is a model citizen. After reading *Become What you Say*, she challenged herself to practice all the skills and make them second nature within a year’s time. She spent an entire month practicing positive self talk. She built her positive self talk in three steps: (1) kept a tally of her negative self talk and rewrote a positive self talk alternative; (2) kept a tally of her family members’ negative self talk and rewrote a positive self-talk alternative; and (3) consciously used positive self talk. To ensure she stayed on track, she asked her friends to call out when she correctly used positive self talk and when she violated her pledge.

Hanna practiced the pursuit of excellence by scripting out how to accomplish her top one priority assignment. Then, she incrementally increased the number of assignments to script out and complete them minus perfectionist tendencies.

She incorporated reflective planning by completing the reflective planning spreadsheet during her August birthday and with the help of her best friend. She also talked her friend into completing the spreadsheet and working together as accountability partners on their important goals.

Hanna applied generosity by increasingly meeting the needs of the people around her with emotional and material support. At the same time, she gradually decreased her material possessions.

She started her gratitude journey by writing and sending one thank you email per day and one handwritten thank you note per month.

Hanna implemented increasing her networking skills by developing a networking checklist she followed every week. She self-rated herself on a daily basis.

She joined the local toastmasters as one of the volunteer organizers. She also decided to practice coalition building and giving back to the community. In this role, she dedicated time to help inner city youth build their professional presentation skills. At the same time, she collaborated with other like minded people to accomplish a goal.

Throughout this self-transformation process, Hanna used a dual approach of self assessment in her personal journal as well as working with a peer coach to stay on track.

Success Story Discussion Questions

- 1. Which of the skills did Hanna master the most? Why?*

- 2. What additional method do you suggest for Hanna to consider?*

Introduction



A growing body of knowledge and research confirms that the words and thoughts you use to address yourself play a major role in your success. Positive words build up and negative words destroy. I have been a fan and practitioner of positive self-talk for many years, and this book is dedicated to telling you about it.

This book is my gift of love to you, the reader. Thank you for buying it. Thank you for deciding to read it. I hope you enjoy it. I hope you practice it. I chose the subject, *become what you say*, as a reminder to you because by adopting positive self-talk you set yourself up for success with your very own words. How cool is that?

Background: What about your words?

Technically speaking, *words* are elements of language that carry meaning and make up sentences. More informally, *words* can mean the messages we deliver. Thus, in this book, I am going to equate *words* with the message you intend to convey.

Typically, we think of the spoken or written word as directed to others. But the majority of your words are spoken to yourself as your thoughts. This is known as *self-talk*.

I have written this book to make you aware that the words you speak to yourself have real consequences. Positive self-talk is life-giving while negative self-talk saps life.

Activity Questions

In your conversations with yourself:

- *Do you tend to make kind remarks about yourself? Yes/No*
- *Do you tend to be self-critical? Yes/No*
- *Do you tend to appreciate your life experiences? Yes/No*
- *Give examples of remarks you tell yourself?*

What is the central message of this book?

Every word that comes out of your mouth is a seed that produces a harvest of the same seed. Positive words about yourself advance your success; while negative words about yourself sabotage your cause. Therefore, be intentional with the words you use.

What are potential alternative titles of the book?

The following titles were seriously considered for this book:

- *Positivity*
- *Positively Speaking*
- *Soft Power*
- *24X7 Think Act Positive*
- *Speak Positive*
- *Managing Your Internal Self-Talk*
- *Watch What You Say About Yourself: It will Become Reality*
- *Your Words Will Seal Your Future*
- *Your Words Will Guarantee Your Level of Success*
- *Your Words are the Best Predictor of Your Future*

What qualifies me to write this book?

I have three sets of qualifications for writing this book. The first is that I am a self-declared and life-long practitioner of positive self-talk and an eternal optimist. Second, I am an expert in learning and human performance. Third, I am a storyteller and I know too many relevant stories. Below I describe my qualifications in each area.

