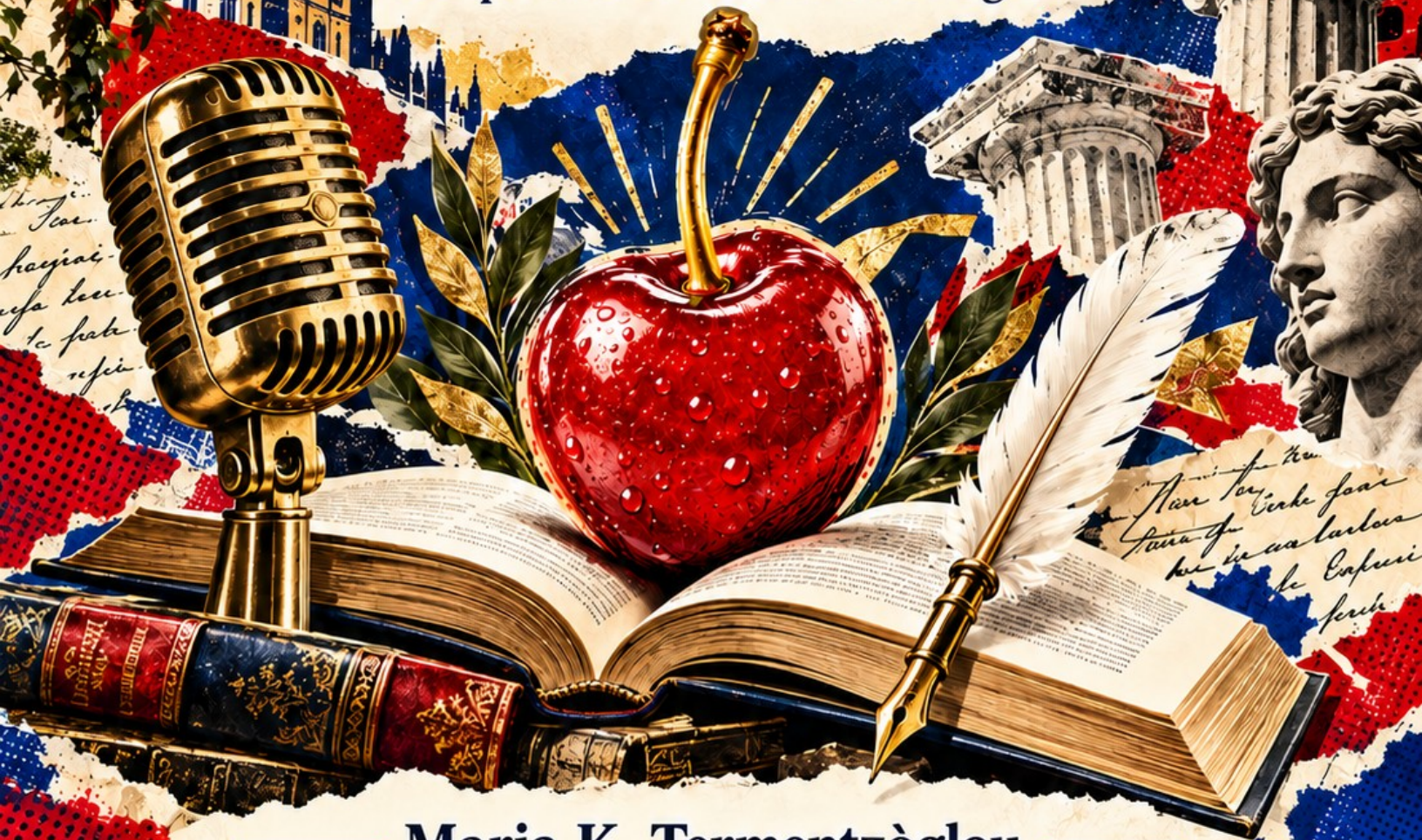


— THE BRITISH —
CHERRY

The **Eloquence** *Club*

217 phrases for memorable English



— Maria K. Termentzoglou —

Meanings • Contexts • Greek equivalents

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The Eloquence Club

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Welcome to The Eloquence Club

An introduction by Maria K. Termentzoglou

Some phrases do more than fill a silence. They give an idea shape, turn a conversation in a new direction or leave a thought in the listener's mind long after the words have ended.

This British Cherry collection brings together 217 phrases to help you find those moments in English. There are familiar idioms with a fresh turn, Latin wisdom, ideas inspired by Greek philosophers and English authors, memorable lines from speeches, literature, cinema and business, and Greek proverbs expressed naturally in English.

You do not need to learn them all. Begin with a phrase that sounds like you. Understand it, notice its tone and try it in a situation where it belongs. A well-chosen line is more effective than a conversation crowded with quotations.

Every numbered entry includes a plain-English explanation, a suggested context, a Greek equivalent and an example showing the phrase in use. Unit 5 brings together The Catchy and the Eloquent and additional lines from public speeches. Unit 6 explores 25 Greek proverbs through 21 new entries and four concise cross-references.

Units 2–4 offer modern speaking adaptations inspired by their sources; they are not presented as verbatim quotations. Unit 5 distinguishes quotations, paraphrases and uncertain attributions. When a credit is uncertain, introduce the words as a saying. Unit 6 distinguishes close equivalents from related expressions and meaning-based renderings. Greek translations convey the intended meaning rather than reproduce a historical translation.

Keep your voice natural. Let a phrase open a conversation, sharpen a point or make someone smile. The aim is to have something worth saying—and to say it with confidence.

Maria K. Termentzoglou

The British Cherry

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Unit 1

Catchy phrases inspired by idioms

001 Rome wasn't built in a day.

Greek: Τα σημαντικά επιτεύγματα χρειάζονται χρόνο.

Meaning: Important achievements take time and sustained effort.

Use context: Reassure a learner or team when progress feels slow; encouraging and conversational.

Example: "You've only been learning English for a month. Rome wasn't built in a day."

002 There is no one-size-fits-all solution.

Greek: Δεν υπάρχει μία λύση που να ταιριάζει σε όλες τις περιπτώσεις.

Meaning: Different people or situations need different approaches.

Use context: Explain why teaching, training or a business proposal needs adapting to individual needs.

Example: "Some students need conversation practice; others need writing support. There is no one-size-fits-all solution."

003 If you want to make God laugh, tell him your plans.

Greek: Αν θέλεις να κάνεις τον Θεό να γελάσει, πες του τα σχέδιά σου. — Παραλλαγή παροιμίας των Γίντις.

Meaning: Even careful plans can be overturned by unexpected events.

Use context: Make a light, self-deprecating remark after plans change; it is a proverb, not theology.

Example: "I planned a quiet weekend, and then twelve relatives arrived. If you want to make God laugh, tell him your plans."

004 It's horses for courses.

Greek: Το κατάλληλο πρόσωπο ή η κατάλληλη μέθοδος εξαρτάται από την περίπτωση. — Βρετανικό, ανεπίσημο.

Meaning: Different people or methods suit different tasks.

Use context: Compare job candidates, learning styles or solutions; informal and distinctly British.

Example: "Maya excels at presenting; Alex prefers research. It's horses for courses. Let's divide the work accordingly."

005 Still waters run deep.

Greek: Τα ήρεμα νερά είναι βαθιά· οι λιγομίλητοι άνθρωποι μπορεί να κρύβουν βάθος.

Meaning: A quiet person may have deep thoughts, feelings or abilities.

Use context: Praise someone whose insight surprises others; avoid assuming silence always signals wisdom.

Example: "Anna barely spoke, but her final question changed our approach. Still waters run deep."

006 All that glitters is not gold.

Greek: Δεν είναι χρυσός ό,τι λάμπει.

Meaning: An attractive appearance does not guarantee real quality or value.

Use context: Question a glamorous offer, impressive presentation or apparently perfect opportunity.

Example: "The job title sounds impressive, but check the working conditions. All that glitters is not gold."

007 Empty vessels make the most noise.

Greek: Όσοι έχουν τη λιγότερη ουσία συχνά κάνουν τον περισσότερο θόρυβο. — Επικριτικό.

Meaning: People who know little may speak the loudest.

Use context: Criticise empty boasting indirectly; pointed and potentially insulting if aimed at someone present.

Example: "I used to mistake loud confidence for expertise. Empty vessels make the most noise."

008 The proof of the pudding is in the eating.

Greek: Η πραγματική αξία φαίνεται στην πράξη και στο αποτέλεσμα.

Meaning: You discover whether something is good by trying it and judging the results.

Use context: Move a discussion from promises to a pilot, demonstration or practical test.

Example: "The demonstration looked promising. The proof of the pudding is in the eating. Let's try the software on a real task."

009 Nothing ventured, nothing gained.

Greek: Χωρίς τόλμη δεν υπάρχει κέρδος.

Meaning: You cannot gain something worthwhile without taking some risk.

Use context: Encourage a considered application, proposal or new venture; not a promise of success.

Example: "You meet the requirements, so submit the application. Nothing ventured, nothing gained."

010 Forewarned is forearmed.

Greek: Όποιος έχει προειδοποιηθεί μπορεί και να προετοιμαστεί.

Meaning: Knowing about a possible problem helps you prepare for it.

Use context: Thank someone for a warning or introduce contingency planning.

Example: "Thanks for warning me about the client's concerns. Forewarned is forearmed. I'll bring the supporting figures."

011 Fine words butter no parsnips.

Greek: Με τα ωραία λόγια μόνο δεν γίνεται δουλειά. — Παλαιότερη βρετανική παροιμία.

Meaning: Pleasant words and promises achieve little without action.

Use context: Challenge repeated assurances when delivery is overdue; old-fashioned, humorous and slightly sharp.

Example: “We’ve heard three promises about the repairs, but the roof still leaks. Fine words butter no parsnips. When will the work begin?”

012 There’s many a slip ’twixt cup and lip.

Greek: Ακόμη και λίγο πριν από την επιτυχία, πολλά μπορούν να πάνε στραβά. — Παλαιότερη παροιμία.

Meaning: Things can still go wrong even when success seems very close.

Use context: Caution against celebrating before a contract is signed or a project is completed; literary.

Example: “The buyer sounds enthusiastic, but nothing is signed yet. There’s many a slip ’twixt cup and lip. Let’s wait before celebrating.”

013 A little knowledge is a dangerous thing.

Greek: Η ημιμάθεια είναι επικίνδυνη.

Meaning: Limited understanding can produce misplaced confidence and poor decisions.

Use context: Urge someone to check expertise before acting; more tactful when applied to yourself.

Example: “I read one article and thought I understood the whole subject. A little knowledge is a dangerous thing. I should check a proper reference.”

014 A nod is as good as a wink.

Greek: Ένας μικρός υπαινιγμός αρκεί για να συνεννοηθούμε. — Βρετανικό, παλαιότερο.

Meaning: A small hint is enough when both people already understand the situation.

Use context: Acknowledge a discreet suggestion between people with shared understanding; informal and knowing.

Example: “You don’t need to say any more about keeping the announcement quiet. A nod is as good as a wink.”

015 You cannot make an omelette without breaking eggs.

Greek: Δεν μπορείς να πετύχεις μια αλλαγή χωρίς κάποιο κόστος ή αναστάτωση.

Meaning: Some worthwhile changes involve unavoidable disruption or sacrifice.

Use context: Explain a difficult transition; use carefully when other people will bear the costs.

Example: “The new system will mean a week of disruption. You cannot make an omelette without breaking eggs. We must still support everyone through the change.”

016 You cannot make a silk purse out of a sow’s ear.

Greek: Δεν μπορείς να δημιουργήσεις κάτι εκλεκτό από εντελώς ακατάλληλο υλικό. — Παλαιότερο, επικριτικό.

Meaning: Poor basic materials cannot easily produce a high-quality result.

Use context: Explain why better inputs are needed; avoid applying this dismissively to people.

Example: “You cannot make a silk purse out of a sow’s ear. If the original recording is this poor, editing alone will not make it clear.”

017 The road to hell is paved with good intentions.

Greek: Οι καλές προθέσεις μπορεί να οδηγήσουν σε ολέθρια αποτελέσματα.

Meaning: Good intentions can still lead to harmful results.

Use context: Ask for evidence, safeguards or follow-through when someone defends a plan by its motives.

Example: “The road to hell is paved with good intentions. Offering support means little if nobody answers when people actually ask for help.”

018 It’s an ill wind that blows nobody any good.

Greek: Ακόμη και μια δυσάρεστη εξέλιξη συνήθως ωφελεί κάποιον. — Παλαιότερη παροιμία.

Meaning: Even an unfortunate event usually creates some benefit for someone.

Use context: Identify an unexpected opportunity after a setback; avoid sounding pleased about others’ suffering.

Example: “The cancelled outdoor event gave our little café an unexpectedly busy afternoon. It’s an ill wind that blows nobody any good.”

019 You cannot have your cake and eat it too.

Greek: Δεν μπορείς να απολαμβάνεις ταυτόχρονα δύο ασυμβίβαστα οφέλη.

Meaning: You cannot enjoy two advantages that cancel each other out.

Use context: Explain a trade-off, such as demanding both maximum flexibility and complete certainty.

Example: “You want a completely flexible schedule and a guaranteed finishing time. You cannot have your cake and eat it too. Which matters more to you?”

020 One swallow does not make a summer.

Greek: Ένα χελιδόνι δεν φέρνει την άνοιξη· ένα μόνο θετικό σημάδι δεν αρκεί.

Meaning: One positive sign does not prove that a lasting improvement has occurred.

Use context: Discuss an isolated good result in sales, study or performance; calmly cautionary.

Example: “This month’s results are encouraging, but one swallow does not make a summer. Let’s see whether the improvement lasts.”

021 There is more to this than meets the eye.

Greek: Υπάρχουν περισσότερα εδώ απ' όσα φαίνονται με την πρώτη ματιά.

Meaning: The situation is more complicated than it first appears.

Use context: Introduce hidden causes, background information or a surprising explanation.

Example: "The complaint sounds straightforward, but three departments were involved. There is more to this than meets the eye. We should hear from each of them."

022 The devil is in the detail.

Greek: Οι κρίσιμες δυσκολίες κρύβονται στις λεπτομέρειες.

Meaning: Small details can determine whether a plan succeeds or fails.

Use context: Move from broad agreement to checking a contract, schedule or technical specification.

Example: "The partnership sounds promising. The devil is in the detail. Let's check who is responsible for each stage before agreeing."

023 We cannot see the wood for the trees.

Greek: Έχουμε χαθεί στις λεπτομέρειες και δεν βλέπουμε τη συνολική εικόνα.

Meaning: We are so focused on individual details that we have lost sight of the overall situation.

Use context: Reset a meeting that has become absorbed in minor issues; use "we" to soften criticism.

Example: "We cannot see the wood for the trees. We've spent twenty minutes choosing the font without deciding what the presentation needs to say."

