

## Module 1 — Leading High-Performing Teams

Everything worth remembering from this module — read it once, then take the Final Quiz.

### Grammar in a nutshell

#### Hedging & cautious language

Hedging means making a claim more cautious and less absolute. It is essential in academic and professional English to sound objective and avoid overstatement.

**Cautious verbs:** *Prefer suggest, indicate, appear, seem, tend to over strong verbs like prove, show, confirm.* → *The data suggest a link. / Costs tend to rise.*

**Modal verbs:** *may, might, could, would reduce certainty; may well = quite probably.* → *This may be the cause. / It would appear that... / This may well change.*

**Adverbs & quantifiers:** *relatively, fairly, somewhat, slightly, generally, broadly, arguably, to some extent, partly soften statements.* → *It is relatively common. / Broadly speaking... / To some extent...*

#### Advanced phrasal & prepositional verbs

At C1, phrasal verbs include many three-part verbs and pairs where the same verb + different particle changes meaning completely.

**Three-part phrasal verbs:** *Verb + adverb + preposition, always inseparable: put up with (tolerate), look forward to, come up with, cut down on, look down on, get on with, run out of, do away with, face up to, catch up on.*

**Same verb, different particle:** *The particle changes the meaning: give up (quit) vs give in (surrender); take off (leave the ground) vs take after (resemble); put off (postpone) vs put up with (tolerate).*

**Register & synonyms:** *Phrasal verbs are common in speech; formal writing often prefers a Latinate synonym.* → *do away with = abolish; come up with = propose; cut down on = reduce; find out = discover.*

### Watch out

Don't over-hedge — too many softeners sound vague and weak.

Avoid absolute words (always, never, prove, certainly) unless you are sure.

Keep subject-verb agreement: This seems / The data suggest.

Three-part verbs are inseparable: put up with it (not put it up with).

After the final preposition use a noun or -ing: look forward to seeing you.

Learn the whole chunk — the meaning is rarely literal.

## Vocabulary of the module

| WORD                  | MEANING                                                 | EXAMPLE                                                               |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>to hand over</b>   | to give responsibility for something to someone else    | <i>"It's time to hand over the client reports to Dario."</i>          |
| <b>to take on</b>     | to accept a new task or responsibility                  | <i>"She's ready to take on the whole product launch."</i>             |
| <b>workload</b>       | the amount of work a person has to do                   | <i>"Let's look at your workload before adding anything new."</i>      |
| <b>to oversee</b>     | to watch over work without doing it yourself            | <i>"You'll oversee the project, but the team runs it day to day."</i> |
| <b>to step in</b>     | to intervene when help is really needed                 | <i>"I'll only step in if the client escalates."</i>                   |
| <b>to follow up</b>   | to check progress after something has started           | <i>"Let's follow up on Friday to see how it's going."</i>             |
| <b>a one-to-one</b>   | a private meeting between a manager and one team member | <i>"Bring it up in your one-to-one next week."</i>                    |
| <b>breathing room</b> | space and time to work without constant pressure        | <i>"Give the new hire some breathing room to learn."</i>              |

## More words from the Reading

| WORD              | MEANING                             |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>painted</b>    | described or presented (as)         |
| <b>inferred</b>   | worked out indirectly from evidence |
| <b>oversees</b>   | supervises and is responsible for   |
| <b>burden</b>     | a heavy load or responsibility      |
| <b>foster</b>     | to encourage the growth of          |
| <b>widespread</b> | common; found everywhere            |
| <b>caveat</b>     | an important warning or condition   |
| <b>ties</b>       | connections or bonds between people |

## Useful Language — 15 phrases to keep

### Delegating with ownership

- ▶ "I'd like to hand over the monthly client review to you — **outcome, format, the decisions are yours.**" — delegate the outcome, not the steps
- ▶ "You might want to start with the top three accounts, but it's your call." — suggest without commanding
- ▶ "I'll check in on Fridays, and I'll only step in if something escalates." — define support without micromanaging

### Positive feedback that sticks

- ▶ "The way you handled that objection turned the whole meeting around." — name the exact behaviour
- ▶ "What really made the difference was how early you flagged the risk." — highlight what made the difference
- ▶ "That's exactly the standard I'd love the whole team to follow." — turn praise into a standard

### Corrective feedback, softened

- ▶ “It might be worth revisiting the numbers before this goes to the client.” — hedge a correction politely
- ▶ “I was wondering if the report couldn’t be a bit tighter — shall we look at it together?” — suggest tentatively, invite collaboration
- ▶ “To be fair, part of this is on me — I probably wasn’t clear enough about the deadline.” — share responsibility to keep trust

### Coaching questions

- ▶ “What have you tried so far?” — make them think before you answer
- ▶ “What would you do if I were on holiday?” — push for ownership
- ▶ “Which option are you leaning towards, and why?” — surface their reasoning

### Following up & support

- ▶ “How is the handover going — anything slowing you down?” — open a follow-up without pressure
- ▶ “Is there anything you’d like me to take off your plate this week?” — offer to rebalance the workload
- ▶ “Let’s touch base next Friday and see where we’ve got to.” — schedule the next check-in naturally

### ✓ Ready for the Final Quiz?

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Tick what you can do. All of them? You are ready — you need 70%% to pass.

- ☐ I can delegate a piece of work clearly — outcome, ownership, deadline — without micromanaging
- ☐ I can give positive and corrective feedback that is specific, fair and easy to accept
- ☐ I can use coaching questions to develop people instead of solving everything yourself
- ☐ I can soften or strengthen your message deliberately, using hedging with precision
- ☐ I can run a one-to-one conversation that leaves the other person clearer and more motivated