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Have you ever been around someone who has a way with words? They know just the right thing to say or have the exact phrase to characterize a situation. It's remarkable how word power can make a difference in communication.

I have always been enamored with people who can articulate their thoughts in a way that catches the listener's ear. Leaders pay attention to specific words and phrases, particularly watching for words or phrases that may conjure negative feelings.

By making subtle shifts from standard language to Leader's Language, communication improves. Some people may ask, "Aren't you just playing with words?" The answer is, "Of course!" Leaders actually do play with language because using the right words in the right combination with the right tone and body language can mean the difference between gaining agreement or causing dissention.

Try implementing the Leader's Language, and you will be amazed with the improved connection you'll have with others. Consider these subtle shifts and why each matters:

Standard Language	Leader's Language
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Change	Adjust or/Tweak
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Most people hate to change. Yet the words "adjust" and "tweak" suggests a small shift rather than a massive conversion.

Mistake	Great Moment
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By saying you had a "great moment," you are implying you are going to learn and grow from an experience that may be perceived as a mistake. Of course it's important to acknowledge your "great moments" as well.

Have to	Get to
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When you "get to" you no longer "have to" do anything. Remember, you "get to" go to practice and participate in sports. Even if you feel you have to, replace it with "get to" and you will feel different immediately.

Confusion	Clarity
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If you don't understand something, it's vital to get clarity from a friend, teammate or coach. Confusion suggests you don't get it or weren't focused when the message or instructions were given. Asking for clarity implies you have a basic understanding but need more information.



Me

We

Regardless of your sport, it's vital to create a spirit of "we" instead of me. When someone asks a team leader/captain, "How is your season going?" It's much better to say, "We are. . ." instead of "I'm doing well" and then add personal stats to impress the person who is asking.

Boast

Blessed

Too often athletes are bragging or boasting about team or personal statistics. People are drawn to people who feel blessed with their achievements and how the season is going.

Can't

Up until now

The word can't builds up a mental wall that prevents people from becoming their best. Saying, "Up until now," we/I haven't been able to achieve the goal," implies you are still pursuing the goal.

Problem

Opportunity

Most of us hate problems, but we look forward to opportunities. For example, a school may have a problem with school spirit or they may have an opportunity to improve school spirit by engaging their student leaders.

I don't know

I need more information

Usually, people say "I don't know" for one of two reasons. Either they truly don't know, or they are too lazy to discover the solution. If someone asks for the answer to something and you sincerely don't know, by saying, "I need more information" you are demonstrating a desire to do research to figure out a potential solution.

To be honest

To be straight forward

When someone says to me, "To be honest with you. . ." I usually think, "So you haven't been honest with me up until now?" Leaders may need to have difficult conversations with teammates or coaches. It's possible you have to state some difficult words that may not go over well. By using the phrase "To be straight forward" means you are sharing what you really think without sugar coating it

At first glance these changes may seem minuscule, but implementing the slight shift from standard language to the leader's language will make huge gains in effective, positive communication.