024 Let's not throw the baby out with the bathwater.

Greek: Ας μην απορρίψουμε και τα χρήσιμα μαζί με όσα χρειάζονται αλλαγή.

Meaning: Do not discard something valuable while removing what is wrong.

Use context: Argue for improving an existing system instead of abandoning it completely.

Example: "The booking system needs a better payment page. Let's not throw the baby out with the bathwater. The rest of it works well."

025 We are in danger of putting the cart before the horse.

Greek: Κινδυνεύουμε να κάνουμε τα πράγματα με τη λάθος σειρά.

Meaning: We are doing things in the wrong order.

Use context: Point out that a team is choosing tools or spending money before defining its needs.

Example: "We are in danger of putting the cart before the horse. Before buying new equipment, let's agree on what we actually need it to do."

026 I would be wary of painting everyone with the same brush.

Greek: Θα απέφευγα να κρίνω τους πάντες με τον ίδιο γενικευτικό τρόπο.

Meaning: It is unfair to judge everyone as though they share the same characteristics.

Use context: Challenge a generalisation about customers, colleagues or a group; measured and diplomatic.

Example: "One visitor was rude, but the others have been delightful. I would be wary of painting everyone with the same brush."

027 There is a grain of truth in that, but it is not the whole story.

Greek: Υπάρχει ένας κόκκος αλήθειας σε αυτό, αλλά δεν είναι όλη η αλήθεια.

Meaning: Part of the claim is valid, but it leaves out important information.

Use context: Acknowledge an opponent's point before adding nuance in a debate or meeting.

Example: "There is a grain of truth in that, but it is not the whole story. Working from home saves commuting time, yet not everyone has a quiet place to work."

028 I would not set that in stone just yet.

Greek: Δεν θα το θεωρούσα ακόμη οριστικό και αμετάβλητο.

Meaning: The decision should remain open to revision.

Use context: Keep dates, budgets or plans flexible while evidence is still developing.

Example: "June is our preferred date, but I would not set that in stone just yet. We're still waiting for the venue."

029 The jury is still out on that.

Greek: Δεν έχει ακόμη διαμορφωθεί οριστική κρίση γι' αυτό.

Meaning: There is not enough evidence to reach a firm conclusion yet.

Use context: Discuss an unproven proposal or early results; conversational rather than strictly legal.

Example: "Will the new timetable improve attendance? The jury is still out on that. We need more than one week's results."

030 I would take that with a pinch of salt.

Greek: Θα το αντιμετωπίζα με κάποια επιφύλαξη.

Meaning: Do not accept the claim completely without checking it.

Use context: Respond to gossip, exaggerated promises or uncertain information; mildly sceptical.

Example: "Someone told me the whole department is moving abroad. I would take that with a pinch of salt. No official announcement has been made."

031 I suspect we are scratching the surface.

Greek: Υποψιάζομαι ότι μόλις αγγίζουμε την επιφάνεια του ζητήματος.

Meaning: We have only begun to understand or address the subject.

Use context: Explain why an initial discussion, survey or investigation needs deeper follow-up.

Example: "I suspect we are scratching the surface. Five interviews can suggest useful questions, but they cannot tell us what every customer thinks."

032 Allow me to play devil's advocate for a moment.

Greek: Επιτρέψτε μου να κάνω για λίγο τον δικηγόρο του διαβόλου.

Meaning: I will test the argument by temporarily presenting the opposing view.

Use context: Stress-test a proposal in a meeting; make clear that you may not personally hold that view.

Example: "Allow me to play devil's advocate for a moment. If this service is so convenient, why have so few customers used the trial?"

033 That argument cuts both ways.

Greek: Αυτό το επιχείρημα μπορεί να στηρίζει και την αντίθετη θέση.

Meaning: The same reasoning can support either side or create both benefits and disadvantages.

Use context: Show that a persuasive point also weakens the speaker's own position.

Example: "That argument cuts both ways. If experience matters more than qualifications, we should also consider the experienced candidate without a degree."

034 Let's grasp the nettle.

Greek: Ας αντιμετωπίσουμε επιτέλους το δύσκολο ζήτημα αποφασιστικά. — Βρετανικό.

Meaning: Let's tackle an unpleasant or difficult problem directly.

Use context: Open an overdue conversation about conflict, costs or poor performance; decisive and British.

Example: "Let's grasp the nettle. Avoiding the disagreement over responsibilities is making the atmosphere worse."

035 We need to bite the bullet.

Greek: Πρέπει να πάρουμε τη δύσκολη απόφαση ή να αντέξουμε κάτι δυσάρεστο.

Meaning: We must accept something unpleasant and deal with it courageously.

Use context: Acknowledge a necessary expense, difficult decision or unavoidable task.

Example: "The old printer keeps breaking down. We need to bite the bullet. Replacing it will cost money, but the delays are already costing time."

036 We need to strike while the iron is hot.

Greek: Πρέπει να εκμεταλλευτούμε την ευκαιρία όσο οι συνθήκες είναι ευνοϊκές.

Meaning: We should act while the opportunity is still favourable.

Use context: Encourage timely follow-up after a promising meeting or expression of interest.

Example: "The organiser loved your workshop idea. We need to strike while the iron is hot. Send the outline while the conversation is still fresh."

037 Let's make sure we are not gilding the lily.

Greek: Ας βεβαιωθούμε ότι δεν προσθέτουμε περιττά στολίδια σε κάτι ήδη άρτιο. — Λογοτεχνικό.

Meaning: We may be adding unnecessary decoration or improvement to something already good.

Use context: Stop over-editing a presentation, design or proposal; literary and gently humorous.

Example: "Let's make sure we are not gilding the lily. The invitation already looks elegant; another border and three more colours may be too much."

038 We have been penny-wise and pound-foolish.

Greek: Κάναμε οικονομία στα μικρά, αλλά χάσαμε πολύ περισσότερα στα μεγάλα.

Meaning: We saved small amounts in ways that caused much larger losses.

Use context: Review false economies, such as buying unreliable equipment or cutting essential training.

Example: "We have been penny-wise and pound-foolish. The cheapest chairs needed replacing within six months, so we ended up paying twice."

039 Let's make a virtue of necessity.

Greek: Ας μετατρέψουμε αυτό που αναγκαστικά πρέπει να κάνουμε σε πλεονέκτημα.

Meaning: Let's turn an unavoidable constraint into an advantage.

Use context: Reframe a smaller budget, limited space or forced change as a useful design choice.

Example: "Our smaller room means fewer guests. Let's make a virtue of necessity. We can turn the event into a more personal discussion."

040 Let's not rest on our laurels.

Greek: Ας μην επαναπαυτούμε στις επιτυχίες μας.

Meaning: Past achievements do not remove the need to keep improving.

Use context: Motivate a successful team after celebrating its results.

Example: "Winning this award is worth celebrating. Let's not rest on our laurels. Our next customers will still expect excellent service."

Unit 2

Catchy phrases inspired by Latin quotes

041 Let's seize the day before it becomes another missed opportunity.

Greek: Ας αδράξουμε τη μέρα πριν γίνει άλλη μία χαμένη ευκαιρία.

Meaning: We should use today's opportunity instead of postponing it until it disappears.

Use context: Encourage a first step on an idea, application or meaningful conversation.

Carpe diem — Seize the day.

Example: "The application closes tomorrow, and your proposal is ready. Let's seize the day before it becomes another missed opportunity."

042 Let's move swiftly without rushing our judgement.

Greek: Ας κινηθούμε γρήγορα, χωρίς να βιαστούμε να κρίνουμε.

Meaning: Act promptly while still thinking carefully about the decision.

Use context: Balance urgency and quality during a launch, deadline or fast-moving discussion.

Festina lente — Make haste slowly.

Example: "Let's move swiftly without rushing our judgement. We can shorten the meeting without skipping the checks that matter."

043 While there is breath in me, there is hope in this endeavour.

Greek: Όσο αναπνέω, υπάρχει ελπίδα γι' αυτή την προσπάθεια.

Meaning: I remain hopeful and committed despite the difficulty.

Use context: Express resolve in a speech about a demanding project; deliberately dramatic.

Dum spiro, spero — While I breathe, I hope.

Example: "We have faced delays, refusals and another difficult winter. While there is breath in me, there is hope in this endeavour. I am not ready to abandon this community project."

044 The road to the stars was never promised to be smooth.

Greek: Κανείς δεν υποσχέθηκε ότι ο δρόμος προς τα άστρα θα είναι ομαλός.

Meaning: Ambitious goals usually involve obstacles and hard work.

Use context: Encourage people during demanding study, training or a long project; uplifting and literary.

Ad astra per aspera — To the stars through hardship.

Example: "You're finding this stage of your studies demanding. The road to the stars was never promised to be smooth. Ask for support, and keep taking the next step."

045 Fortune favours the bold; shall we give it something to work with?

Greek: Η τύχη ευνοεί τους τολμηρούς· να της δώσουμε λοιπόν μια ευκαιρία να μας βοηθήσει;

Meaning: Taking a thoughtful risk gives success a chance to happen.

Use context: Invite a hesitant team to make a proposal or try an opportunity; playful and confident.

Audentes fortuna iuvat — Fortune favours the bold.

Example: "The conference is accepting workshop proposals. Fortune favours the bold; shall we give it something to work with? We already have an idea worth sharing."

046 Let's dare to know, even when the answer unsettles us.

Greek: Ας τολμήσουμε να γνωρίσουμε, ακόμη κι αν η απάντηση μας αναστατώνει.

Meaning: Seek understanding even when the truth challenges your beliefs.

Use context: Open a research discussion, difficult review or honest conversation about performance.

Sapere aude — Dare to know.

Example: "Let's dare to know, even when the answer unsettles us. Instead of explaining away the complaints, let's ask what our customers are trying to tell us."

047 To err is human; admitting it is a good place to begin.

Greek: Το σφάλμα είναι ανθρώπινο· η παραδοχή του είναι μια καλή αρχή.

Meaning: Mistakes are normal; acknowledging them allows improvement to begin.

Use context: Admit your own error or encourage openness during a team review.

Errare humanum est — To err is human.

Example: “To err is human; admitting it is a good place to begin. I sent the wrong version, and I’ll correct it before the meeting.”

048 Before we close the case, let’s open our ears to the other side.

Greek: Πριν κλείσουμε την υπόθεση, ας ακούσουμε και την άλλη πλευρά.

Meaning: A fair decision requires listening to the people whose view has not yet been heard.

Use context: Pause a disagreement, complaint or investigation before reaching a conclusion.

Audi alteram partem — Hear the other side.

Example: “Before we close the case, let’s open our ears to the other side. We’ve heard the manager’s account; now we need to listen to the employee.”

049 Let’s be worthy of the reputation we are trying to build.

Greek: Ας είμαστε αντάξιοι της φήμης που προσπαθούμε να χτίσουμε.

Meaning: Our actual standards should deserve the good image we want others to see.

Use context: Discuss trust, leadership or service quality when promises exceed performance.

Esse quam videri — To be rather than to seem.

Example: “Let’s be worthy of the reputation we are trying to build. If we promise personal service, every enquiry deserves more than an automatic reply.”

050 If love conquers all, let it begin with the distance between us.

Greek: Αν η αγάπη νικά τα πάντα, ας ξεκινήσει από την απόσταση ανάμεσά μας.

Meaning: Let affection help us overcome the separation or disagreement between us.

Use context: Use in a personal reconciliation, wedding speech or affectionate message; intimate and poetic.

Amor vincit omnia — Love conquers all.

Example: “If love conquers all, let it begin with the distance between us. I would rather begin an honest conversation than win another argument with you.”

Unit 3

Catchy phrases inspired by Greek philosophers

051 The first step towards wisdom may be admitting where our certainty ends.

Greek: Το πρώτο βήμα προς τη σοφία ίσως είναι να παραδεχτούμε πού τελειώνει η βεβαιότητά μας.

Meaning: Recognising the limits of your knowledge can help you learn.

Use context: Admit uncertainty in a discussion without pretending to have every answer.

Inspired by Socrates in Plato's Apology, 21d

Example: "The first step towards wisdom may be admitting where our certainty ends. I can explain our results, but I cannot yet say why they differ from last year's."

052 Let the truth carry the weight that fine words cannot.

Greek: Ας σηκώσει η αλήθεια το βάρος που δεν μπορούν να σηκώσουν τα ωραία λόγια.

Meaning: Accurate, honest information matters more than impressive wording.

Use context: Introduce evidence in a presentation or bring an overpolished proposal back to facts.

Inspired by Socrates in Plato's Apology, 17a–18a

Example: "Let the truth carry the weight that fine words cannot. Rather than describe our service as excellent, I'll show you what customers actually reported."

053 We should be at least as ambitious for our character as for our fortune.

Greek: Ας είμαστε τουλάχιστον εξίσου φιλόδοξοι για τον χαρακτήρα μας όσο και για την περιουσία μας.

Meaning: Developing integrity deserves as much effort as gaining wealth.

Use context: Discuss career choices, leadership values or the purpose of success.

Inspired by Socrates in Plato's Apology, 29d–30b

Example: "We should be at least as ambitious for our character as for our fortune. The promotion matters to me, but so does the way I treat the colleagues who helped me reach it."

054 A reputation for wisdom is no substitute for an examined answer.

Greek: Η φήμη του σοφού δεν υποκαθιστά μια απάντηση που έχει εξεταστεί προσεκτικά.

Meaning: Being considered wise does not make an unsupported answer reliable.

Use context: Ask respectfully for reasoning when a claim rests mainly on someone's reputation.

Inspired by Socrates in Plato's Apology, 21b–22a

Example: "A reputation for wisdom is no substitute for an examined answer. I respect the speaker's experience, but I would still like to understand the evidence behind that conclusion."

055 An unexamined assumption can quietly become a way of life.

Greek: Μια ανεξέταστη παραδοχή μπορεί σιωπηλά να γίνει τρόπος ζωής.

Meaning: A belief we never question can begin to control our behaviour.

Use context: Open a reflective discussion about habits, workplace culture or inherited expectations.

Inspired by Socrates in Plato's Apology, 38a

Example: "An unexamined assumption can quietly become a way of life. We keep saying that evening classes suit everyone, although we have never asked our learners."

056 Before we defend the picture, let's ask whether we are looking at shadows.

Greek: Πριν υπερασπιστούμε την εικόνα, ας αναρωτηθούμε μήπως κοιτάζουμε σκιές.

Meaning: Check whether your view reflects reality or only a misleading appearance.

Use context: Question a popular narrative, selective evidence or an incomplete picture of a problem.

Inspired by Plato, Republic VII, the cave allegory

Example: "Before we defend the picture, let's ask whether we are looking at shadows. A handful of dramatic headlines may not represent the experience of most people involved."

057 A new light can hurt our eyes before it improves our sight.

Greek: Ένα καινούργιο φως μπορεί να πονέσει τα μάτια μας πριν βελτιώσει την όρασή μας.

