

# CLARITY

One of the key language mistakes many of us make is not being clear enough and thinking that we were. In many situations, the expectation is on the listener to intuit that we really mean business. It is like a 'code' one needs to understand. One is really saying, "I mean it!" but actually says, "You might want to consider..."

**DIRECTIONS:** As a two member team answer the following questions and be prepared to share-out your discussions.

Take two minutes to discuss why are each of the statements below are "ineffective wording?"

- Perhaps you should...
- You might consider...
- I would encourage you to...
- A thought I have is...
- Something you might want to...

Take two minutes to discuss why people might use these "ineffective wordings?"

Take two minutes to come up with better ways to convey an accurate message?

## Closing Thoughts

Andy Platt, an educational consultant, makes the case when he helps supervisors with the following three words, "recommend, suggest and expect." For many years if someone put a 'recommendation' into an evaluation the reader picked up on the urgency under the somewhat kinder wording and went straight to work on making that recommendation a reality. There was no need to be bolder and clearer.

With today's employee if you have explicit expectations, state them. Do so with the words "expectation" or "non-negotiable." If you offer a "suggestion," make it be just that, a suggestion. One that can be taken, or not. The translations I have had to make for teachers after reading an evaluation have been many and the shocker to some evaluators is that sometimes the teacher cannot read between the lines. Getting more comfortable with 'spelling out' what needs to be done is where we all need to be going in order to communicate more successfully.