

Filler Words

Are there any words or phrases that you use in English when you're thinking of something to say?

Those are called **filler words (or phrases)**. They're **not** always a bad thing, especially in conversations! Native and advanced speakers of English use these phrases all the time.

In English, we **don't have pauses or silence** when we have a conversation. People expect you to speak right away! But sometimes you need a moment to think – even if you're good at English!

That's why we use filler words and filler phrases. So that people aren't waiting for your answer. Using filler phrases will make you sound much more natural.

Directions: Write down some filler words/phrases that you use or that you've heard:

Filler Words: Listening

Directions: Listen to these parts of an interview with Mark Zuckerberg.

First just listen for filler words (don't write anything). Then answer the "After Listening" questions.

Then listen again. As you listen, look at the script and circle the filler words that you see in the conversation on this paper.

After listening:

1. What are Mark Zuckerberg's favorite filler words or phrases?

2. When does he use filler words?

Part 1

Interviewer: The last several months here, Mark, have they taken some of your swagger away and is that important?

Mark Zuckerberg: I mean that's um... You know... I try to not have a swagger. So I'm not sure it's...

Interviewer: I don't mean it in a literal sense. I mean it more in a figurative sense.

MZ: You know... I mean there's a lot of crazy stuff that's going on. Alright so... there are periods where people say that, you know, we're doing better than we think we're doing. There are periods where people say we're doing worse than I think that we're doing.

Part 2

Interviewer: It's been a tough several months around here. What is morale like? Are people here worried? Are they concerned? Cuz a lot of these people came here thinking one thing was gonna happen and it's changed.

MZ: Um yeah. I mean... You know, things go in cycles where, obviously, in a...we're in a tough cycle now where – I mean, that doesn't help morale – but at the same time, people here are focused on the things that they're building.

Interviewer: But like you, these people have taken a hit. Do you, when you walk by and you see faces of employees here, do you feel personally responsible for them? I don't mean as a CEO. I mean...You look at people here and, did you feel like "hey – it's gonna be OK. I'm gonna make it better."

MZ: Um. Well. I... I mean, I feel a lot of responsibility in my role, and the thing that, that we can do is just make sure that we're building the business and building our products to be the best that they can be and that's what everyone comes to work every day to do and I think, you know, people... people are really excited and optimistic about the things that we're doing.

For the teacher:

Video: Mark Zuckerberg - Interview (Rock Center With Brian William) - HD

<https://youtu.be/oO3wCqjytmg>

First part: 0:10 – 0:40

Second part: 1:10 – 2:07