Meaning: A challenging discovery may feel uncomfortable before it becomes helpful.

Use context: Reassure someone receiving difficult feedback or learning an unfamiliar perspective.

Inspired by Plato, Republic VII, the prisoner's release

Example: "The feedback challenged everything I thought I was doing well. A new light can hurt our eyes before it improves our sight. I needed time to understand its value."

058 Education should change where we look, not merely what we repeat.

Greek: Η εκπαίδευση πρέπει να αλλάζει το πού κοιτάζουμε, όχι μόνο το τι επαναλαμβάνουμε.

Meaning: Learning should improve how we understand the world, beyond memorising information.

Use context: Discuss teaching methods, training design or the aims of education.

Inspired by Plato, Republic VII, the turning of the soul

Example: "Education should change where we look, not merely what we repeat. After this lesson, I want students to question an advertisement, not simply repeat a definition."

059 Seeing further brings a responsibility to help others find their way.

Greek: Όταν βλέπουμε πιο μακριά, έχουμε ευθύνη να βοηθάμε και άλλους να βρουν τον δρόμο τους.

Meaning: Greater understanding creates a responsibility to support other people.

Use context: Encourage experienced colleagues to mentor newcomers or share useful knowledge.

Inspired by Plato, Republic VII, the return to the cave

Example: "Seeing further brings a responsibility to help others find their way. If you understand the system, make time to explain it to the colleague who has just joined us."

060 A discussion loses its purpose when defeating people becomes more important than finding truth.

Greek: Μια συζήτηση χάνει τον σκοπό της όταν η νίκη επί των άλλων γίνεται σημαντικότερη από την αλήθεια.

Meaning: A discussion stops being useful when winning matters more than understanding.

Use context: Calm a combative meeting or reset the ground rules for a debate.

Inspired by Plato, Republic VII, the misuse of argument

Example: "A discussion loses its purpose when defeating people becomes more important than finding truth. Could we return to the evidence instead of questioning one another's motives?"

061 Character takes shape in the choices we keep making.

Greek: Ο χαρακτήρας διαμορφώνεται μέσα από τις επιλογές που κάνουμε επανειλημμένα.

Meaning: Repeated decisions gradually form our habits and character.

Use context: Explain why small daily choices matter in training, study or leadership.

Inspired by Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics II.1

Example: "Character takes shape in the choices we keep making. Answering honestly when a mistake is small prepares us to be honest when the consequences are larger."

062 Courage needs judgement, or it risks becoming recklessness.

Greek: Το θάρρος χρειάζεται κρίση, αλλιώς κινδυνεύει να γίνει απερισκεψία.

Meaning: Bravery becomes dangerous when it ignores consequences.

Use context: Distinguish a calculated risk from an impulsive decision.

Inspired by Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics II.7

Example: "Courage needs judgement, or it risks becoming recklessness. Launching a pilot is a considered risk; promising a service we cannot deliver is another matter."

063 We cannot become better merely by becoming better at discussing goodness.

Greek: Δεν γινόμαστε καλύτεροι απλώς επειδή συζητάμε καλύτερα για την αρετή.

Meaning: Talking intelligently about good behaviour does not replace practising it.

Use context: Move a values discussion towards specific actions and responsibilities.

Inspired by Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics II.4

Example: "We cannot become better merely by becoming better at discussing goodness. If inclusion is one of our values, who will make the next event accessible?"

064 The right measure is not always the same measure for everyone.

Greek: Το σωστό μέτρο δεν είναι πάντοτε το ίδιο για όλους.

Meaning: What is appropriate depends on the person and the situation.

Use context: Explain why support, workload or training should be tailored rather than identical.

Inspired by Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics II.6

Example: "The right measure is not always the same measure for everyone. One learner needs more preparation time; another needs a more demanding speaking task."

065 The right response requires the right moment, motive and manner.

Greek: Η σωστή αντίδραση απαιτεί την κατάλληλη στιγμή, το σωστό κίνητρο και τον κατάλληλο τρόπο.

Meaning: A good response depends on why, when and how you act.

Use context: Discuss sensitive feedback, conflict or leadership judgement.

Inspired by Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics II.6

Example: “The right response requires the right moment, motive and manner. Your feedback may be fair, but delivering it in front of the whole team would be unkind.”

066 Let's put our effort where our choices can make a difference.

Greek: Ας στρέψουμε την προσπάθειά μας εκεί όπου οι επιλογές μας μπορούν να κάνουν τη διαφορά.

Meaning: Focus energy on actions you can influence.

Use context: Help a team identify useful next steps during uncertainty or a setback.

Inspired by Epictetus, Enchiridion 1

Example: “Let's put our effort where our choices can make a difference. We cannot control the delay, but we can keep our customers informed.”

067 Before we react to the event, let's examine the meaning we have given it.

Greek: Πριν αντιδράσουμε στο γεγονός, ας εξετάσουμε το νόημα που του έχουμε αποδώσει.

Meaning: Our interpretation of an event affects how we respond to it.

Use context: Invite a pause after disappointing feedback or an ambiguous message.

Inspired by Epictetus, Enchiridion 5

Example: “Before we react to the event, let's examine the meaning we have given it. A short reply might mean that she is busy, not that she dislikes the proposal.”

068 A pause can keep a provocation from choosing our response for us.

Greek: Μια παύση μπορεί να εμποδίσει την πρόκληση να υπαγορεύσει την αντίδρασή μας.

Meaning: A short delay can prevent an automatic, angry reaction.

Use context: Discuss responding calmly to criticism or a provocative email.

Inspired by Epictetus, Enchiridion 20

Example: “A pause can keep a provocation from choosing our response for us. I'll leave that email unanswered for an hour and come back to it calmly.”

069 Before we fall in love with the outcome, let's consider what the effort will demand.

Greek: Πριν ερωτευτούμε το αποτέλεσμα, ας σκεφτούμε τι θα απαιτήσει η προσπάθεια.

Meaning: Consider the work and sacrifices behind a goal before committing to it.

Use context: Review a promotion, qualification or ambitious new project realistically.

Inspired by Epictetus, Enchiridion 29

Example: “Before we fall in love with the outcome, let's consider what the effort will demand. The qualification sounds exciting, but can we realistically make time for the weekly study?”

070 Let our principles be recognised in our conduct before they are heard in our speeches.

Greek: Ας αναγνωρίζονται οι αρχές μας πρώτα στη συμπεριφορά μας και έπειτα στις ομιλίες μας.

Meaning: People should see our values in what we do.

Use context: Discuss credibility when public commitments need practical follow-through.

Inspired by Epictetus, Enchiridion 46

Example: “Let our principles be recognised in our conduct before they are heard in our speeches. If we say that family matters, our working arrangements should reflect that commitment.”

071 There is no wrong age to begin asking how to live well.

Greek: Δεν υπάρχει ακατάλληλη ηλικία για να αρχίσουμε να αναρωτιόμαστε πώς να ζούμε καλά.

Meaning: People of any age can reflect on how to live better.

Use context: Encourage an adult learner or introduce a discussion about a fresh start.

Inspired by Epicurus, Letter to Menoeceus, opening

Example: “There is no wrong age to begin asking how to live well. Starting a new course at sixty can be a beginning, not an apology.”

072 Before we ask for more, let's ask which desires deserve to lead us.

Greek: Πριν ζητήσουμε περισσότερα, ας αναρωτηθούμε ποιες επιθυμίες αξίζει να μας καθοδηγούν.

Meaning: Some wants deserve more attention than others.

Use context: Question competing ambitions, spending choices or priorities.

Inspired by Epicurus, Letter to Menoeceus, kinds of desire

Example: “Before we ask for more, let's ask which desires deserve to lead us. I want a larger home, but I also want less pressure and more time with my family.”

073 A pleasure that leaves us worse off may be too expensive, whatever its price.

Greek: Μια απόλαυση που μας αφήνει σε χειρότερη κατάσταση ίσως κοστίζει υπερβολικά, όποια κι αν είναι η τιμή της.

Meaning: An enjoyable experience may not be worthwhile if its consequences leave us worse off.

Use context: Discuss a tempting shortcut, costly habit or short-term reward.

Inspired by Epicurus, Letter to Menoeceus, choosing pleasures

Example: “A pleasure that leaves us worse off may be too expensive, whatever its price. Another hour of late-night scrolling is free, but tomorrow's exhaustion is not.”

074 Knowing how to enjoy enough can free us from needing more.

Greek: Το να ξέρουμε πώς να χαιρόμαστε τα αρκετά μπορεί να μας απελευθερώσει από την ανάγκη για περισσότερα.

Meaning: Being satisfied with sufficient resources can reduce endless wanting.

Use context: Talk about spending, ambition or a simpler way of life.

Inspired by Epicurus, Letter to Menoeceus, simple living

Example: “Knowing how to enjoy enough can free us from needing more. I still enjoy travelling, but I no longer feel that every holiday must be more impressive than the last.”

075 A pleasant life needs a thoughtful guide.

Greek: Μια ευχάριστη ζωή χρειάζεται συνετή καθοδήγηση.

Meaning: A satisfying life benefits from careful judgement.

Use context: Close a discussion about balancing enjoyment with sensible choices.

Inspired by Epicurus, Letter to Menoeceus, prudence

Example: “A pleasant life needs a thoughtful guide. I want to enjoy this year without leaving every responsibility for my future self.”

Unit 4

Catchy phrases inspired by English authors

076 If brevity is the soul of wit, I shall make every word earn its place.

Greek: Αν η συντομία είναι η ψυχή του πνεύματος, θα φροντίσω κάθε λέξη να αξίζει τη θέση της.

Meaning: I will keep my contribution concise and make each word useful.

Use context: Open a short speech or answer after a long discussion; lightly witty.

Inspired by William Shakespeare, Hamlet 2.2, Polonius

Example: "If brevity is the soul of wit, I shall make every word earn its place. I have one recommendation, two reasons and a request for your decision."

077 Let's be true to our principles before asking others to trust our promises.

Greek: Ας είμαστε πιστοί στις αρχές μας πριν ζητήσουμε από άλλους να εμπιστευτούν τις υποσχέσεις μας.

Meaning: Trust begins with behaving consistently with our principles.

Use context: Discuss leadership credibility or promises made to clients and colleagues.

Inspired by William Shakespeare, Hamlet 1.3, Polonius

Example: "Let's be true to our principles before asking others to trust our promises. We cannot advertise transparency while refusing to explain an unexpected charge."

078 Before we blame the stars, let's examine our own choices.

Greek: Πριν κατηγορήσουμε τα άστρα, ας εξετάσουμε τις δικές μας επιλογές.

Meaning: Examine your decisions before attributing an outcome entirely to luck or fate.

Use context: Introduce an honest review of a disappointing result; use "we" to avoid sounding accusatory.

Inspired by William Shakespeare, Julius Caesar 1.2, Cassius

Example: "Before we blame the stars, let's examine our own choices. The launch was unlucky, but we also ignored several early warnings."

079 Doubt can close a door before we have even tried the handle.

Greek: Η αμφιβολία μπορεί να κλείσει μια πόρτα πριν καν δοκιμάσουμε το πόμολο.

Meaning: Self-doubt can stop us attempting something that might succeed.

Use context: Encourage someone to apply, speak up or explore a realistic opportunity.

Inspired by William Shakespeare, Measure for Measure 1.4, Lucio

Example: "Doubt can close a door before we have even tried the handle. Send your application; let the organisation decide whether your experience fits."

080 The past may set the scene; it need not write our next line.

Greek: Το παρελθόν μπορεί να στήνει το σκηνικό· δεν χρειάζεται να γράφει και την επόμενη ατάκα μας.

Meaning: Previous experience influences the future without fully determining it.

Use context: Speak about recovery, reinvention or a new chapter after a setback.

Inspired by William Shakespeare, The Tempest 2.1, Antonio

Example: "The past may set the scene; it need not write our next line. One disappointing exam result does not have to determine how you approach the next one."

081 A pleasant illusion is still a poor foundation.

Greek: Μια ευχάριστη ψευδαίσθηση παραμένει σαθρό θεμέλιο.

Meaning: A comforting belief is unreliable if it is not true.

Use context: Challenge wishful thinking in a plan, forecast or personal decision.

Inspired by Francis Bacon, Of Truth

Example: "A pleasant illusion is still a poor foundation. We should plan around confirmed bookings, not the number of guests we hope will come."

082 Read to sharpen judgement, not merely to stock an argument.

Greek: Διάβαζε για να οξύνεις την κρίση σου, όχι απλώς για να συγκεντρώνεις επιχειρήματα.

Meaning: Read to understand and evaluate ideas, not simply to collect points that support your position.

Use context: Discuss research, study habits or preparation for a debate.

Inspired by Francis Bacon, Of Studies

Example: "Read to sharpen judgement, not merely to stock an argument. Include the research that challenges your position as well as the work that supports it."

