

People Make The Difference whitepaper

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Four Things a Leader Should Never Say.

Ever heard a line from your manager or leader that has stuck in your head on a loop for days afterwards - and not in a good way? As leaders, we have to remember even 'throw-away' lines can have great impact. A colleague shared how offended she had been when a former boss said, "this strategy is the same as last year," when it differed hugely. She felt undervalued in her role when - in reality - her boss hadn't had sufficient time to compare the two documents in detail. Yet that one line - and the tone it was delivered in - frustrated her for days to come.

What you say is just as important as how you say it. Negativity is not usually intended, but could the words you are using be causing more harm than good? If you've ever found yourself saying any of the following, it might be time to think about how you can change them in order to deliver greater encouragement into your team.

1. "Don't Bring Me Bad News"

Besides making you an unapproachable figure, telling your team that you don't want to hear about the bad news or the nasty surprises - even as a throw away humour line - doesn't actually make the bad news go away. Great leaders should want to know about the bad news so they can be fully informed every step of the way so they can start to work toward a solution.

2. "I'll Just Do It Myself"

It's easy to fall into the trap of doing everything yourself to make sure the job gets done, but remember that you have a team for a reason. Each member of your team has strengths that others don't and together, the job will get done. By expressing that you

would rather do the job yourself, you're telling your team that you don't care whether they are challenged and that it's not okay to not know something. Instead of trying to do everything yourself, try showing team members how to do things or talk them through as they do it.

3. "You can do that, not me"

Are you worried that you 'can't' do a certain job well and therefore avoid it? If you don't believe in your own abilities as a leader, how can your team? Showing your team that you are willing to learn how to do a job can be an priceless display of how you want them to be acting within the team.

4. "Failure is not an Option"

Talking about failure in such a way can be a very fine line to walk. On one hand it can be inspiring to think that failure is not possible; on the other hand you run the risk of creating a fear of failure. Instead, steer away from talking about failure at all and focus on encouraging trying new things and learning from mistakes.

At the end of the day, you are the leader – your words and actions are the example for your team and you have to be setting an example that you want them to follow.

If you would like to make sure your words have a lasting positive impact, contact People Make The Difference. We can help you with our training workshops, one-on-one coaching and Coach On Call services. To find out more, call us on 0412 333 415 or visit: peoplemakethedifference.com.au