



4 More Words That Improve Listening

By **Michael Linsin** on April 9, 2016

Last week's article was about how just [three words can improve listening](#). The phrase "in a moment" keeps students from moving on while you're giving directions.

It keeps them rooted in the present and tuned in until the end.

This week, we're going to build on the same strategy.

We're going to add four more words that make the original three even stronger and more effective.

When used in a certain way, and repeated for every time you give directions, the additional four-word phrase motivates students to complete whatever you ask of them with urgency.

It bridges the gap between knowing what to do and doing it with speed, accuracy, and confidence.

It allows for your students to mentally rehearse what you want them to do and provides a push to get them going in the right direction.

While the original three are used *before* giving directions, the additional four are used *after* you give directions.

The four words are: "*When I say go.*"

As in, "*When I say 'go,' you're going to complete these directions (or steps) exactly as I've given them.*"

You'll say these words just before turning your students loose to complete the task, assignment, or routine you've laid out for them.

It's important, however, to pause and allow for any final clarifying questions before actually giving your signal. You may also want to ask if there is anyone [who doesn't know](#) what to do.

Because once you say 'go,' you're handing responsibility *in total* over to them – with [very reluctant additional support](#) from you. You've done your job and prepared them to succeed.

It's their job to see it through.

If there are questions, or if you feel you need to review any details one last time, you'll want to add yet another pause before giving your 'go' signal. This is critical.

A final pause of 15-20 seconds will cause students to visualize themselves successfully doing whatever you want them to do. It also builds suspense and challenges them to perform with excellence.

Only when you feel satisfied you've provided every tool they need to succeed will you say . . .

"Go!"

This simple two-part strategy of giving directions — *in a moment* and *when I say go* — can turn distracted, bored, and daydreaming students into active and tenacious listeners.

When combined with compelling, highly detailed instruction, and [a true expectation of independence](#), it can transform learning.

Now, it's important to note that there is a lot to this topic. It's part of a broader approach to education that we here at SCM believe is the answer to motivating students and instilling in them a love of learning.

The article, in fact, refers to a number of important strategies