083 Revenge keeps yesterday in charge of tomorrow.**Greek:** Η εκδίκηση αφήνει το χθες να εξουσιάζει το αύριο.**Meaning:** Seeking revenge allows an old injury to control future choices.**Use context:** Encourage someone to resolve a conflict or move forward after a dispute.*Inspired by Francis Bacon, Of Revenge***Example:** "Revenge keeps yesterday in charge of tomorrow. I would rather settle the disagreement than spend another month planning how to embarrass him."**084 Adversity can reveal strengths that comfort never calls upon.****Greek:** Οι αντιξοότητες μπορούν να αποκαλύψουν δυνάμεις που η άνεση δεν μας ζητά ποτέ να επιστρατεύσουμε.**Meaning:** Difficult circumstances can reveal abilities that easy situations never require.**Use context:** Reflect on lessons from a demanding project; avoid minimising someone's current suffering.*Inspired by Francis Bacon, Of Adversity***Example:** "Adversity can reveal strengths that comfort never calls upon. When our venue closed, the team found alternatives none of us would have considered before."**085 Good timing means knowing when to wait and when waiting becomes the risk.****Greek:** Σωστός χρονισμός σημαίνει να ξέρεις πότε να περιμένεις και πότε η αναμονή γίνεται ο κίνδυνος.**Meaning:** Delay can be useful, but waiting too long can create a greater danger.**Use context:** Decide whether to gather more information or act on a time-sensitive opportunity.*Inspired by Francis Bacon, Of Delays***Example:** "Good timing means knowing when to wait and when waiting becomes the risk. We have checked the proposal carefully; delaying another week could mean losing the available place."**086 It is a truth too readily acknowledged that confidence must mean competence.****Greek:** Είναι μια αλήθεια που δεχόμαστε υπερβολικά εύκολα ότι η αυτοπεποίθηση συνεπάγεται ικανότητα.**Meaning:** We too easily assume that a confident person must also be capable.**Use context:** Question an impressive pitch or interview performance; an ironic literary opening.*Inspired by Jane Austen, Pride and Prejudice, opening sentence; stylistic adaptation***Example:** "It is a truth too readily acknowledged that confidence must mean competence. A polished interview answer tells us less than a clear demonstration of the work."**087 Before judging their character, I had better examine my own.****Greek:** Πριν κρίνω τον χαρακτήρα τους, καλύτερα να εξετάσω τον δικό μου.**Meaning:** Self-reflection should accompany criticism of other people.**Use context:** Acknowledge your own contribution to a conflict before judging someone else.*Inspired by Jane Austen, Pride and Prejudice, Elizabeth's self-recognition***Example:** "Before judging their character, I had better examine my own. I criticised her for interrupting, then realised I had barely let her finish a sentence."**088 There is a difference between knowing our worth and needing everyone else to confirm it.****Greek:** Άλλο να γνωρίζουμε την αξία μας και άλλο να χρειαζόμαστε να μας την επιβεβαιώνουν όλοι.**Meaning:** Self-respect is different from depending on constant approval.**Use context:** Discuss confidence, recognition or reactions to feedback.*Inspired by Jane Austen, Pride and Prejudice, Mary on pride and vanity***Example:** "There is a difference between knowing our worth and needing everyone else to confirm it. I can be proud of my work even when it attracts very little attention online."**089 What leaves me cold may be someone else's delight.****Greek:** Αυτό που με αφήνει αδιάφορο μπορεί να δίνει χαρά σε κάποιον άλλο.**Meaning:** Something that does not interest me may give someone else great pleasure.**Use context:** Acknowledge different tastes in books, entertainment or activities; conversational and tolerant.*Inspired by Jane Austen, Emma, Emma on differing pleasures***Example:** "What leaves me cold may be someone else's delight. Historical novels are not my preference, but I can see why you love this one."**090 A clever remark loses its charm when someone else pays for it.****Greek:** Μια έξυπνη ατάκα χάνει τη γοητεία της όταν κάποιος άλλος πληρώνει το τίμημα.**Meaning:** A witty remark becomes less admirable when it hurts someone else.**Use context:** Challenge a cruel joke or reflect on humour in a workplace or social setting.*Inspired by Jane Austen, Emma, Knightley's rebuke after Box Hill***Example:** "A clever remark loses its charm when someone else pays for it. We can make the room laugh without making our newest colleague feel small."

091 Profit is a narrow measure of a life that affects other people.

Greek: Το κέρδος είναι στενό μέτρο για μια ζωή που επηρεάζει άλλους ανθρώπους.

Meaning: Financial gain alone does not capture how a life affects others.

Use context: Discuss business purpose, leadership or the meaning of success.

Inspired by Charles Dickens, A Christmas Carol, Stave I, Marley

Example: "Profit is a narrow measure of a life that affects other people. A successful company should also ask how its decisions affect staff and neighbours."

092 We should be careful which habits we forge into chains.

Greek: Ας προσέχουμε ποιες συνήθειες σφυρηλατούμε σε αλυσίδες.

Meaning: Repeated choices can create restrictions that become hard to escape.

Use context: Discuss unhealthy routines, dependency or commitments taken on without thought.

Inspired by Charles Dickens, A Christmas Carol, Stave I, Marley's chain

Example: "We should be careful which habits we forge into chains. Answering every message immediately has made it difficult for me to switch off at all."

093 Kindness does not need a large budget to make a lasting difference.

Greek: Η καλοσύνη δεν χρειάζεται μεγάλο προϋπολογισμό για να αφήσει διαρκές αποτύπωμα.

Meaning: Thoughtful treatment can have a lasting effect without costing much.

Use context: Encourage better service, appreciation or everyday support within a team.

Inspired by Charles Dickens, A Christmas Carol, Stave II, Fezziwig

Example: "Kindness does not need a large budget to make a lasting difference. Remembering a new colleague's name and inviting them to lunch can change their first week."

094 A warning about the future is an invitation to change it.

Greek: Μια προειδοποίηση για το μέλλον είναι πρόσκληση να το αλλάξουμε.

Meaning: Recognising a possible bad outcome gives us a chance to prevent it.

Use context: Present a risk assessment, difficult forecast or early warning constructively.

Inspired by Charles Dickens, A Christmas Carol, Stave IV, Scrooge

Example: "A warning about the future is an invitation to change it. These falling attendance figures give us time to ask learners what needs to improve."

095 Let the change in our conduct speak louder than the change in our language.

Greek: Ας μιλήσει η αλλαγή στη συμπεριφορά μας πιο δυνατά από την αλλαγή στα λόγια μας.

Meaning: Show improvement through behaviour, rather than relying on different words.

Use context: Follow an apology, policy announcement or statement of renewed commitment.

Inspired by Charles Dickens, A Christmas Carol, Stave V

Example: "Let the change in our conduct speak louder than the change in our language. We have apologised for the delays; now we need to answer enquiries when we say we will."

096 If this makes life harder for everyone, what exactly have we improved?

Greek: Αν αυτό δυσκολεύει τη ζωή όλων, τι ακριβώς έχουμε βελτιώσει;

Meaning: A supposed improvement should be questioned if it makes people's lives more difficult.

Use context: Challenge an inconvenient process change or a system designed without its users in mind.

Inspired by George Eliot, Middlemarch, Dorothea on easing others' lives

Example: "If this makes life harder for everyone, what exactly have we improved? The new form requires six steps to complete a task that previously needed two."

097 A quiet contribution can matter beyond the people who notice it.

Greek: Μια αθόρυβη προσφορά μπορεί να έχει αξία πέρα από όσους την προσέχουν.

Meaning: Work can make a real difference even when it attracts little recognition.

Use context: Thank a colleague whose essential contribution usually goes unnoticed.

Inspired by George Eliot, Middlemarch, Finale

Example: “A quiet contribution can matter beyond the people who notice it. Your careful preparation made today’s event run smoothly, even though you were never on stage.”

098 An ordinary life is only ordinary from a distance.

Greek: Μια συνηθισμένη ζωή φαίνεται συνηθισμένη μόνο από απόσταση.

Meaning: People’s lives become more complex and interesting when we understand them closely.

Use context: Introduce a personal story or challenge a dismissive judgement about someone.

Inspired by George Eliot, Middlemarch, the narrator on ordinary human life

Example: “An ordinary life is only ordinary from a distance. Ask your grandmother about her first job, and you may discover a story you never expected.”

099 My convenience is not your obligation.

Greek: Η δική μου διευκόλυνση δεν είναι δική σου υποχρέωση.

Meaning: Something being easier for me does not automatically make it your responsibility.

Use context: Acknowledge an unfair request or discuss boundaries; direct and potentially firm.

Inspired by George Eliot, Middlemarch, Farebrother on convenience and duty

Example: “My convenience is not your obligation. I asked you to work late because I had planned badly; I should not have assumed you were available.”

100 Let’s know a little more before we believe quite so much.

Greek: Ας μάθουμε λίγα περισσότερα πριν πιστέψουμε τόσα πολλά.

Meaning: Gather more understanding before becoming so certain of your conclusions.

Use context: Slow down speculation or an argument based on limited evidence.

Inspired by George Eliot, Middlemarch, the narrator on knowing and believing

Example: “Let’s know a little more before we believe quite so much. We have seen one message without its context, so let’s ask what happened before drawing conclusions.”

Unit 5

The Catchy and the Eloquent

Where the Hook Meets the Line

96 phrases from thinkers, speakers, writers, film characters and business voices.

How to Use This Collection

Read the meaning, choose an appropriate context and notice how the example uses repetition, contrast or rhythm. The attribution names the credited person or work; the source note explains any uncertainty or adaptation. Linked source notes offer further reading in the electronic edition.

The eight groups follow the supplied collection. Some labels are broad: "The Socratics" includes thinkers from other schools, and "Literary Fiction" also includes essays and a letter. Workplace examples are modern adaptations, not historical statements.

I. The Socratics

101 "I know one thing: that I know nothing."

Attribution: Socrates — "Ἐν οἶδα ὅτι οὐδὲν οἶδα" (Hen oida hoti ouden oida)

Greek: Ξέρω ένα πράγμα: ότι δεν ξέρω τίποτα.

Meaning: Recognising the limits of your knowledge helps you remain curious and willing to learn.

Use context: admitting uncertainty makes you look wiser, not weaker.

Source note: Popular summary of Socratic humility, not a verbatim quotation from Plato's Apology 21d.

Example: "After twenty years in this field, I've learned to say, in the spirit of Socratic humility, that I know one thing: that I know nothing. And that's exactly why I keep asking questions."

102 "The unexamined life is not worth living."

Attribution: Socrates

Greek: Η ανεξέταστη ζωή δεν αξίζει να τη ζει κανείς.

Meaning: A worthwhile life involves questioning your choices, beliefs and values.

Use context: urging an audience toward self-reflection or challenging complacency.

Source note: Socrates in Plato's Apology 38a; English wording varies by translation.

Example: "Before we scale this company further, we need to examine what we've built. As Socrates put it, the unexamined life is not worth living — and neither is the unexamined business."

103 "Everything flows."

Attribution: Heraclitus — "Πάντα ῥεῖ" (Panta rhei)

Greek: Τα πάντα ρέουν.

Meaning: Circumstances continually change, so fixed expectations may need reconsidering.

Use context: talking about change, adaptation, or letting go of the past.

Source note: Traditional summary of Heraclitean change; not an authenticated verbatim fragment in this form.

Example: "The Heraclitean formula is panta rhei — everything flows. The market you built your strategy on last year no longer exists. Neither should your strategy."

104 "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit."

Attribution: Aristotle

Greek: Είμαστε ό,τι κάνουμε επανειλημμένα. Η αριστεία, λοιπόν, δεν είναι πράξη αλλά συνήθεια.

Meaning: Consistent practice builds excellence more reliably than an occasional outstanding performance.

Use context: talking about discipline, training, or long-term growth over shortcuts.

Source note: Will Durant's formulation of Aristotle's ideas, The Story of Philosophy; not Aristotle's own words.

Example: "You don't become a great speaker by giving one great speech. As Will Durant summarised Aristotle's ideas, we are what we repeatedly do — excellence is a habit, not an act."

105 "The whole is greater than the sum of its parts."

Attribution: Aristotle

Greek: Το όλον είναι μεγαλύτερο από το άθροισμα των μερών του.

Meaning: Parts working together can produce qualities or results they could not achieve separately.

Use context: making a case for teamwork, synthesis, or systems thinking.

Source note: Popular paraphrase associated with Aristotle's Metaphysics VIII.6; exact wording not verified here.

Example: "Each of our departments is strong on its own. But a familiar summary of Aristotle's ideas reminds us the whole is greater than the sum of its parts — and that's the gap we need to close."

106 "I am looking for an honest man." (said while walking through daylight with a lit lamp)

Attribution: Diogenes

Greek: Ψάχνω έναν έντιμο άνθρωπο.

Meaning: Honesty seems so scarce that finding it becomes a deliberate search.

Use context: calling out a lack of integrity, with dry wit rather than anger.

Source note: Traditional Diogenes anecdote; the wording and "honest" interpretation vary in retellings.

Example: "Diogenes walked through Athens in broad daylight holding a lamp, looking for an honest man. Some days, in this industry, I feel like I should carry one too."

107 "It's not what happens to you, but how you react to it that matters."**Attribution:** Epictetus**Greek:** Δεν μετρά μόνο τι σου συμβαίνει, αλλά και πώς αντιδράς.**Meaning:** Your response to an event can matter greatly even when you cannot control the event itself.**Use context:** talking about resilience, mindset, or crisis leadership.*Source note: Modern paraphrase of Epictetus, especially Enchiridion 5; not an exact ancient quotation.***Example:** "We didn't choose this setback. But a modern paraphrase of Epictetus gives us a useful thought — it's not what happens to you, it's how you react to it. So let's talk about our response."**108 "Educate the children and it won't be necessary to punish the men."****Attribution:** Pythagoras**Greek:** Μορφώστε τα παιδιά και δεν θα χρειαστεί να τιμωρήσετε τους ενήλικες.**Meaning:** Early education may help prevent behaviour that would later require correction.**Use context:** arguing for prevention over correction — education, policy, parenting, systems design.*Source note: Attributed to Pythagoras in the supplied collection; exact source unverified. The claim is rhetorical, not a guarantee.***Example:** "We keep debating harsher penalties. A familiar saying suggests another approach: educate the children, and it won't be necessary to punish the men."**109 "Wise men speak because they have something to say; fools because they have to say something."****Attribution:** Plato**Greek:** Οι σοφοί μιλούν επειδή έχουν κάτι να πουν· οι ανόητοι επειδή πρέπει κάτι να πουν.**Meaning:** Speak when you can contribute something useful rather than merely filling silence.**Use context:** making the case for brevity or substance over noise.*Source note: Attributed to Plato in the supplied collection; no verified primary passage established here.***Example:** "One saying draws a useful distinction: wise men speak because they have something to say; fools because they have to say something. Let's make sure we're the former today."**110 "Know thyself." (inscribed at Delphi, often linked to Thales / the Seven Sages)****Attribution:** Thales of Miletus**Greek:** Γνώθι σαυτόν.**Meaning:** Understand your own character, strengths, limitations and motives.**Use context:** opening a talk on identity, leadership, or self-awareness.*Source note: Delphic maxim associated with the Seven Sages; do not treat Thales as its established sole author.***Example:** "An ancient Delphic maxim urges us: know thyself. It's still the hardest assignment any leader ever gets."**II. The Stoics****111 "You have power over your mind, not outside events. Realise this, and you will find strength."****Attribution:** Marcus Aurelius**Greek:** Έχεις εξουσία πάνω στον νου σου, όχι στα εξωτερικά γεγονότα. Συνειδητοποίησέ το και θα βρεις δύναμη.**Meaning:** You can work on your judgements and responses when outside circumstances remain beyond your control.**Use context:** addressing a team through a crisis or setback outside their control.*Source note: Modern Stoic formulation attributed to Marcus Aurelius; exact wording unverified.***Example:** "We can't control the market crash. But a modern Stoic formulation reminds us we have power over our mind, not outside events — realise that, and you find strength. So let's focus on what we can control."**112 "Waste no more time arguing what a good man should be. Be one."****Attribution:** Marcus Aurelius**Greek:** Μη χάνεις άλλο χρόνο συζητώντας πώς πρέπει να είναι ο καλός άνθρωπος. Γίνε ένας.**Meaning:** Put your values into practice instead of endlessly discussing them.**Use context:** cutting through debate or overthinking and calling for action.*Source note: Rendering of Marcus Aurelius, Meditations 10.16.***Example:** "We've spent three meetings arguing about what good leadership looks like. Marcus Aurelius put it simply — waste no more time arguing what a good man should be. Be one."

