

Laconic *(pronounced luh-kon-ik) adjective*

Definition

(of a person's speech or expression) using few words; terse or concise to the point of seeming discourteous, brusque, unconcerned, or mysterious.

Main Example

- Once, when asked why he loved acting in Westerns with their markedly restrained dialogue, the late Glenn Ford replied: “You don’t have to speak English to understand what’s going on. I’ve always said the talking pictures talk too much!” Given that particular mindset, it’s no wonder Ford excelled at portraying the tough, **laconic** hero.

Workplace Examples

- Yes, Jay has the knowledge and the drive, but he’s not a good manager because of his poor communication skills. The guy speaks in sound bites! On more than one occasion, his **laconic** instructions, or his **laconic** replies, resulted in ambiguity and confusion among the employees.
- Oh, Tom is passionately interested in the arts, I can assure you! His **laconic** manner must have given you the false impression that he is indifferent to this sort of stuff.

Other Examples

- somebody deliberately being **laconic** and low-key during a meeting because she is there as an observer rather than a participant
- some managers adopting a verbal style that is **laconic**, thinking it to be fashionable for the right reasons, and not realizing that ultra brevity is an impediment to strong leadership
- many veterans who were treated cruelly in Japanese and North Vietnamese POW camps giving only **laconic** accounts of their suffering because of the discomfort they feel when talking about those experiences
- during Pentagon press briefings in the weeks following the U.S. invasion of Iraq, Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Gen. Tommy Franks presenting a stark contrast: Rumsfeld was expansive, often talking at length when asked a question, while Franks was brief to the point of being **laconic**