

The last word

Pushing the envelope



IF YOU'RE STRUGGLING WITH YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS, CONSIDER THE RESEARCH, SAYS STEVE HOLDEN.

As professionals, we all want to impress, particularly when we don't know what we're talking about, in meetings and such, especially when someone is minuting, as in taking the minutes, which is why we need to action a whole pile of new vocabulary.

With that in mind, let me incentivise you with a heads up.

The bad news is that brainstorming is out – it has negative connotations – but there's good news, which is that idea showers are in. The immensely positive idea with an idea shower is not just that you have ideas, but that you have ideas that cascade down. Never mind that you can't cascade something up; the important thing is to make sure your ideas have more leverage.

Leveraging is, of course, the main game, mostly because you can talk about leveraging anything, even ideas, although there's more leverage in talking about leveraging value or leveraging talent or leveraging resources. The leverage lies in talking about leveraging, by the way, not in actually lev-

eraging something. Also, and in addition, keep in mind that you can maybe even leverage levers.

Time once was that one of 'also,' 'and' or 'in addition' would've been redundant. You thought it was excess verbiage? No more. These days less is no longer more. In the current currency, less is, just, well, less. As we now say, more is, um, more.

All this business of using many words instead of a few is one of the critical challenges in our current, contemporary climate. Sure, we used to have problems, but challenges are better and we don't want plain, ordinary challenges, we want critical challenges – mainly because, you guessed it, problems always had negative connotations.

Having taken that on board, of course, you'll need to review this absolutely positive challenge going forward. If going forward worries you, just remember that it's simply a form of forward planning – which is a new kind of current, contemporary planning

that's replaced the old kind, which must've been, um, backward planning, I guess.

Seriously, though, forward planning is the new way forward. It's the only way to pre-prepare for cognisant regular and irregular eventualities – and stuff – in our current, contemporary climate.

Folks in the old days used just to pre-prepare.

Imagine that.

No longer. It's imperative these days that we pre-prepare if we're to push the envelope with our blue-sky thinking so that we can articulately face to face from the get-go, kinda, sorta.

Sure, some of these idea showers may be out of left field for you, but now is the time to step up to the plate if you really want to touch base with your colleagues. Who knows, they might even want to start a baseball team.

My hope is that you obtain 110 per cent leverage from this impactful article, since it cascades granularity from a high-altitude 360-degree platform for the maximisation of your professional development. As an idea shower, also, and in addition, at the end of the day, it may help you to architect the paradigm shift you need in your school.

Otherwise you might have to resort to just changing things.

Oh, and if there's anyone who can translate this stuff into plain and meaningful English, let me know.

End of story. **T**

This month's Last Word may as well have been written using some kind of goofy jargon generator software, but was actually pre-prepared and written by Steve Holden, Editor of Teacher, and a 2008 highly-commended winner in the Australian Council of Deans of Education Excellence in Education Journalism Awards in the 'Print, Radio, Television or Online: Best commentary, opinion or critique' category for the Last Word.

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