113 "Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity."**Attribution:** Seneca**Greek:** Τύχη είναι αυτό που συμβαίνει όταν η προετοιμασία συναντά την ευκαιρία.**Meaning:** Preparation enables people to benefit when a favourable opportunity appears.**Use context:** giving credit to hard work disguised as good fortune — achievement speeches.*Source note: Commonly attributed to Seneca; no verified passage established here. Introduce it as a saying.***Example:** "People call her an overnight success. A familiar saying offers another explanation — luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity. She's been preparing for ten years."**114 "It is not that we have a short time to live, but that we waste a lot of it."****Attribution:** Seneca**Greek:** Δεν έχουμε λίγο χρόνο να ζήσουμε· σπαταλάμε πολύ από αυτόν.**Meaning:** How we use available time matters as much as how much time we have.**Use context:** talking about urgency, time management, or seizing the moment.*Source note: Rendering of Seneca, On the Shortness of Life 1; translation wording varies.***Example:** "We keep saying 'someday.' Seneca warned us two thousand years ago — it's not that we have a short time to live, but that we waste a lot of it. Someday is today."**115 "First say to yourself what you would be, and then do what you have to do."****Attribution:** Epictetus**Greek:** Πρώτα πες στον εαυτό σου τι θέλεις να γίνεις και έπειτα κάνε όσα χρειάζονται.**Meaning:** Choose your goal or character ideal, then take the actions it requires.**Use context:** talking about vision before action — goal-setting speeches, commencement addresses.*Source note: Associated with Epictetus, Discourses III.23; exact translation not established here.***Example:** "Before you write the business plan, write the identity. In a formulation associated with Epictetus: first say to yourself what you would be, and then do what you have to do."**116 "Well-being is realised by small steps, but is truly no small thing."****Attribution:** Zeno of Citium**Greek:** Η ευημερία επιτυγχάνεται με μικρά βήματα, αλλά δεν είναι καθόλου μικρό πράγμα.**Meaning:** Small improvements can accumulate into something deeply valuable.**Use context:** reassuring an audience that incremental progress is still meaningful progress.*Source note: Traditional saying attributed to Zeno of Citium; supplied English wording unverified.***Example:** "None of us are going to transform overnight. But as a saying attributed to Zeno of Citium puts it — well-being is realised by small steps, but is truly no small thing."**117 "Fate leads the willing, and drags along the reluctant."****Attribution:** Cleanthes**Greek:** Η μοίρα οδηγεί τον πρόθυμο και σέρνει τον απρόθυμο.**Meaning:** Accepting what cannot be changed may be easier than resisting it without effect.**Use context:** talking about change that's coming whether people embrace it or not.*Source note: Seneca, Letter 107.11, in his Latin rendering associated with Cleanthes.***Example:** "This industry is shifting whether we like it or not. Seneca's rendering associated with Cleanthes puts it this way — fate leads the willing, and drags along the reluctant. I'd rather we walked than got dragged."**118 "It is not enough to know what should be done, but one must be able to apply it in practice."****Attribution:** Musonius Rufus**Greek:** Δεν αρκεί να ξέρεις τι πρέπει να γίνει· πρέπει και να μπορείς να το εφαρμόσεις.**Meaning:** Useful knowledge includes the ability to act on what you understand.**Use context:** closing a talk that's been heavy on ideas, pushing the audience toward action.*Source note: Paraphrase of a theme in Musonius Rufus; exact sentence unverified.***Example:** "You've heard the theory today. But a practical theme in Musonius Rufus reminds us it's not enough to know what should be done — you must apply it. So here's your homework."

119 "Logic is the scaffolding on which the house of philosophy is built."

Attribution: Chrysippus

Greek: Η λογική είναι η σκαλωσιά πάνω στην οποία χτίζεται το οικοδόμημα της φιλοσοφίας.

Meaning: Clear reasoning provides a structure on which more complex ideas can rest.

Use context: making a case for structure, method, or process before creativity.

Source note: Attributed to Chrysippus in the supplied collection; exact source unverified. Use as a modern metaphor.

Example: "Everyone wants to talk about the vision. But consider this modern metaphor — logic is the scaffolding on which the house of philosophy is built. Vision without structure collapses."

120 "He conquers who endures."

Attribution: Cato the Younger

Greek: Νικά όποιος αντέχει.

Meaning: Persistence can help someone overcome setbacks and eventually succeed.

Use context: closing a speech about perseverance, especially after a loss or setback.

Source note: Attributed to Cato the Younger in the supplied collection; authorship unverified.

Example: "We didn't win this round. But one saying is worth remembering: he conquers who endures. We're still standing. That's the win."

III. The Pre-Socratics and Others

121 "No man ever steps in the same river twice."

Attribution: Heraclitus

Greek: Κανείς δεν μπαίνει δύο φορές στο ίδιο ποτάμι.

Meaning: Both circumstances and people change, so an experience cannot be repeated in exactly the same way.

Use context: talking about change, growth, or why past strategies won't work twice.

Source note: Traditional rendering of the river image associated with Heraclitus; wording and interpretation vary.

Example: "You're trying to repeat what worked last year. But the river image associated with Heraclitus reminds us — no man ever steps in the same river twice. The market has already moved."

122 "The only constant in life is change."

Attribution: Heraclitus

Greek: Η μόνη σταθερά στη ζωή είναι η αλλαγή.

Meaning: Change is so persistent that we should expect and prepare for it.

Use context: opening a talk about transformation, disruption, or adapting to new conditions.

Source note: Modern summary associated with Heraclitus; not a verified verbatim fragment.

Example: "A modern summary of Heraclitean change puts it simply: the only constant in life is change. The question isn't whether we adapt — it's how fast."

123 "Nothing exists except atoms and empty space; everything else is opinion."

Attribution: Democritus

Greek: Δεν υπάρχει τίποτε άλλο παρά άτομα και κενός χώρος· όλα τα υπόλοιπα είναι γνώμη.

Meaning: The line contrasts underlying physical reality with qualities shaped by human perception.

Use context: cutting through noise and pushing an audience back to hard facts or data.

Source note: Loose summary of Democritus' atomism; the example turns a philosophical claim into a modern data metaphor.

Example: "We've heard a lot of opinions in this room today. Borrowing a metaphor from Democritus, let's distinguish our interpretations from the evidence. Let's look at the data."

124 "It is not strength of body, but strength of spirit that makes a great leader."

Attribution: Democritus

Greek: Δεν είναι η σωματική δύναμη αλλά η δύναμη του πνεύματος που κάνει έναν μεγάλο ηγέτη.

Meaning: Good leadership depends on character and judgement more than physical power or intimidation.

Use context: redefining leadership away from dominance and toward character.

Source note: Attributed to Democritus in the supplied collection; exact source unverified.

Example: "You don't need to be the loudest person in the room. One leadership maxim puts it this way — it's not strength of body, but strength of spirit that makes a great leader."

125 "The boundless is the origin of all things."

Attribution: Anaximander

Greek: Το άπειρο είναι η αρχή των πάντων.

Meaning: Anaximander's principle concerns an indefinite or boundless origin, rather than an ordinary material substance.

Use context: talking about potential, blank slates, or the start of a new venture.

Source note: Summary of the apeiron doctrine; the business example is a modern analogy, not its original meaning.

Example: "We're starting with nothing but an idea. Borrowing an image from Anaximander's boundless origin, we can imagine possibilities that do not yet have a shape."

126 "There is geometry in the humming of the strings."**Attribution:** Pythagoras**Greek:** Υπάρχει γεωμετρία στο βουητό των χορδών.**Meaning:** Music can illustrate mathematical relationships beneath an apparently purely artistic experience.**Use context:** making a case for hidden structure behind something that looks purely creative or intuitive.*Source note: Attributed to Pythagoras in the supplied collection; exact wording unverified.***Example:** "What looks like instinct to you is actually pattern. A saying attributed to Pythagoras suggests there is geometry in the humming of the strings — and there's geometry in every great pitch too."**127 "Man is the measure of all things."****Attribution:** Protagoras**Greek:** Ο άνθρωπος είναι το μέτρο όλων των πραγμάτων.**Meaning:** Human perception or judgement provides the standpoint from which things are assessed.**Use context:** talking about perspective, subjectivity, or putting the human experience at the centre of a decision.*Source note: Traditional Protagorean maxim. Its philosophical interpretation is debated; the people-first example is an adaptation.***Example:** "We've been measuring this project by spreadsheets alone. Adapting Protagoras's maxim, man is the measure of all things — let's put people back at the centre of this."**128 "Motion is an illusion." (from his famous paradoxes about the impossibility of motion)****Attribution:** Zeno of Elea**Greek:** Η κίνηση είναι ψευδαίσθηση.**Meaning:** The phrase challenges our ordinary understanding of motion through apparently contradictory reasoning.**Use context:** playfully challenging an audience's assumptions before revealing a deeper truth.*Source note: Oversimplified summary of Zeno of Elea's paradoxes, not a verified quotation. Use it to invite scrutiny of assumptions.***Example:** "Zeno's paradoxes challenged ordinary assumptions about motion. Sometimes what looks obviously true survives strictly because no one has questioned it hard enough. So let's question this."**129 "Love and strife are the two great forces that move the universe."****Attribution:** Empedocles**Greek:** Η αγάπη και η έριδα είναι οι δύο μεγάλες δυνάμεις που κινούν το σύμπαν.**Meaning:** Empedocles described forces that bring elements together and separate them.**Use context:** framing a conflict or negotiation as one of two natural forces at play, not a personal failure.*Source note: Modern summary of Empedocles' cosmology; its application to teams is metaphorical.***Example:** "Every team goes through both. In a modern summary of Empedocles' cosmology, love and strife are the two great forces that move the universe — and they move every partnership too."**130 "The descent to hell is the same from every place."****Attribution:** Anaxagoras**Greek:** Η κάθοδος στον Άδη είναι ίδια από παντού.**Meaning:** Death can be reached from any place; geographical location does not change that shared human end.**Use context:** making the point that failure or ruin looks the same no matter how you got there — accountability speeches.*Source note: Traditional anecdote attributed to Anaxagoras; "hell" here represents Hades, not Christian punishment. The example is figurative.***Example:** "It doesn't matter which shortcut got us here. A saying attributed to Anaxagoras suggests the descent to hell is the same from every place. What matters now is the way back."**IV. Roman Rhetoricians and Statesmen****131 "Who benefits?"****Attribution:** Cicero — "Cui bono?"**Greek:** Ποιος ωφελείται;**Meaning:** Identifying who gains from a decision may help reveal possible motives.**Use context:** exposing hidden motive behind a decision or argument — a sharp rhetorical weapon.*Source note: Latin question used by Cicero, who credits the judge Cassius; benefit alone does not prove wrongdoing.***Example:** "Before we approve this contract, let's ask the question Cicero made famous: cui bono? Who actually benefits here — and is it us?"

132 "A room without books is like a body without a soul."**Attribution:** Cicero**Greek:** Ένα δωμάτιο χωρίς βιβλία είναι σαν σώμα χωρίς ψυχή.**Meaning:** Books and learning are presented as giving life and depth to a space.**Use context:** making a case for learning, reading, or investing in knowledge.*Source note: Attributed to Cicero in the supplied collection; exact source unverified.***Example:** "We keep cutting the training budget. But a familiar saying reminds us — a room without books is like a body without a soul. Don't let this team lose its soul."**133 "The sinews of war are infinite money."****Attribution:** Cicero**Greek:** Τα νεύρα του πολέμου είναι το απεριόριστο χρήμα.**Meaning:** Ambitious campaigns depend on substantial financial resources.**Use context:** talking bluntly about resources being the real constraint behind any ambitious plan.*Source note: Traditional rendering associated with Cicero's Philippic V; exact translation not verified here.***Example:** "We can have the best strategy in the world, but a traditional rendering of Cicero's point is blunt — the sinews of war are infinite money. Let's talk budget before we talk vision."**134 "To live is to think."****Attribution:** Cicero**Greek:** Ζω σημαίνει σκέφτομαι.**Meaning:** Thinking and intellectual engagement are presented as essential parts of living fully.**Use context:** opening a talk on curiosity, critical thinking, or intellectual engagement.*Source note: Attributed to Cicero in the supplied collection; exact source unverified here.***Example:** "A saying attributed to Cicero puts it briefly: to live is to think. If we stop asking questions in this company, we've already started dying."**135 "The man who blushes is not quite a brute."****Attribution:** Quintilian**Greek:** Όποιος κοκκινίζει δεν έχει χάσει εντελώς την ανθρωπιά του.**Meaning:** Embarrassment about wrongdoing may indicate that a person still has a conscience.**Use context:** making a point about conscience or shame as evidence of remaining humanity.*Source note: Attributed to Quintilian in the supplied collection; exact source unverified. "Brute" is deliberately harsh.***Example:** "Say what you want about the intern who owned the mistake — a saying attributed to Quintilian makes a point: the man who blushes is not quite a brute. That kind of honesty is rare, and it's valuable."**136 "A good orator has knowledge of everything important, and the ability to speak about it eloquently."****Attribution:** Quintilian**Greek:** Ο καλός ρήτορας γνωρίζει όσα έχουν σημασία και μπορεί να μιλά γι' αυτά με ευγλωττία.**Meaning:** Effective speaking requires both knowledge and the ability to express it clearly and persuasively.**Use context:** framing eloquence as substance plus delivery.*Source note: A summary of an ideal of oratory, not a verified verbatim Quintilian quotation.***Example:** "One summary of the ideal orator puts it this way: a good orator has knowledge of everything important, and the ability to speak about it eloquently. That's the whole game — know something real, then say it well."**137 "The desire for glory is the last thing to be laid aside, even by the wise."****Attribution:** Tacitus**Greek:** Η επιθυμία για δόξα είναι το τελευταίο πράγμα που εγκαταλείπουν ακόμη και οι σοφοί.**Meaning:** Even thoughtful people may continue to desire recognition.**Use context:** talking honestly about ambition, ego, or the limits of humility.*Source note: Rendering of Tacitus, Histories IV.6; exact translation not established here.***Example:** "Even after decades in this field, ambition doesn't disappear — it just gets quieter. Tacitus said the desire for glory is the last thing to be laid aside, even by the wise. So let's use it, not hide from it."**138 "They make a desert and call it peace." (said of conquerors)****Attribution:** Tacitus — "Solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant"**Greek:** Ερημώνουν έναν τόπο και το ονομάζουν ειρήνη.**Meaning:** Powerful people may give destruction or repression a respectable name.**Use context:** calling out a hollow or false version of success or resolution.*Source note: Tacitus, Agricola 30, in the speech assigned to Calgacus; not simply Tacitus speaking in his own voice.***Example:** "We're calling this deal a win. But Calgacus's speech in Tacitus shows us how easy it is to make a desert and call it peace. Let's be honest about what we actually gained."

