

Tribes Vocabulary Text

Hi, this is AJ, welcome to the vocabulary lesson for “Tribes.” Let’s start.

I already talked about the word tribe, but let me talk about it again. So, again, a tribe...the original meaning of tribe was really a collection of families that were grouped together. So, for example, we had African Tribes, Native American Tribes. So you would have many different families and they are connected to each other and they form one big group and that group is called a tribe.

But now we have a much more general meaning of the word tribe. And a tribe is a collection of people who share a meaning or a purpose or an interest in life. So now we use it in this very general way.

You might talk about a tribe of computer users, for example. So you might have a group, a club, of Apple users, people who love Apple Computers. And then you have another group, another club, let’s say in San Francisco of Apple users. And you have another group, another club, of Apple users in Chicago. And then, somehow, they all connect to each other.

So the group in New York and the group in Chicago and the group in San Francisco, maybe they meet one time every year. They have a big seminar or a convention and they all connect with each other and now we might call them a tribe. We might call them the Apple Users Tribe because you’ve got all these different groups and now they’re connected to each other. They have formed a larger group of people.

And the Effortless English Club, I think of it as a tribe, right? We have people in all different parts of the world and we have little small groups within our club. So we might have a bunch of students from Vietnam and we might have a bunch of students from Brazil. But then these groups connect with each other and then they also connect with people from other countries, so all together we form a big tribe.

Our next word is yearning or to yearn. It’s a verb; to yearn for or to yearn to. To yearn means to really want. It means to desire, to strongly desire. It’s a strong word. So if you say, “I yearn for her”, all right, it means I want her so much. I desire her. I need her so much. It’s a very strong word. So it’s to desire very strongly.

So, Seth Godin says, “Every tribe is yearning for leadership and connection.” So he means that everybody in a group really, really wants leadership and they really, really want connection. They desire leadership. They desire connection. So he’s saying people in groups, they want a meaning. They want to share a meaning with each other and with a leader. So, to yearn means to want a lot or to really, really, really desire.

Our next word is assemble, to assemble. He says that “Right now everybody has an opportunity to find or assemble a tribe.” To assemble means to create or to put together. It means you have different pieces; you put them together in one big whole, w-h-o-l-e, whole. So assemble means just put parts together to create a whole thing, to assemble.

Our next word is leverage. He said “Now individuals have increased leverage within organizations.” And leverage just means an increased power or a way to get more power.

So, for example, normally, in a normal company, maybe I could have influence or I could have power with my small group, my department, here in San Francisco. I go to work, to my office, I can influence the people in my office, maybe 10 people. So I have this amount of power, this small amount of power.

But using the Internet with a website, with email, with phones, I can connect with people in the same company in New York, in Chicago, in Texas and in other countries. I have more leverage. It means I have more ways to influence or more ways to have power. So leverage just kind of has this idea of increased power, increased power or an increased way to get power or ways to get power.

So he’s saying now in any group, any organization, individual people have much more power because they can influence people in other places, in other countries using the Internet, using phones, using video, whatever. They have more ways to influence people, more ways to get power or to lead. And that is leverage.

Our next phrase is “circles of interest.” He said, “Right now because of the Internet we have an explosion of tribes, an explosion of groups, an explosion of circles of interest.” Circles of interest. It’s really similar to tribes, but it’s a weaker phrase. It has a weaker feeling.

Circles of interest just means groups of people who share the same interest, maybe a hobby, maybe people who all love Brad Pitt. You know it’s like a Brad Pitt Fan Club. You might say that’s a circle of interest. So they don’t have a big purpose in life that they all share, but they share something they’re all interested in.

So, for example, again the Apple Computer example is a good example of a circle of interest. If you just have, you know, 20 people and they all like Apple Computers and maybe they meet once a month, you might call that a circle of interest. So, again, it's like of like a club, really, circle of interest; a club, a little, small organization.

And tribe has just a stronger feeling. That's the only difference. Circle of interest just feels less emotional. A tribe is a circle of interest that has a strong meaning, a strong purpose; very emotional connections to each other.

Our next phrase is "to make a difference." Seth Godin says that "Everyone wants to make a difference. Everyone can make a difference." To make a difference means to improve a situation or to improve someone's life. It means to contribute. It means to help.

If you said "Wow, he really made a difference", it means he really helped people. He really improved something. You can make a difference at your job. It means you go to work and you actually improve the company, for example. You say "Oh, they made a difference. They improved the company."

Or you could say the opposite, "I didn't make a difference at my company." It means I didn't help anything. I didn't improve anything. I went to work and then I went home, nothing changed. Things were not different. Everything stayed the same.

So it has a very positive meaning. To make a difference means to change something in a better way. It means to improve something or to help, so it's a very positive word. So if say "You can make a difference", it means you can help. You can improve people's lives. You can improve something. You can help. You can contribute.

Our next word is faith. I think we've had this word before; we'll talk about it again. Faith is just a strong confidence and belief in something. So Seth Godin says "Tribes are about faith. They're about belief in an idea. They're about belief in a community." So he's just saying tribes are about faith. It means to have a tribe, a real tribe. It means the members and the leader they need to have a strong belief. They need to have strong confidence in some purpose or in each other or both.

So it means they have to really, really believe in each other. They have to really feel a strong confidence, belief, emotion about some idea, some purpose, some meaning or some people or person. And that is faith. Faith, faith, a very strong belief, a very strong confidence in something; faith in something or faith about something.

Our next phrase is "grounded in." He said "Tribes are grounded in respect and admiration for the leader of the tribe and for the other members of the tribe." Grounded in really means connected to or created from, so if something is grounded in respect it means it starts from respect. It's created from respect. It really means that respect is the first thing. That everything else starts with respect.

Think of a plant, a small plant. The little plant is growing from the ground, right? A plant starts in the ground, it starts in the earth, and then it grows up, up, up, up, up and it becomes a big tree, maybe. But we say it is grounded, right? It is connected to the earth. It must start in the earth. It must start in the ground. It starts from the ground from the seed and it must always stay connected to the earth. So the tree is grounded in the earth, right? It starts from the earth, connected to the earth first.

So it's that same idea, so it means a tribe is grounded in respect. It means respect is first. Respect and admiration are first. And the tribe must always stay connected to and always begin with respect. It's the most important value. Respect for the leader, respect for other members.

It's the first value, the first purpose and it's the most important one and it's the one that the members must always stay connected to. So, again, think of that plant idea for grounded in, grounded in respect. Tribes are grounded in respect. It means that's where they start. It's the most important idea.

And our last word is brilliant. Most of you probably know this word already, but brilliant means great, fantastic. It also has an idea of very intelligent. So you can say "She is brilliant." It means she is very, very intelligent, very, very smart. So Seth Godin says that "Faith in a tribe is a brilliant strategy." It's a very intelligent strategy. It's a very intelligent plan.

All right, well that is the end of our vocabulary for "Tribes."

I will see you in the mini-story.