

Positive Behavior Support *phrasing examples*

(1) “By” to clarify:

There are two options to consider for clarification when using the word “by” ...

- When you use a “praise phrase” like “Good job!” or “Way to go!” etc., add the word “**by**” and state the **exact** behavior the student demonstrated that made you want to say something nice to begin with.

We say things like; “Good job!” “Way to go!”

Try instead ...

Ex. “Good job **by** completing the assignment before the bell rang.”

“Way to go **by** being in your seat and writing in your agenda!”

- Use the word “**by**” to **clarify** your expectations. ** A helpful hint (to assist the student brain!) is to not only use the word “by”, but also provide directives in clusters of “**3**”.

We say things like; “Get to work ... you know what to do!”

Try instead ...

Ex. “Be ready to work **by** having out your book, writing your name and date on your paper, and copying the instructions off the board.”

(2) Say what you **SEE** and say what you **WANT** ...

- This phrasing helps cut down on all the excessive wording we may use when describing what a student is doing or when we’re frustrated and trying to make a point. Limit the comment/concern to the **description** of the behavior, try not to use the word “**I**”, and use as **few** words as possible.

We say things like; “How many times do I have to repeat myself? I’m really so sick and tired that every time I turn around, you ARE NOT busy doing your work, and on and on and on ...”

Try instead ...

Ex. “You’re looking out the window. Look at your book and copy down the 5 problems.”

(3) (Describe behavior) ... “tells me you want something (+)”

(Describe behavior) ... “tells me you want something (-)”

- This phrasing helps put the ownership and responsibility of behavior back on the student.

We say things like; “**If** you get your homework turned in on time, **I** won’t give you a quiz tomorrow.”

Try instead ...

Ex. (+) “Getting your homework turned in before the bell rings, **tells me you** don’t want a quiz tomorrow”

We say things like; “**If** you are tardy one more time, **I’m** going to write you a referral.”

Try instead ...

Ex. (-) “Coming in late tomorrow **tells me you** want an office referral.”

- If the student responds with any statement that is argumentative, resistant, defensive, etc. it may sound like this; “I didn’t say that!” “I do not!” “That’s NOT FAIR!” etc.

We say things like; “You had your chance. Maybe next time you’ll think twice ...”

Try instead ...

Ex. “Then **show me by** being in your seat when the bell rings.”