139 "Carthage must be destroyed." (repeated at the end of every speech he gave, regardless of topic)**Attribution:** Cato the Elder — "Carthago delenda est."**Greek:** Η Καρχηδόνα πρέπει να καταστραφεί.**Meaning:** Repeatedly returning to the same demand can keep it prominent in an audience's mind.**Use context:** driving home a single relentless point — repetition as rhetorical strategy.*Source note: Traditional formula associated with Cato the Elder; the claim that he used it in every speech belongs to the traditional account.***Example:** "Cato is remembered for repeatedly returning to one demand: Carthage must be destroyed. He understood something we forget: repetition isn't redundant, it's persuasive. So I'll say it again: this deadline must be met."**140 "No book is so bad that some good cannot be got out of it."****Attribution:** Pliny the Younger**Greek:** Κανένα βιβλίο δεν είναι τόσο κακό ώστε να μην μπορείς να αποκομίσεις κάτι καλό από αυτό.**Meaning:** Even a flawed work may contain something worth learning or keeping.**Use context:** reframing a failed project, bad feedback, or a flawed draft as still valuable.*Source note: Pliny the Elder's saying, reported by Pliny the Younger in Letters III.5.***Example:** "This first version didn't work. But Pliny the Younger reports his uncle's saying — no book is so bad that some good cannot be got out of it. Let's find what's worth keeping."**V. Modern Orators****141 "We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender."****Attribution:** Winston Churchill**Greek:** Θα πολεμήσουμε στις παραλίες, στα σημεία απόβασης, στα χωράφια, στους δρόμους και στους λόφους· δεν θα παραδοθούμε ποτέ.**Meaning:** The repeated promise expresses determination to continue resisting across every possible setting.**Use context:** rallying a group through adversity — the repetition itself builds momentum. (Technique: anaphora — repeating the same opening phrase, compare Cato's repeated concluding demand.)*Source note: Churchill, House of Commons, 4 June 1940. Anaphora repeats an opening; Cato's recurring conclusion uses a different position.***Example:** "We'll face setbacks in engineering, setbacks in sales, setbacks in funding. Like Churchill, I say: we will never surrender."**142 "Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts."****Attribution:** Churchill**Greek:** Η επιτυχία δεν είναι οριστική, η αποτυχία δεν είναι μοιραία· αυτό που μετρά είναι το θάρρος να συνεχίζεις.**Meaning:** Neither success nor failure ends the story; continued effort remains important.**Use context:** closing a talk about resilience after a loss.*Source note: The International Churchill Society rejects the Churchill attribution. Use as an unattributed saying.***Example:** "We didn't hit the quarter. But a familiar saying reminds us — success is not final, failure is not fatal. It's the courage to continue that counts. So let's continue."**143 "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character."****Attribution:** Martin Luther King Jr.**Greek:** Ονειρεύομαι ότι τα τέσσερα μικρά παιδιά μου θα ζήσουν κάποτε σε ένα έθνος όπου θα κρίνονται από τον χαρακτήρα τους και όχι από το χρώμα του δέρματός τους.**Meaning:** The speaker imagines a society where children face fair judgement rather than racial prejudice.**Use context:** teaching contrast/antithesis. (Technique: the power is in the contrast — 'color of their skin' vs. 'content of their character.' That structural pairing is learnable and reusable.)*Source note: Martin Luther King Jr, I Have a Dream, 28 August 1963. Preserve its civil-rights context when quoting it.***Example:** "King's dream asks us to look beyond racial prejudice: people should be judged not by the colour of their skin, but by the content of their character. That principle belongs in our daily decisions."**144 "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."****Attribution:** MLK**Greek:** Η αδικία οπουδήποτε απειλεί τη δικαιοσύνη παντού.**Meaning:** An injustice in one place concerns everyone because communities and moral responsibilities are connected.**Use context:** connecting a local problem to a larger principle.*Source note: King, Letter from Birmingham Jail, 16 April 1963; the corporate example is the supplied author's analogy.***Example:** "This isn't just one bad hire, one bad decision. Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere, and the same is true of shortcuts in this company."

145 "Ask not what your country can do for you — ask what you can do for your country."

Attribution: John F. Kennedy

Greek: Μη ρωτάς τι μπορεί να κάνει η χώρα σου για σένα· ρώτα τι μπορείς να κάνεις εσύ για τη χώρα σου.

Meaning: Ask how you can contribute to a community instead of focusing only on what it owes you.

Use context: flipping an audience's expectation.

(Technique: chiasmus — reversing word order in the second half — one of the most quotable structures in all of rhetoric.)

Source note: Kennedy, inaugural address, 20 January 1961. More precisely, antimetabole: repeated words reverse their order.

Example: "Ask not what this team can do for you — ask what you can do for this team."

146 "Yes, we can."

Attribution: Barack Obama

Greek: Ναι, μπορούμε.

Meaning: A short shared affirmation expresses confidence in collective action.

Use context: closing on maximum simplicity — three words, no adjectives, pure momentum. (Technique note: proof that eloquence doesn't require length.)

Source note: Slogan used by Barack Obama; association does not establish that he originated the expression.

Example: "Can we give every new student someone to turn to? Yes, we can. Let's begin by making sure nobody spends their first week feeling invisible."

147 "It always seems impossible until it's done."

Attribution: Nelson Mandela

Greek: Πάντα φαίνεται αδύνατο μέχρι να γίνει.

Meaning: A difficult goal may seem achievable only after someone has accomplished it.

Use context: talking to a team facing something that looks unachievable.

Source note: Widely attributed to Mandela, but a reliable original source remains unestablished; do not present the credit as certain.

Example: "Everyone in this room thinks the deadline is impossible. One often-quoted saying reminds us — it always seems impossible until it's done."

148 "People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

Attribution: Maya Angelou

Greek: Οι άνθρωποι θα ξεχάσουν τι είπες και τι έκανες, αλλά όχι πώς τους έκανες να αισθανθούν.

Meaning: The emotional effect of an interaction may outlast memory of its exact details.

Use context: closing a talk on leadership, customer experience, or team culture. (Technique: tricolon — three parallel clauses building to the real point in the third.)

Source note: Angelou attribution is disputed. Three parallel clauses form a tricolon; the habit saying in 104 is not the same structure.

Example: "A familiar saying reminds us that people will never forget how you made them feel. The customer may forget our exact words, but feeling heard can shape their whole experience."

149 "Stay hungry, stay foolish."

Attribution: Steve Jobs

Greek: Διατήρησε τη δίψα σου για περισσότερα και την τόλμη να φαίνεσαι ανόητος.

Meaning: Stay curious and ambitious, and remain willing to take unconventional paths.

Use context: closing a graduation-style or risk-taking speech — short, symmetrical, quotable. (Technique note: the shortest entries are often the stickiest.)

Source note: Steve Jobs quoted the Whole Earth Catalog's farewell message at Stanford in 2005; he did not originate it.

Example: "As you leave this course, keep asking questions and making room for ideas you have not tried. In the words Steve Jobs quoted: stay hungry, stay foolish."

150 "If you want to fly, you have to give up the things that weigh you down."

Attribution: Toni Morrison

Greek: Αν θέλεις να πετάξεις, πρέπει να αφήσεις όσα σε βαραίνουν.

Meaning: Progress may require releasing possessions, commitments or beliefs that hold you back.

Use context: talking about sacrifice, focus, or letting go of what's holding a team or person back.

Source note: A softened paraphrase of a line in Toni Morrison's Song of Solomon, rather than the novel's exact wording.

Example: "We can't launch three products at once. To paraphrase a line from Toni Morrison's Song of Solomon — if you want to fly, you have to give up the things that weigh you down. Let's decide what we're letting go of."

151 If we're not at the table, we're on the menu.**Attribution:** Saying used by Mark Carney**Greek:** Αν δεν είμαστε στο τραπέζι των αποφάσεων, θα είμαστε στο μενού.**Meaning:** Without a voice in decisions, our interests may be sacrificed to someone else's.**Use context:** Argue for representation in negotiations or organisational change; assertive and pointed.*Source note: Davos, 20 January 2026; official spoken transcript.**Verified use, not a claim of original authorship.***Example:** "The new policy affects every teacher. As Carney's image reminds us, we need a place at the table before others decide our future."**152 When elephants fight, the grass suffers.****Attribution:** Proverb used by Vivian Balakrishnan**Greek:** Όταν μαλώνουν οι ελέφαντες, την πληρώνει το χορτάρι.**Meaning:** Disputes between powerful parties can harm people with much less power.**Use context:** Discuss rival companies, senior managers or states; focus on those caught between them.*Source note: Singapore parliamentary debate, 3 March 2025.**Described as an African proverb; precise cultural origin not established here.***Example:** "The directors see this as a contest for control. When elephants fight, the grass suffers: the staff are paying the price."**153 The time to repair the roof is when the sun is shining.****Attribution:** John F. Kennedy**Greek:** Η ώρα να επισκευάσεις τη στέγη είναι όταν λάμπει ο ήλιος.**Meaning:** Prepare for difficulties while conditions still give you time and resources.**Use context:** Discuss planning, training or maintaining systems before a busy or difficult period.*Source note: State of the Union, 11 January 1962; excerpt from his argument for protection against recessions.***Example:** "Our workload is manageable this month. To borrow Kennedy's image, let's repair the roof now and improve the procedures that fail under pressure."**154 Trust, but verify.****Attribution:** Russian maxim used by Ronald Reagan**Greek:** Να εμπιστεύεσαι, αλλά να επαληθεύεις.**Meaning:** Confidence in someone can coexist with checking important information.**Use context:** Confirm figures, review work or check agreed terms; matter-of-fact rather than suspicious.*Source note: INF Treaty signing, 8 December 1987. Reagan explicitly introduced it as an old Russian maxim.***Example:** "I trust the team's work, but let's check the figures before presenting them. Trust, but verify."**155 Trust everybody, but cut the cards.****Attribution:** American saying used by Ronald Reagan**Greek:** Να εμπιστεύεσαι τους πάντες, αλλά να κόβεις την τράπουλα.**Meaning:** Remain friendly while retaining sensible safeguards; cutting a deck limits another player's control.**Use context:** Offer lightly humorous advice about checking an agreement; explain the card-playing image if needed.*Source note: American Legion convention, Louisville, 6 September 1988. Presented by Reagan as an existing saying.***Example:** "They seem reliable, but we should still confirm the terms in writing. Trust everybody, but cut the cards."**156 Let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate.****Attribution:** John F. Kennedy**Greek:** Ας μη διαπραγματευόμαστε ποτέ από φόβο. Αλλά ας μη φοβόμαστε ποτέ να διαπραγματευτούμε.**Meaning:** Resist intimidation while remaining willing to discuss a solution.**Use context:** Reopen negotiations or explain that dialogue can accompany a firm position; formal and rhetorical.*Source note: Inaugural address, 20 January 1961. Reversing the key words makes the distinction memorable.***Example:** "Our position remains firm. Following Kennedy's advice, we must not fear to negotiate; let's invite them back for a constructive discussion."**157 We will extend a hand if you are willing to unclench your fist.****Attribution:** Barack Obama**Greek:** Θα σας τείνουμε το χέρι, αν είστε πρόθυμοι να ανοίξετε τη σφιγμένη γροθιά σας.**Meaning:** Cooperation becomes possible when the other side stops acting with hostility.**Use context:** Discuss reconciliation after conflict; the image can sound confrontational if aimed directly at a colleague.*Source note: Excerpt from his inaugural address, 20 January 2009; originally an offer of conditional engagement to repressive leaders.***Example:** "Obama's image of an extended hand captures our position: we are ready to rebuild the partnership if the accusations give way to dialogue."

158 You cross the river one stone at a time.**Attribution:** Lee Hsien Loong, recalling Deng Xiaoping**Greek:** Περνάς το ποτάμι πατώντας σε μία πέτρα κάθε φορά.**Meaning:** Move through uncertainty in manageable steps, learning as you proceed.**Use context:** Encourage research, language learning or an unfamiliar project; practical and reassuring.*Source note: Council on Foreign Relations dialogue, June 2014. This is Lee's English wording, not a verified verbatim English quotation from Deng.***Example:** "We need not settle every detail today. You cross the river one stone at a time. Let's test the first stage."**159 Honey melons hang on bitter vines; sweet dates grow on thistles and thorns.****Attribution:** Old Chinese verse quoted by Xi Jinping**Greek:** Γλυκά πεπόνια κρέμονται από πικρές κληματσίδες· γλυκοί χουρμάδες φυτρώνουν ανάμεσα σε τριβόλια και αγκάθια.**Meaning:** Benefits and difficulties can coexist; flaws need not make something worthless.**Use context:** Add balance to a prepared speech about a demanding change or project; poetic rather than conversational.*Source note: Davos, 17 January 2017; WEF's published English text. The transcript does not identify the poet.***Example:** "The old verse quoted at Davos reminds us that sweetness can grow amid difficulty. This transition has been uncomfortable, but it has opened valuable opportunities."**160 There is a sword that can cut down this Gordian knot; it has been wielded before.****Attribution:** Mia Mottley**Greek:** Υπάρχει σπαθί που μπορεί να κόψει αυτόν τον γόρδιο δεσμό· έχει χρησιμοποιηθεί και στο παρελθόν.**Meaning:** A complicated deadlock may have a decisive solution that previous experience shows can work.**Use context:** Propose a practical breakthrough; the Gordian knot represents a seemingly insoluble problem.*Source note: COP26 opening statement, 1 November 2021, hosted by UNFCCC; originally about financing the energy transition.***Example:** "As Mottley's image suggests, we can cut this Gordian knot: give one person clear authority to resolve the overlapping responsibilities."**161 If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.****Attribution:** Proverb used by Zweli Mkhize**Greek:** Αν θέλεις να πας γρήγορα, πήγαινε μόνος. Αν θέλεις να πας μακριά, πήγαινε μαζί με άλλους.**Meaning:** Working alone can be quick, while lasting achievement often depends on cooperation.**Use context:** Encourage teamwork, partnerships or a study group; a useful principle, not an absolute rule.*Source note: Executive Leadership Programme dinner, 9 April 2018. Described as African; specific original language and community not established here.***Example:** "The proverb about going far together suits this project. I can draft the outline, but a lasting programme needs everyone's contribution."**162 Meeting jaw to jaw is better than war.****Attribution:** Winston Churchill**Greek:** Καλύτερα να συζητάμε πρόσωπο με πρόσωπο παρά να πολεμάμε.**Meaning:** Direct discussion is preferable to destructive conflict.**Use context:** Encourage mediation or dialogue; jaw refers informally to talking.*Source note: Washington visit, 1954; documented by the Churchill Archives Centre. The familiar jaw-jaw/war-war variant is associated with Macmillan's later use.***Example:** "Before this becomes a formal dispute, let's meet. As Churchill put it, meeting jaw to jaw is better than war."**163 We cannot negotiate with nature.****Attribution:** Phrase used by Heiko Maas**Greek:** Με τη φύση δεν μπορούμε να διαπραγματευτούμε.**Meaning:** Physical realities do not change because people find them inconvenient.**Use context:** Discuss environmental limits and the need to act on evidence; concise and firm.*Source note: UN Security Council climate debate, 24 July 2020; also used earlier by Ban Ki-moon. No claim that Maas originated it.***Example:** "We can debate the timetable, but we cannot negotiate with nature. Environmental consequences will not wait for consensus."**164 Let us face it: there is no Planet B.****Attribution:** Slogan used by Emmanuel Macron**Greek:** Ας το παραδεχτούμε: δεν υπάρχει δεύτερος πλανήτης ως εναλλακτική λύση.**Meaning:** Earth is irreplaceable; there is no simple backup if we damage it.**Use context:** Environmental presentations and sustainability discussions; wordplay on Plan B.*Source note: US Congress address, 25 April 2018; official English transcript. Verified use, not a claim of invention.***Example:** "We can replace a damaged product, but not the world that sustains us. There is no Planet B."