My qualification #1 to write this book: Practitioner of positive self-talk and eternal optimist

I demonstrate my optimism through my actions, attitude, decisions, and words.

Optimism by Action:

- When I am asked to assist, I try to get it done as requested.
- When I see a need or a problem I can solve, I readily start working on a solution.

Optimism by Attitude:

- When I meet new people, I assume good intent until I see evidence otherwise.
- When I am offered constructive feedback, I accept it with gratitude rather than being defensive.

Optimism by Decisions:

- When I am offered solutions I have been looking for at the right price, I make an immediate buying decision.
- I tend to make consultant hiring decision on the spot after one networking meeting.

Optimism by Word:

- When I am asked to collaborate, I am inclined to respond: “Let’s do it!” “Let’s get it done.” “Why not?”
- When I see people taking personal improvement actions, I tend to encourage and compliment rather than point out what they could have done differently.

I know a thing or two about optimism leading to success because I have been blessed with much success. And I enjoy every day of my life because I encounter life events as blessings.

Too often, in casual group conversations, I hear the following:

- Complaints about the boss;
- Complaints about the economy;
- Complaints about a sports team;
- Complaints about the weather;
- Complaints about the government;

- Complaints about anything someone has no control over;
- You get the idea – the list of complaints goes on and on.

What are your common topics of complaint regarding items you have no control over?

I do not take part in these types of “downer” conversations. Whenever complaints start, I do one or more of the following:

- Sometimes, I try to change the subject.
- I ask the participants to share an alternative viewpoint. For example, if I hear complaints about urban living, I may suggest brainstorming the advantages of urban life. You get the idea?
- When the situation permits, I point out that complaining about circumstances does not make our situation any better.
- I also may point out that repeating an event and associated emotions over and over makes us feel worse.
- I ask to share the joyous moment of the day.
- I ask to share an elevator speech.

My qualification #2 to write this book: Expert in lifelong learning and human performance

Armed with a Ph.D. in Instructional System Design and a graduate certificate in Human Resource Development, I am a practicing expert in learning and human performance development. Consequently, I have spent years exploring and studying self-directed human actions that contribute to learning and performance improvement. As a practitioner and fan of positive self-talk and optimism, I have studied best practices and research findings related to positive self-talk and human performance, including the growing body of scientific research showing a strong link between positive self-talk and improved performance. Thus, I am

uniquely qualified to write this book because of my personal experience with positive self-talk, positive outlook, professional and business expertise, and familiarity with scientific research on the subject.

My qualification #3 to write this book: Storyteller

I am a natural storyteller. I have been a storyteller for my entire life. Ironically, I did not know this inner talent until very recently. For every chapter in this book, I have included stories to support every hypothesis and illustrate them for greater understanding. You will be happy to read some of the most colorful and true stories. Many more will be shared during book release events.

Thus, I am qualified to write this book as (1) a master practitioner of positivity; (2) as a learning expert; and (3) as a storyteller.

What are my sources for the content of this book?

The content of this book is based on a combination of the following sources:

- Research findings on positive self-talk and related topics;
- My personal, career, and business experiences;
- Knowledge and insights based on many years of interest, study, and observation of life around me;
- Conversations with people in my networking circles; and
- Insights from listening to and reading the works of other wise people.

Who is this book written for?

In writing the second edition of this book, I have two distinct audiences (1) those who are dedicated to making our world a better place, and (2) those who are improving living conditions for themselves and their immediate family members. While these two types of people are not mutually exclusive, we all emphasize one over the other at different stages of our lives.

This book is primarily for people who have a worthy goal to accomplish. A worthy goal is a goal beyond a person's personal interest and bigger than oneself. Some examples of worthy goals include: eliminating hunger from the face of the earth, eliminating childhood obesity in the nation, eliminating bullying in schools, providing free college educational access to needy students, and eliminating

sexual harassment from the workplace. This book provides the right frame of mind to accomplish an impossible but worthy goal.

The book is secondarily for people who want to achieve positive quality of life outcomes. Positive quality of life outcomes include such things as good health, meaningful relationships, career success, happiness, and satisfaction with one's accomplishments.

