

TOP 100 POWER VERBS

**The Most Powerful Verbs and Phrases
You Can Use to Win in Any Situation**

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Top 100 Power Verbs

(1) *“The test of friendship is assistance in adversity, and that too, unconditional assistance. Co-operation which needs consideration is a commercial contract and not friendship. Conditional co-operation is like adulterated cement which does not bind.”*

—Mohandas Gandhi, Indian, preeminent leader of Indian nationalism in British-ruled India (1869–1948)

Adumbrate

- (1) foreshadow; give a general description of something but not the details; prefigure; obscure; overshadow; predict; presage; summary

Word Used in Sentence(s)

(1) *The global political troubles adumbrated an eventual world—wide economic recession.*

(1) *It is never good for a manager to adumbrate news of a partial layoff to just a few employees.*

Affect

- (1) change; concern; have an effect on; impact; impinge on; impress; influence; move; shape; strike; sway; touch
(2) distress; disturb; move; touch; upset
(3) assume; fake; imitate; pretend or have; put on

Word Used in Sentence(s)

(1) *How various countries attract or discourage import and export operations affects the way American firms structure their global operations.*

(1) *“Being fit matters...New research suggests that a few extra pounds or a slightly larger waistline affects an executive’s perceived leadership ability as well as stamina on the job.”*

—Kwoh, Leslie. “Marketing,” *Wall Street Journal*, January 16, 2013: pg. B1.

Collocates to: adversely, does, factor, how, negatively, performance, positive

Allege

- (1) assert without proof; claim; cite as an authority; excuse; offer as a plea

Word Used in Sentence(s)

(1) *Given the ubiquity of social media, sometimes all it takes to ruin someone's reputation is for a person to allege a heinous act to have occurred.*

(1) *“‘We need a healthy dose of real competition,’ says John Anderson, president of the Electricity Consumers Resource Council. ‘We were deregulation’s first supporters. But all we’ve really done is go from one regulatory structure to a new one that is less customer-friendly.’ He and other critics also allege that a key negative feature in each market is ‘market power’—an oligopoly situation that may be allowing generating companies to whipsaw prices upward.”*

—Clayton, Mark. “In Deregulation of Electric Markets, a Consumer Pinch,” *Christian Science Monitor*, April 25, 2006.

Collocates to: authorities, courts, critics, defendants, documents, officials, lawsuits, plaintiffs, police, prosecutors

Arrogate

(1) ascribe; assume; claim as own; take power that is not yours

Word Used in Sentence(s)

(1) *I won’t arrogate to teach you about life.*

(1) *He is the type of man who will arrogate, assume, and ascribe such powers to himself.*

Back down

(1) back off; bow out; give up; pull out; retreat from a position; surrender

Word Used in Sentence(s)

(1) *“Don’t back down just to keep the peace. Standing up for your beliefs builds self-confidence and self-esteem.”*

—Oprah Winfrey, American television personality, actress, and producer (1954–)

(1) *“You are a coward when you even seem to have backed down from a thing you openly set out to do.”*

—Mark Twain, American humorist, writer, and lecturer (1835–1910)

(1) “Officials tend to **back down** when the people get their backs up.”

—Unknown

Back out

- (1) abandon; ; back off; back pedalbail out; cancel or renege on an arrangement; leave; pull back; retreat

Word Used in Sentence(s)

(1) “When in doubt, **back out** on a technicality.”

—Walter Shapiro, American columnist

Bafflegab

- (1) double-talk; gibberish talk; speak in an ambiguous or incomprehensible way; song and dance; speak tap dance around a straight answer; speak gobbledygook; use puffery

Word Used in Sentence(s)

(1) *The Play, “Death of a Salesman” could have easily been subtitled “the end of one man’s **bafflegab**.”*

Belie

- (1) disprove; to give false impression or to contradict

Word Used in Sentence(s)

(1) *The small, unassuming building **belied** the global Internet business that was taking place inside.*

(1) “Man is a creature of hope and invention, both of which **belie** the idea that things cannot be changed.”