165 To being pragmatic, empathetic, strong and kind.**Attribution:** Jacinda Ardern**Greek:** Να είμαστε πρακτικοί, με ενσυναίσθηση, δυνατοί και καλοσυνάτοι.**Meaning:** Practical judgement, understanding, firmness and compassion can coexist in leadership.**Use context:** Discuss teaching or management; introduce it as a speech excerpt rather than a complete standalone sentence.*Source note: Closing fragment of the 2018 UN General Assembly statement, published by New Zealand's government on 28 September 2018.***Example:** "Ardern's words, 'strong and kind', express the approach I want: maintain the standard, listen carefully and offer practical support."**166 We are on a highway to climate hell with our foot still on the accelerator.****Attribution:** António Guterres**Greek:** Τρέχουμε στον αυτοκινητόδρομο προς την κλιματική κόλαση, με το πόδι ακόμη πατημένο στο γκάζι.**Meaning:** We are approaching a disastrous outcome while continuing behaviour that makes it more likely.**Use context:** Analyse urgent environmental rhetoric; deliberately alarming and best suited to serious public speaking.*Source note: COP27 opening remarks, 7 November 2022; UN transcript as delivered.***Example:** "Guterres's accelerator image exposes the contradiction: our targets promise lower emissions, yet our decisions continue to push them upwards."**VI. Movie Lines****167 "I'm gonna make him an offer he can't refuse."****Attribution:** The Godfather**Greek:** Θα του κάνω μια προσφορά που δεν θα μπορεί να αρνηθεί.**Meaning:** Make a proposal so attractive that the other person is very likely to accept it.**Use context:** talking about a proposal or deal designed to be impossible to turn down.*Source note: The Godfather (1972), Vito Corleone. The film gives the line a threatening undertone; use the business adaptation playfully.***Example:** "We're not asking them to switch vendors. We're making them an offer they can't refuse — and that's the pitch."**168 "You're gonna need a bigger boat."****Attribution:** Jaws**Greek:** Θα χρειαστείτε μεγαλύτερο σκάφος.**Meaning:** The challenge is larger than expected, so you need more resources or a stronger plan.**Use context:** realising mid-crisis that your resources don't match the scale of the problem.*Source note: Jaws (1975), Chief Brody. The example changes "you" to "we".***Example:** "We planned this launch for ten thousand users. We just hit a hundred thousand in a day. We're gonna need a bigger boat."**169 "Failure is not an option."****Attribution:** Apollo 13**Greek:** Η αποτυχία δεν είναι επιλογή.**Meaning:** The outcome matters so much that everyone must commit to finding a solution.**Use context:** rallying a team around zero-tolerance stakes — a deadline, a safety issue, a make-or-break moment.*Source note: Apollo 13 (1995), the film's Gene Kranz. A screen line, not a recorded remark from the mission.***Example:** "There's no plan B for this audit. Failure is not an option."**170 "Pay no attention to the man behind the curtain."****Attribution:** The Wizard of Oz**Greek:** Μην δίνετε σημασία στον άνθρωπο πίσω από την κουρτίνα.**Meaning:** An impressive appearance may distract people from what is really happening behind it.**Use context:** exposing a gap between image and reality — marketing vs. substance, hype vs. product.*Source note: The Wizard of Oz (1939), the Wizard. Usually used ironically when exposing an illusion.***Example:** "The demo looked flawless. But half of it was pay-no-attention-to-the-man-behind-the-curtain — smoke, not substance."**171 "Here's looking at you, kid."****Attribution:** Casablanca**Greek:** Στην υγιά σου, μικρή.**Meaning:** A familiar, affectionate way to salute someone or end a toast.**Use context:** closing on warmth, nostalgia, or a toast — understated rather than grand.*Source note: Casablanca (1942), Rick Blaine. "Kid" is affectionate in the film; it can sound patronising without familiarity.***Example:** "To everyone who believed in this project before it had a name — here's looking at you."

172 "It ain't about how hard you hit. It's about how hard you can get hit and keep moving forward."**Attribution:** Rocky Balboa**Greek:** Δεν μετράει πόσο δυνατά χτυπάς, αλλά πόσα χτυπήματα αντέχεις και συνεχίζεις μπροστά.**Meaning:** Resilience means continuing after setbacks, rather than relying only on strength or talent.**Use context:** talking about resilience over raw talent.*Source note: Adapted excerpt from Rocky Balboa (2006), not the original Rocky (1976).***Example:** "This quarter hit us hard. But it ain't about how hard you hit — it's about how hard you can get hit and keep moving forward."**173 "There is no spoon."****Attribution:** The Matrix**Greek:** Δεν υπάρχει κουτάλι.**Meaning:** A problem may become easier when you question an assumption that seemed fixed.**Use context:** reframing a perceived constraint as self-imposed rather than real. Check whether the supposed limit is genuinely an assumption before using the metaphor.*Source note: The Matrix (1999), the spoon boy. A metaphor for changing perspective, not proof that real limits disappear.***Example:** "You keep saying the budget makes this impossible. I'd push back — there is no spoon. The constraint is the plan, not the money."**174 "If you build it, he will come."****Attribution:** Field of Dreams**Greek:** Αν το χτίσεις, εκείνος θα έρθει.**Meaning:** Sometimes you must create something before the people who need it can see its value.**Use context:** making the case for building ahead of demand — vision before validation. A visionary slogan, not evidence that demand will follow.*Source note: Field of Dreams (1989), the mysterious voice. "They will come" in the example is a common adaptation, not the film's wording.***Example:** "We don't have the customers yet. But if you build it, they will come — and I'd rather be ready than late."**175 "Carpe diem. Seize the day, boys. Make your lives extraordinary."****Attribution:** Dead Poets Society**Greek:** Άδραξε τη μέρα. Κάντε τη ζωή σας ξεχωριστή.**Meaning:** Use the opportunities you have now to make your life meaningful.**Use context:** closing an inspirational talk, especially to a younger audience.*Source note: Dead Poets Society (1989), John Keating, drawing on the Latin expression carpe diem.***Example:** "You won't get this exact room, this exact team, again. Carpe diem. Make it count."**176 "You can't handle the truth!"****Attribution:** A Few Good Men**Greek:** Δεν αντέχεις την αλήθεια!**Meaning:** You are resisting a fact because accepting it would be uncomfortable.**Use context:** calling out an audience's resistance to an uncomfortable but necessary fact — best delivered with restraint, not shouting, or it reads as parody. This is deliberately provocative: reserve the example for a theatrical speech or a group that knows your humour.*Source note: A Few Good Men (1992), Colonel Jessup.**Confrontational wording; in ordinary conversation it works best as an obvious joke.***Example:** "Everyone wants the good news slide. Half of you can't handle the truth — the churn number is the real story."**VII. Literary Fiction****177 "War is peace. Freedom is slavery. Ignorance is strength."****Attribution:** George Orwell, 1984**Greek:** Ο πόλεμος είναι ειρήνη. Η ελευθερία είναι σκλαβιά. Η άγνοια είναι δύναμη.**Meaning:** Contradictory slogans can make manipulation sound like a coherent message.**Use context:** exposing a contradiction dressed up as consistency — corporate doublespeak, political spin, self-serving logic.*Source note: George Orwell, Nineteen Eighty-Four (1949). These are the fictional Party's slogans, not Orwell's own beliefs.***Example:** "They're calling the layoffs 'right-sizing for growth.' Orwell had a name for that kind of language — war is peace, freedom is slavery. Let's call it what it is."**178 "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others."****Attribution:** Orwell, Animal Farm**Greek:** Όλα τα ζώα είναι ίσα, αλλά κάποια είναι πιο ίσα από τα άλλα.**Meaning:** People may claim to support equality while granting special privileges to a favoured group.**Use context:** calling out a stated principle that isn't applied evenly.*Source note: George Orwell, Animal Farm (1945), the altered commandment. A satirical exposure of hypocrisy.***Example:** "We say every team has an equal voice in this decision. But let's be honest — some animals are more equal than others here."

179 "Man is not made for defeat. A man can be destroyed but not defeated."**Attribution:** Ernest Hemingway, *The Old Man and the Sea***Greek:** Ο άνθρωπος δεν είναι φτιαγμένος για την ήττα. Μπορεί να καταστραφεί, αλλά όχι να νικηθεί.**Meaning:** A person can suffer great loss without surrendering their courage or dignity.**Use context:** talking about dignity in loss — closing a speech after a setback that still leaves you standing.*Source note: Ernest Hemingway, The Old Man and the Sea (1952), Santiago. A shortened extract from his reflection.***Example:** "We lost the client. That stings. But Hemingway drew the line — a man can be destroyed but not defeated. We're still here, and we're still building."**180 "So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past."****Attribution:** F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby***Greek:** Έτσι συνεχίζουμε, βάρκες κόντρα στο ρεύμα, παρασυρόμενες αδιάκοπα πίσω στο παρελθόν.**Meaning:** We struggle to move forward while memories and old patterns keep pulling us back.**Use context:** closing on something bittersweet — reflective, elegiac, not triumphant.*Source note: F. Scott Fitzgerald, The Great Gatsby (1925), the narrator's final sentence.***Example:** "We keep reaching for a version of this industry that no longer exists. Fitzgerald knew the feeling — we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past."**181 "The test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in mind at the same time and still retain the ability to function."****Attribution:** F. Scott Fitzgerald, "The Crack-Up"**Greek:** Δείγμα εξαιρετικής ευφυΐας είναι να κρατάς ταυτόχρονα δύο αντίθετες ιδέες και να συνεχίζεις να λειτουργείς.**Meaning:** Clear thinking can involve considering conflicting ideas without becoming unable to decide or act.**Use context:** making a case for nuance over false binaries.*Source note: F. Scott Fitzgerald, "The Crack-Up" (1936), an essay; this is not from The Great Gatsby.***Example:** "You want certainty. I can't give you that. What I can give you is what Fitzgerald called the test of a first-rate intelligence — holding two opposed ideas at once and still moving forward."**182 "A book must be the axe for the frozen sea within us."****Attribution:** Franz Kafka**Greek:** Ένα βιβλίο πρέπει να είναι το τσεκούρι για την παγωμένη θάλασσα μέσα μας.**Meaning:** Powerful writing can break through emotional numbness and deeply challenge the reader.**Use context:** talking about why hard truths or difficult art matter more than comfort.*Source note: Franz Kafka, letter to Oskar Pollak (1904). English translations vary; this is a familiar rendering.***Example:** "Nobody wants the blunt version of this feedback. But Kafka said it best — a book must be the axe for the frozen sea within us. Sometimes the kind thing isn't the comfortable thing."**183 "Freeing yourself was one thing; claiming ownership of that freed self was another."****Attribution:** Toni Morrison, *Beloved***Greek:** Άλλο να ελευθερώνεις τον εαυτό σου και άλλο να γίνεσαι κύριος του ελεύθερου εαυτού σου.**Meaning:** Gaining freedom or a new position is different from feeling able to shape your own life within it.**Use context:** distinguishing between achieving something and actually owning or inhabiting it.*Source note: Toni Morrison, Beloved (1987). The novel's context is enslavement and freedom; the workplace example uses the idea metaphorically.***Example:** "Getting the title was step one. Morrison's line is the real challenge — freeing yourself was one thing, claiming ownership of that freed self was another. That's the job now."**184 "A woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction."****Attribution:** Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own***Greek:** Μια γυναίκα χρειάζεται χρήματα και ένα δικό της δωμάτιο για να γράψει λογοτεχνία.**Meaning:** Creative independence needs practical resources, privacy and freedom to work.**Use context:** making the case for resources and autonomy as prerequisites for creative or independent work, not luxuries.*Source note: Virginia Woolf, A Room of One's Own (1929), a non-fiction essay about women and writing.***Example:** "We keep asking people to be innovative without giving them the space or the budget to fail. Woolf said it plainly a century ago — you need the room of your own before you can do the work."

185 "It is not down on any map; true places never are."**Attribution:** Herman Melville, *Moby-Dick***Greek:** Δεν βρίσκεται σε κανέναν χάρτη· οι αληθινοί τόποι δεν βρίσκονται ποτέ.**Meaning:** Some meaningful experiences or destinations cannot be fully captured by conventional descriptions.**Use context:** talking about pursuing something unproven, uncharted, or hard to justify on paper.*Source note: Herman Melville, Moby-Dick (1851), chapter 12, describing Queequeg's home.***Example:** "There's no market research for what we're building. But Melville reminds us — it is not down on any map; true places never are."**186 "It is not human nature to be able to bear more than a certain amount of misfortune."****Attribution:** Gabriel García Márquez, *One Hundred Years of Solitude***Greek:** Ο άνθρωπος δεν μπορεί να αντέξει τη δυστυχία πέρα από ένα ορισμένο όριο.**Meaning:** People have limits, and repeated hardship can exhaust even a resilient person.**Use context:** naming burnout or breaking points honestly, without dramatizing them.*Source note: Attributed in the collection to Gabriel García Márquez, One Hundred Years of Solitude. The wording and location have not been verified; introduce it as a saying.***Example:** "We keep asking this team to absorb one more hit. One saying puts a limit on that — it's not human nature to bear more than a certain amount of misfortune. We need to respect that limit."**VIII. Business and Tech Visionaries****187 "The best way to predict the future is to create it."****Attribution:** Peter Drucker**Greek:** Ο καλύτερος τρόπος να προβλέψεις το μέλλον είναι να το δημιουργήσεις.**Meaning:** Taking action can influence what happens next, instead of leaving you only to guess.**Use context:** pushing a team from passive forecasting into active building.*Source note: Often attributed to Peter Drucker; the exact attribution is unverified. Related versions circulate under other names.***Example:** "We can keep guessing where the market goes, or we can go there first. A familiar maxim puts it well — the best way to predict the future is to create it."**188 "Your brand is what people say about you when you're not in the room."****Attribution:** Jeff Bezos**Greek:** Η επωνυμία σου είναι όσα λένε οι άλλοι για σένα όταν δεν είσαι στο δωμάτιο.**Meaning:** Your reputation depends on people's actual experience of you, including what they say in your absence.**Use context:** talking about reputation, culture, or customer trust as something earned, not managed.*Source note: Widely attributed to Jeff Bezos; an original source for this precise wording has not been verified.***Example:** "We can't control every conversation about us. A saying often attributed to Bezos puts it plainly — your brand is what people say about you when you're not in the room. So let's make sure that conversation is a good one."**189 "If I had asked people what they wanted, they would have said faster horses."****Attribution:** Henry Ford**Greek:** Αν είχα ρωτήσει τους ανθρώπους τι ήθελαν, θα μου έλεγαν πιο γρήγορα άλογα.**Meaning:** People often describe improvements to familiar products rather than imagine a completely new solution.**Use context:** defending a bold, non-obvious product decision against safe, incremental feedback. Use it to widen thinking while still listening to customers.*Source note: Widely attributed to Henry Ford, without a verified contemporary source. Treat it as an innovation parable, not a documented Ford quotation.***Example:** "The focus group wanted small tweaks. The familiar faster-horses story captures the trap: people can ask for improvements without imagining a new approach. We're building the car."**190 "Done is better than perfect."****Attribution:** Sheryl Sandberg**Greek:** Καλύτερα ολοκληρωμένο παρά τέλειο.**Meaning:** Finishing useful work can be more valuable than delaying it indefinitely in pursuit of perfection.**Use context:** pushing a team past analysis paralysis or perfectionism.*Source note: A Facebook workplace motto discussed by Sheryl Sandberg; do not present her as its established originator.***Example:** "We've revised this deck eleven times. The familiar motto applies here — done is better than perfect. Let's ship it."

