

An empty threat is a statement of intent to harm that the person making it does not actually intend to carry out. It is a "hollow" or "meaningless" warning that lacks any real substance or ability to be followed through. Over time, repeated empty threats can cause a person's warnings to be ignored completely, leading to a loss of credibility.

- **Meaning:** It's a bluff, a statement that sounds threatening but is not backed by the intention to act.
- **Origin:** The term can be traced to the Latin phrase "", which translates to "empty threat" or "hollow thunderbolt".
- **Effect:** Empty threats can be damaging in relationships because the person on the receiving end may stop believing them and begin to ignore them.
- **Credibility:** A person's credibility is lost when they make threats they don't follow through on, as their words become meaningless.