

Verbal Tics

um you know like I'm like I mean etc.

Think of a *verbal tic* as a word or phrase used constantly and unconsciously but which is often independent of the meaning someone wants to convey. Because they can distract the listener and hinder communication, verbal tics should be avoided.

It's not easy though. Even the most skilled and articulate communicators have them. For example, notice how often you hear professional journalists and political commentators on television say "I mean...."

It's possible that they're common because of social acceptance from peers, not unlike the verbal equivalent of the latest clothing fashion.

Avoid them and stand out from the crowd.