Who else can benefit the most from the book?

- Parents who want to use these principles to model for and teach their children;
- Career professionals who seek job satisfaction and upward mobility;
- Business owners who want to grow their businesses and create jobs in their communities;
- Political leaders, whose campaign words really matter to their electorate;
- Community leaders who are in the business of creating and spreading the common good.

How should you read this book?

I encourage you to read this book with a pen or pencil on hand to write your responses to the questions interspersed throughout. As an expert on human learning, I know that you will gain more from this book if you combine your reading with practice activities and reflective thinking. Thus, for the best results, I encourage you to make the time to actively respond to the activity questions provided throughout this book and at the end of each chapter.

What is contained in this book?

This book discusses the positive actions and benefits of:

- Positive Self-Talk: How to Reframe Your Words for Positive Action
- Reflective Planning: How Best to Mine Your Past to Guarantee Future Success
- Generosity: How Your Giving Makes a Difference

- Gratitude: How Expressing Gratitude Reaps You Abundant Joy & Happiness
- Networking: How Making Connections Generates Limitless Possibilities
- Coopetition-Oriented Teamwork: How Collaborating With Your Rivals Creates a Win-Win
- Giving Back: How One Person Has the Potential to Build a Better World
- Excellence Over Perfection: How Perfection is the Enemy of Good

How is this book different from other books?

- It is designed as a workbook with space for you to write comments and answers to activity questions. Each chapter contains at least one reflective question. You are encouraged to write your responses to the questions and act on the action items in this book.
- Each chapter contains a self-assessment to allow you to determine the level of skills you possess.
- It is written in question and answer format so you can focus on the questions that most interest you. This allows you to use your reading time wisely.
- It is designed as an interactive tool. Write on it. Underline items. You may write remarks such as agree, disagree, not sure, like it, do not like this, etc. You may draw on pages, fold them, or tear off a page and give it away. The book is written for you to do something with it.
- After you are finished with the book, you may intentionally leave it at a café for others to pick up and read.
- Important points are said over and over a little differently. Why? Habits are formed through repetition. Learning is gained through intentional repetition. Thus, the book repeats some points for reinforcement.

Success Criteria

I have set out five success criteria for this book. I will consider this book a success if the following criteria are met, in the priority order listed:

- 1) My number one success criterion for this book is that you, the reader, apply what you have learned here to change your life, and your enhanced positive self-talk, reflective planning, generosity, gratitude, networking skills,

coopetition-oriented teamwork, giving back to the community, and excellence over perfection.

- 2) My second success criterion is that you, the reader, read this book the way it is intended, taking notes, responding to the activities, and interacting with the book.
- 3) My third success criterion is that you, the reader, read this book however you want to read it.
- 4) My fourth success criterion is that you, the reader, buy the book for yourself or as a gift for someone else or receive it as a gift.
- 5) Finally, my fifth success criterion is that you, the reader, create your own success stories related to the ones in this book.

Thank you for considering the above five things.

If you wait for perfect conditions, you will not get anything done.

— Ecclesiastes 11: 4

Book Testimonials

"It's impossible not to be swept up in the wake of Dr. Hamda's practice of using positive words, actions and attitudes as an approach to building successful business and community relationships! Fortunately, you don't need to have the privilege of working directly with Dr. Hamda to experience how making "positive adjustments" in how you think and communicate can result in productive and satisfying results. As a learning leader, a driving principle that underscores the advice I give to my clients is to always adopt practices that ensure sustainable learning. Become What You Say gives you the field-tested tools and advice you need to achieve sustainable personal and professional growth. With gratitude."

— Natalia Guerrido-CEO and Partner, Bonzach LLC

"Gabe has remained more optimistic than anyone I know, in any situation. NEVER in the 20 years I have worked with him have I heard him bad-mouth a person. Never! Can you imagine! Not everyone we come across in our lives is a positive character, but Gabe sees the best in everyone. His positive attitude is contagious, as it sets the stage for a happy, hopeful organizational culture. Using positive words is a way to shape productive behavior, and he is a wonderful role model for that."