—Tom Clancy, American novelist (1947–)

(1) “Our very hopes **belied** our fears, our fears our hopes **belied**, we thought her dying when she slept, and sleeping when she died!”

—Thomas Hood, English poet and humorist (1799–1845)

Collocates to: fact, image, notion, numbers, seem, words

Beset

- (1) attack; be snowed under; beleaguer; besiege; harass; inundate; overrun; overwhelm; plague; surround

Word Used in Sentence(s)

(1) *In spite of the toughest gun laws in the U.S., Chicago is **beset** by more gun violence than any other American city.*

Collocates to: by, delays, economy, financial, injuries, internal, problems, troubles

Besmirch

- (1) attack someone; blacken; cast aspersions on; charge falsely or with malicious intent; damage; defame; slander; sully; taint; tarnish

Word Used in Sentence(s)

(1) *Since being fired, he has been busy **besmirching** his former boss.*

(1) *Because of the ubiquity of social media, it is much easier to **besmirch** someone and not be held accountable.*

(1) *He **besmirched** her reputation with lies and untruths.*

(1) *“Men are nicotine-soaked, beer-**besmirched**, whiskey-greased, red-eyed devils.”*

—Carrie Nation, American temperance activist (1848–1911)

Collocates to: anything, man, name, otherwise, reputation, would

Blandish

- (1) coax; cajole; induce or persuade by gentle flattery; influence

Word Used in Sentence(s)

(1) *A leader most likely would not attempt to **blandish** a follower into accepting his point of view but rather resort to the use of influence.*

Bowdlerize

- (1) censor; edit; expurgate; remove obscenity or other inappropriate content

Word Used in Sentence(s)

(1) *“John Nance Garner, FDR’s first vice president, famously said ‘the job of second-in-command wasn’t worth a warm bucket of spit.’ Well, that’s not exactly what Garner said, but in an era before hot microphones, newspapermen were kind enough to **bowdlerize** it for him.”*

—Mark Hemingway, American writer for *The Washington Examiner*

Bullyrag

- (1) dominate; force into agreement or compliance; intimidate

Word Used in Sentence(s)

(1) *This was the kind of neighborhood in which it was standard practice for young teens to be **bullyragged** into joining a street gang.*

Cadge

- (1) ask; beg; get away with; rob; sneak; sponge by imposing on another’s good nature; steal; take

Word Used in Sentence(s)

(1) *If people were not in such a good mood during the Christmas season, **cadging** by many charities would not be so successful.*

Collocates to: drinks, food, free, from, lift, try

Calumniate

- (1) utter maliciously false statements, charges, or imputations; slander; traduce

Word Used in Sentence(s)

(1) *“I am not to order the natural sympathies of my own breast, and of every honest breast to wait until the tales and all the anecdotes of the coffeehouses of Paris and of the dissenting meeting houses of London are*

*scoured of all the slander of those who **calumniate** persons, that afterwards they may murder them with impunity. I know nothing of your Story of Messalina. What, are not high rank, great splendour of descent, great personal elegance and outward accomplishments ingredients of moment in forming the interest we take in the misfortunes of men?"*

—Bromwich, David. "The Context of Burke's Reflections," *Social Research*, Volume 58, Issue 2, Summer 1991: pg. 313–354.

Collocates to: afterwards, person, slander, that, those, who

Capitulate

- (1) acquiesce; cede; give in; give up; give way; relent; submit; surrender; yield

Word Used in Sentence(s)

(1) *When the company brought in nonunion workers, the union **capitulated** and went back to work without a new contract.*

(1) *The union bargaining team was forced to **capitulate** on the pension issue.*

(1) *"I will be conquered; I will not **capitulate**."*

—Samuel Johnson, English poet, critic, and writer (1709–1784)

(1) *Today, successful selling should produce a win-win outcome, not one in which the buyer feels like she had to **capitulate**.*

Card stack

- (1) load an argument with evidence for one side while suppressing evidence to the contrary

Word Used in Sentence(s)

(1) ***Card stacking** can be a tool of advocacy groups or of those groups with specific agendas to manipulate perception of an issue by emphasizing the groups' beliefs over the opposition, over fact-based information, even over reality.*