

## Using Quotations Effectively

Direct quotations help bring your writing to life for your reader. This is especially true when the way a person speaks, or how he/she says something, is particularly interesting, insightful, or colorful.

Try to include one or two direct quotations per page in the main section of your profile, but not many more. While tempting, your profile shouldn't become a string of direct quotes, or "I asked, she said. I asked, she said." Your job as the writer is to frame and tell your subject's story, sprinkling their actual thoughts and ideas throughout to reveal their depth and personality.

Introduce each direct quote with a meaningful **signal phrase** that signals the words are not your own. Signal phrases can also be used at the end of a quotation. For example:

Ms. Marsh remembers that, "He always made me feel like a daughter he hadn't seen in quite a while."

"Growing up with five brothers and sisters, I learned from an early age how to work with others to get through difficult times and solve problems," she said.

It can also be helpful to describe how your subject said something.

"The girl couldn't remember my name for the life of her, but she remembered her horse Dooley." Jackie smiles with the memory.

When I asked what was the best part about working at Wegdwood, without hesitation she replied, "Helping children get a better outlook on life and letting them know they have someone in their corner."

"I am psychologically kind of a health freak," Mr. Yeganeh said, in a lisping staccato of Armenian origin.

The signal phrase you choose should match the tone of the quotation. For example, don't say that someone disputes something if they are actually agreeing. Know what each verb means and look them up if you aren't sure.

### Common Signal Phrases

acknowledges	comments	endorses	reasons
adds	compares	grants	refutes
admits	confirms	illustrates	rejects
agrees	contends	implies	reports
argues	declares	insists	responds
asserts	discusses	notes	suggests
believes	disputes	observes	thinks
claims	emphasizes	points out	writes

Source: Hacker, Diana. *Rules for Writers*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2008.