— Tanya E. Kruk, MA, CAPM, Senior Consultant

"If you know Dr. Hamda, his words in this book in it's second edition remind you of the positive words he says whenever he greets you. You can't help but smile as he greets you. This book is a printed memory of when you and he meet. Become What You Say continues the tradition of the first edition with more examples, insights, and research on the power of words, how they influence one's own attitude, and shape the behavior of others. This book is, first and foremost, inspirational -- coupled with instructional and motivational elements to yield a triple outcome for the reader."

— Stuart H. Weinstein, Ph.D., Graduate Faculty, Instructional Systems Development,
University of Maryland Baltimore County

"I've known Gabe Hamda close to a decade. He understands the power of words. Not only does he always maintain a positive tone in his talks, but he also encourages everyone he meets to use positive words. In 'Become What You Say', Gabe will show you how to become what you want by knowing how to say it right."

— Assegid Habtewold, the author of
'The Highest Level of Greatness' and 'Soft Skills That Make or Break Your Success'

"I have known Gabe Hamda for almost twenty years. He has been an inspiration and partner in a number of business ventures. When I took over the leadership of Jacksonville Fire and Rescue Services, after retiring as Fire Chief of the District of Columbia Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department, my initial task was to begin Team Building. I called on Gabe and his team to assist. His untiring energy and willingness to assist was of tremendous help to my success in

building a strong team, that would help make Jacksonville Fire and Rescue Department one on the best in the nation. I find him to be the most optimistic and generous person, and business leader I have known. His willingness to give advice and share his knowledge with new and upcoming businesses is unprecedented. I am eternally grateful for his friendship.”

— Ray Alfred, Fire Chief (Ret.), President, Emergency Responders Industries, Inc.

If a more positive person in word or deed than Dr Gabe Hamda exists, I am eagerly awaiting them. I have known him and heard his uplifting speech and wondered, is this real? Well, he is real, the full frontal display of optimism and positive example. The lessons of his book promise success. I will gladly read and heed.

— Gene Kendall, Radm USN(ret)

You Become What You Say: The Power of Words by Dr. Hamda is a special gift because it distills the wisdom of a very exceptional thought leader. Dr. Hamda is a successful businessman and over the years that I have known him, he has generously volunteered his time to mentor and support the development of others. He is a wonderful example of a leader who “walks his talk”. In this book, he takes us on a journey unlike any other that will enrich your soul and bring out your true brilliance. Please don’t rush your reading, I encourage you to take your time and savor the genius of this book.

- James Alexander, Internal Organization Development Consultant, Federal Government

*“I have known Gabe Hamda for over 15 years and find him to be one of the most positive, generous, and creative business people I have ever met. Gabe’s effervescent personality enables him to quickly engage people and establish common ground with both friends and foes. He is well-grounded – intellectually, professionally, socially, and spiritually – and integrates his wealth of life experiences into everything and everyone he touches. Dr. Hamda models the attributes about which he writes in his latest work, *You Become What You Say*. He operates on the principle “freely you have received, freely give” and has demonstrated such liberality with his time, talents, and treasure. As a developing consultant, I consider Gabe to be a personal mentor from whom I can seek and receive sound counsel on a broad array of business and professional topics. I can honestly say that Gabe Hamda doesn’t just talk the talk, he walks the walk!”*

— Verdun P. Woods, Jr. Organizational Development Consultant, Jacksonville, FL

Gabe Hamda, Ph.D., SPHR, is President and CEO of ICATT Consulting (www.icatt.net). ICATT improves organizational performance through customized training, staffing services and cyber security services.

Gabe holds a Ph.D. Instructional System Design from Florida State University and SPHR (Senior Professional in Human Resources) from Society for Human Resource Management. Gabe is co-founder of Go Pro21 Community and Access Growing Business Council. Gabe may be reached by email at gabe.hamda@icatt.net.



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