

Each discipline has its own language

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**Each discipline has its own language**

**By John Warzecha**

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English scholars may use such language as "stream of consciousness", while economists may speak of "market maximization". Unfortunately this makes it indecipherable to everyone else. Individuals not directly involved in the discipline, or a related field, are left thinking that the language is convoluted and not worth the time and effort to understand. Perhaps there is safety in isolation but in this safety there is the potential for losing your audience.

Words, or rather the control of words and hence the control of language, have given one a sense of power. If some language confuses, then there may be the impression that one is somehow superior over someone who does not understand the language. This is the great democratizing feature of the Internet.

Unfortunately there has now developed a separate language that has become exclusive to the Internet and it has had the effect of scaring many people away from active use of the net. It is true that there has been a phenomenal increase in business on the net but in many cases the use is restricted to e-mail and basic research for papers or reports. Many individuals need a very precise explanation or understanding and yet while they are surfing around the net they come across a word such as "e-zines" (which means a newsletter sent through e-mail) and now their enthusiasm is tempered. This is not to suggest that people using the net are linguistically challenged in some way. They merely want to understand the language without having to resort to a technical dictionary.

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Perhaps the introduction of the Apple computer can serve as an illustration. When individuals began working on computers, there was constant frustration for people who were able to use the computer but who were not literate enough to work their way through the myriad of DOS prompts. The concept of a user friendly system opened the door for Apple with its user friendly Icons and point and click method. What could be easier? Now the computer could be used by everyone and not just the technologically gifted. Computers were now taking on some human attributes – so to speak.

This kind of democratization of the Internet is also necessary. Why should a potential user, especially someone who wants to set up a web page, but who does not necessarily possess the technical expertise, be

faced with phrases that talk of "switch off the external CPU cache in your PC's Bios" or "paid-rank" search engine." This is a case where the old "kiss" (keep it simple stupid) would prove effective.

There is a power in language but that power does not have to be hidden through an over dependence on technical jargon. Gone are the days when a computer firm would fearfully bring a programmer into a meeting because the typical programmer gave the impression of having lived in another time zone while operating as a social outcast.

There is an interesting commercial on television that deals with advanced networking capabilities that will allow inter-office and inter-branch communications. The president of the company comes up to the resident computer programmer and asks him to justify the expense using less than 10 words. The programmer stops for about 10 seconds and answers that the bottom line will be improved by 15% in less than one year. It was very simple, short and straight to the point. There was no technical jargon, bafflegab or technical rhetoric. The justification for the added expense was in the explanation. The commercial was extremely effective because it showed that, despite the complexity of the business applications, the solutions are very straightforward and simple.

When discussing computers or web-sites one can read about "incorporating CSS, DHTML, Flash, Shockwave, VRML, Java into your site, plus by using SQL/mysql, php3, ASP, javascript can add the ability to collate customer database information and add e-commerce abilities."

Translated this means that "you can incorporate amazing multi-media and interactivity into your site, plus by using our highly skilled team we can make it easy for you to see who your customers are, plus allow them to order your products on-line".

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In the same way when selling equipment you can advertise that you can purchase a "12.1 active matrix laptop, 16+colours, with an AGP graphics controller, and a 2.5 MB of SGRAM video memory! What's more – it includes the L2 Cache running at the full clock speed, plus TWO extra PCMCIA slots so you can add a modem for instant Internet gaming!"

Again this can be translated into "Purchase our amazing laptop with brilliant colours, and exceptionally smooth graphics for playing games. What's more– it can include extra memory to run games extremely fast, plus you can add extra functions such as a modem to connect to the Internet where you can play against other people."

There will always be room for the technical jargon for the individual who wants it. After the purchaser has been attracted to the product by gaining a straight-forward understanding of its capabilities, then, if he desires it, the technical capabilities can be covered by referring to the specifications. Technical jargon, or statistical specifications, are

not necessary to sell the capabilities of a product or a service, but only to explain it and to validate any claims that have been made.

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### **ARE YOU DISCIPLINED?**

**By Rhoberta Shaler**

#### **ARE YOU DISCIPLINED? by Rhoberta Shaler**

For most people, the word "discipline" has an immediate negative connotation. It implies something imposed from the outside, doesn't it? It means that someone or something is controlling or demanding, neither of which are particularly appealing. When we do think about self-discipline, it, too, often has a negative spin because it is seen as difficult and contributing to failure. Can you think about it differently?

Self-discipline is nothing more than keeping your commitments to yourself. If you say something is important and significant to you, then take this little test:

Does that something that you SAY is important show up a

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significant number of times in either your calendar, or your checkbook, or both? If it does not, then, where is the demonstration that it is important to you? Do you regularly do what you say has value to you?

I'm sure you understand the picture. I believe behavior, not words. How about you?

So, self-discipline arises from self-esteem and self-esteem is enhanced by self-discipline. Then, it seems natural that you take a look at your self-esteem. Do you believe that you are worth spending the time and/or money on? Do you get the "left-overs" of time and resources rather than filling your own cup? It is not unusual to feel that you are being a "good" person when you are self-sacrificing. That's because our society often tells us this is so. Oh, good thinking! The society says so because everyone else benefits from your self-sacrifice. In fact, "sacrifice" itself is an interesting concept. The dictionary says it means "the act of giving up or destroying one thing for the sake of something else".

Do you really want to be SELF-sacrificing?

Rhoberta Shaler, PhD Keynotes, Seminars & Coaching for entrepreneurs & professionals who want the motivation & strategies to achieve, to lead and to live richly. Creator of the Living Richly™ Program Host of Living Richly™ on [www.wsRadio.ws](http://www.wsRadio.ws). Author of OPTIMIZE Your Day! Practical Wisdom for

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