Relationship Tune-up: Change up Your Language

Leaders set the tone for an office or board meeting. Set the right tone by eliminating these killer phrases from your vocabulary.

Avoid saying…	Instead say…	Insight for Leaders
Yes, but…	*Yes, and…*	Help people understand how your ideas and theirs relate to one another. By using 'and' instead of 'but' you show that you respect what they have said and will build on their idea.
We tried that last year	*We've tried that before, so let's see what we learned to make this try better*	We don't want to close down people's ideas too soon. If you tried something before, there was probably a compelling reason to try it. Discuss 'lessons learned' and find better ways to implement it this time.
It's not in the budget	*How could we make this make sense financially?*	Budget restrictions shouldn't stop all new initiatives. Assess the financial benefits and then look at the budget for ways to accomplish great ideas within your financial capabilities.
It won't work	*How could we make this work?*	Don't jump to conclusions too soon. If it's a great idea, find ways to make it work Can you do a test first to check the results? Involve others to gain insight on how to overcome challenges.
We've always done it that way	*Let's see how this new idea would work*	When we've been on the job awhile, we adopt ways of doing things at the expense of trying new things. Spend 10% of each staff meeting challenging a different ingrained assumption.

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The members won't buy it	*What would it take for members to buy into it?*	You may need to help members understand the benefits of a new idea. Take the time to talk with members, gather their input and share the value of trying something new.
If it ain't broke, don't fix it.	*There may be a better way.*	Move your organization ahead by challenging the status quo. Surprise members with unexpected improvements and enhancements.
I'll think about it	*Tell me more about your idea.*	There's no better time than the present to be open to new ideas. Ask questions, be curious, encourage people to pursue their ideas whenever possible. They may not all work, but you'll be further ahead in the long run.
We don't have the resources	*Who could we align with to get the resources we need?*	Build partnerships to accomplish more than you can do on your own. Look for resources outside of your organization that would be a good match for what you can bring to the table.
Good idea, but not for us	*How can we make that idea work here?*	Help people reach across traditional boundaries. Encourage them to try out new things even if they have some initial resistance. Create an environment of openness and experimentation.

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