191 "If you're not embarrassed by the first version of your product, you've launched too late."

Attribution: Reid Hoffman

Greek: Αν δεν ντρέπεται για την πρώτη εκδοχή του προϊόντος σου, το κυκλοφόρησες πολύ αργά.

Meaning: Releasing an early, usable version lets you learn from feedback before polishing every detail.

Use context: normalising an imperfect launch as a strategic choice, not a failure.

Source note: Reid Hoffman; a familiar formulation of advice he has repeated publicly. It concerns early learning, not neglecting essential quality.

Example: "This MVP isn't pretty, and that's fine. Hoffman said it best — if you're not embarrassed by the first version, you've launched too late."

192 "Leadership is hard to define, and good leadership even harder. But if you can get people to follow you to the ends of the earth, you are a great leader."

Attribution: Indra Nooyi

Greek: Η ηγεσία ορίζεται δύσκολα, η καλή ηγεσία ακόμη δυσκολότερα. Αν όμως οι άνθρωποι σε ακολουθούν ως την άκρη του κόσμου, είσαι σπουδαίος ηγέτης.

Meaning: Leadership depends partly on earning people's trust and commitment, rather than merely holding a title.

Use context: closing a talk on what leadership actually earns, versus what a title confers.

Source note: Attributed to Indra Nooyi; the original source and exact wording have not been verified.

Example: "Anyone can hold the title. A test often attributed to Nooyi is harder — can you get people to follow you to the ends of the earth? That's the only leadership that counts."

193 "Our industry does not respect tradition — it only respects innovation."

Attribution: Satya Nadella

Greek: Ο κλάδος μας δεν σέβεται την παράδοση· σέβεται μόνο την καινοτομία.

Meaning: Past success or an established habit does not guarantee relevance when an industry changes.

Use context: justifying a departure from 'how it's always been done.'

Source note: Satya Nadella, first email to Microsoft employees as CEO, 4 February 2014. Punctuation adapted.

Example: "We've done it this way for a decade. But Nadella's line applies here — this industry doesn't respect tradition, it only respects innovation. Precedent isn't a plan."

194 "Price is what you pay. Value is what you get."

Attribution: Warren Buffett

Greek: Τιμή είναι αυτό που πληρώνεις. Αξία είναι αυτό που παίρνεις.

Meaning: The amount something costs and the benefit it provides are different measures.

Use context: reframing a decision away from cost alone and toward long-term worth.

Source note: Warren Buffett repeated this distinction in his 2008 shareholder letter, crediting Ben Graham.

Example: "Yes, it's the more expensive option. But Buffett drew the distinction we need here — price is what you pay, value is what you get."

195 "I never dreamed about success. I worked for it."

Attribution: Estée Lauder

Greek: Δεν ονειρευόμουν απλώς την επιτυχία. Δούλεψα γι' αυτήν.

Meaning: Achievement requires sustained effort, not only ambition or imagination.

Use context: cutting through romanticised narratives about achievement, in favour of effort.

Source note: Estée Lauder; quoted on the company's official founder page.

Example: "People love the highlight reel. Estée Lauder's version is more honest — I never dreamed about success, I worked for it. That's the part nobody posts about."

196 "If something is important enough, you should try even if the probable outcome is failure."

Attribution: Elon Musk

Greek: Αν κάτι είναι αρκετά σημαντικό, αξίζει να προσπαθήσεις ακόμη κι αν η αποτυχία είναι το πιθανότερο αποτέλεσμα.

Meaning: A worthwhile goal can justify a difficult attempt even when success is uncertain.

Use context: justifying a high-risk bet that's worth making despite long odds.

Source note: Widely attributed to Elon Musk; an original source for this exact wording has not been verified.

Example: "The odds aren't in our favour. But a saying often attributed to Musk is the right one here — if something is important enough, you try, even if failure is the likely outcome."

Unit 6

Greek Wisdom, English Eloquence

Familiar Greek wisdom, natural English expression. These 21 entries distinguish close equivalents from related sayings and explanatory renderings. Four familiar proverbs are revisited through cross-references at the end of the unit.

197 The prospect of earning spurs people into action.

Greek: Το αγώγι ξυπνάει τον αγωγάτη.

Meaning: An opportunity to work and earn can motivate someone to make an effort.

Use context: Explain how a concrete opportunity encourages initiative. Meaning-based rendering, not an established English proverb.

Source note: The Greek saying concerns work and reward. Needs must expresses necessity and is only a partial match.

Example: “He kept postponing his portfolio until a client offered him paid work. The prospect of earning spurs people into action.”

198 Better late than never.

Greek: Κάλλιο αργά παρά ποτέ.

Meaning: Doing something late is preferable to not doing it at all.

Use context: Welcome a delayed start or achievement; light encouragement, sometimes mild sarcasm.

Example: “I finally enrolled in the English course I have been considering for years. Better late than never.”

199 Talk is cheap.

Greek: Τα πολλά λόγια είναι φτώχεια.

Meaning: Promises and confident statements mean little unless people act on them.

Use context: Challenge repeated promises; blunt and potentially critical. A contextual equivalent when the Greek saying contrasts talk with action.

Source note: Actions speak louder than words is related. Neither English expression covers every use of the Greek saying to discourage excessive talking.

Example: “They keep promising faster support, but nobody answers our messages. Talk is cheap; I want to see an improvement.”

200 Sow the wind, reap the whirlwind.

Greek: Όποιος σπέρνει ανέμους θερίζει θύελλες.

Meaning: Reckless or harmful behaviour can bring consequences much greater than expected.

Use context: Warn about escalating conflict or irresponsible decisions; forceful and literary.

Source note: A close proverbial equivalent; the English wording has a biblical background, Hosea 8:7.

Example: “He encouraged rumours to weaken a colleague, and now nobody trusts the team. Sow the wind, reap the whirlwind.”

201 Out of sight, out of mind.

Greek: Μάτια που δε βλέπονται γρήγορα λησμονιούνται.

Meaning: People and things can receive less attention when they are no longer regularly seen.

Use context: Discuss keeping in touch or maintaining visibility; observational, sometimes regretful.

Example: “Since the team moved online, we rarely hear from the quieter members. Out of sight, out of mind—we should arrange regular check-ins.”

202 Every little helps.

Greek: Φασούλι το φασούλι γεμίζει το σακούλι.

Meaning: Small contributions can make a worthwhile difference when added together.

Use context: Encourage saving, steady practice or contributions to a shared effort; a useful everyday equivalent.

Source note: Traditional alternative: Many a little makes a mickle.

Mickle means a large amount; label this alternative traditional/dialectal. The mickle/muckle variant is also recorded.

Example: “Ten minutes of English each evening may seem modest, but every little helps. Keep building the habit.”

203 When the cat’s away, the mice will play.

Greek: Όταν λείπει η γάτα, χορεύουν τα ποντίκια.

Meaning: People may relax the rules when the person supervising them is absent.

Use context: Make a humorous observation about supervision; avoid sounding distrustful of an entire team.

Example: “The manager left early, and the office turned into a birthday party. When the cat’s away, the mice will play.”

204 Every cloud has a silver lining.

Greek: Κάθε εμπόδιο για καλό.

Meaning: An unwelcome situation may still contain something beneficial.

Use context: Offer gentle encouragement after a minor setback; do not minimise someone’s serious distress.

Source note: Related expression: a blessing in disguise describes something initially unwelcome that later proves beneficial; it is not identical in use.

Example: “The event was cancelled, but I finally had time to finish my application. Every cloud has a silver lining.”

205 You reap what you sow.

Greek: Ό,τι σπείρεις θα θερίσεις.

Meaning: Your actions tend to shape the consequences you experience.

Use context: Discuss effort, habits or responsibility; can praise commitment or criticise behaviour.

Example: “She practised consistently and now speaks with confidence. You reap what you sow.”

206 There's no smoke without fire.**Greek:** Όπου υπάρχει καπνός υπάρχει και φωτιά.**Meaning:** The saying suggests that a rumour or suspicion may have some basis.**Use context:** Discuss why concerns deserve checking; the proverb itself is not evidence that a claim is true.**Example:** "People keep saying the branch will close. There's no smoke without fire, perhaps—but I will check the announcement before believing the rumour."**207 Do good without expecting anything in return.****Greek:** Κάνε το καλό και ρίξ' το στο γιαλό.**Meaning:** Help others without making recognition or repayment a condition.**Use context:** Discuss generosity, volunteering or quiet support; a meaning-based rendering rather than a fixed English proverb.*Source note: Related literary expression: Cast your bread upon the waters. It can suggest doing good or taking a chance with uncertain returns; it is not an exact substitute.***Example:** "You may never hear from the person you helped. Do good without expecting anything in return."**208 Practise what you preach.****Greek:** Δάσκαλε που δίδασκες και νόμο δεν εκράτεις.**Meaning:** Follow the standards you recommend to other people.**Use context:** Discuss consistency and leadership; direct criticism can sound accusatory. British verb spelling: practise.*Source note: The Greek saying rebukes hypocrisy; the English phrase can also offer general advice.***Example:** "I ask my students to read every day, so I should practise what I preach and make time for my own reading."**209 Haste makes waste.****Greek:** Όποιος βιάζεται σκοντάφτει.**Meaning:** Rushing can cause mistakes that waste time or resources.**Use context:** Encourage a final check under time pressure; concise and cautionary.**Example:** "I sent the invoice before checking it and had to issue a correction. Haste makes waste."**210 Blood is thicker than water.****Greek:** Το αίμα νερό δεν γίνεται.**Meaning:** The proverb presents family ties as especially strong.**Use context:** Discuss family loyalty or attachment; describe a belief, not an obligation to accept every family member's behaviour.**Example:** "They disagree about almost everything, but she came immediately when he needed help. Blood is thicker than water."**211 Don't put all your eggs in one basket.****Greek:** Μη βάζεις όλα τα αυγά σε ένα καλάθι.**Meaning:** Avoid making success depend entirely on a single option.**Use context:** Discuss applications, suppliers or plans; encourage alternatives.**Example:** "Apply to several suitable programmes rather than waiting for one answer. Don't put all your eggs in one basket."**212 Lie down with dogs, get up with fleas.****Greek:** Όποιος κοιμάται με τα σκυλιά, ξυπνάει με τους ψύλλους.**Meaning:** Associating with people who behave badly can bring trouble or damage your reputation.**Use context:** Warn about dishonest associates; a sharp, judgemental proverb.**Example:** "He knew the group was cheating and joined them anyway. Lie down with dogs, get up with fleas."**213 In the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is king.****Greek:** Στη χώρα των τυφλών βασιλεύει ο μονόφθαλμος.**Meaning:** Even limited ability can seem exceptional where others have less relevant knowledge.**Use context:** Comment on relative expertise; a traditional metaphor that can sound dismissive.**Example:** "I only know basic spreadsheets, but nobody else in the office uses them. In the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is king."**214 The apple doesn't fall far from the tree.****Greek:** Το μήλο κάτω από τη μηλιά θα πέσει.**Meaning:** Children often resemble their parents in habits, abilities or character.**Use context:** Notice a family resemblance; affectionate or critical depending on context.**Example:** "Her mother loved telling stories, and now she writes wonderful ones herself. The apple doesn't fall far from the tree."**215 Their bark is worse than their bite.****Greek:** Σκυλί που γαβγίζει δεν δαγκώνει.**Meaning:** Someone sounds more frightening or severe than their behaviour usually proves to be.**Use context:** Reassure someone about a stern manner when you know the person well; this is not a guarantee of harmlessness.*Source note: A natural functional equivalent. Change their to his or her as appropriate; the English expression is less absolute than the Greek wording.***Example:** "The supervisor sounds fierce, but she is patient when someone needs help. Her bark is worse than her bite."

216 Time heals all wounds.**Greek:** Ο χρόνος γιατρεύει τις πληγές.**Meaning:** Emotional pain often becomes easier to live with as time passes.**Use context:** Reflect on recovery from disappointment; use sensitively, without promising that every hurt disappears.**Example:** “I cannot promise that time heals all wounds, but the disappointment feels less overwhelming than it did last month.”**217 A friend in need is a friend indeed.****Greek:** Ο φίλος στην ανάγκη φαίνεται.**Meaning:** A true friend gives support when you are facing difficulties.**Use context:** Thank someone for practical help or reflect on dependable friendship.*Source note: Here, in need refers to the difficult situation in which a friend's support proves their loyalty.***Example:** “You came to help when everyone else was too busy. A friend in need is a friend indeed.”**Four familiar proverbs revisited****Δεν είναι χρυσός ό,τι λάμπει.**

All that glitters is not gold. See entry 006 in Unit 1 for the explanation, context and example.

Όποιος δεν ρισκάρει δεν κερδίζει.

Nothing ventured, nothing gained. See entry 009 in Unit 1 for the explanation, context and example.

Ένα χελιδόνι δεν φέρνει την άνοιξη.

One swallow does not make a summer. See entry 020 in Unit 1 for the explanation, context and example.

Η τύχη τους τολμηρούς βοηθά.

Fortune favours the bold. See entry 045 in Unit 2 for the explanation, context and example.

The end

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