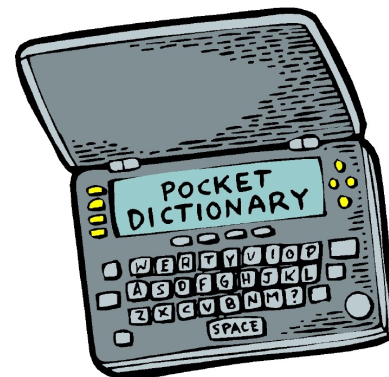


COMMONLY MISUSED WORDS



IMPACT

The verb “impact” means to “crush together, to press or fix firmly into”. The noun “impact” requires wordy phrasing.

Wrong: This program will impact the mining sector.

Better: This program will have an impact on the mining sector.

Best: This program will affect the mining sector.

Wrong: This program will positively impact the mining sector.

Better: This program will have a positive impact on the mining sector.

Best: This program will help the mining sector.

Wrong: This program will negatively impact lumber exports.

Better: This program will have a negative impact on lumber exports.

Best: This program will hamper lumber exports.

COMMIT

The verb “commit” is transitive. It requires a direct object unless used in the passive voice. The noun “commitment” requires wordy phrasing.

Wrong: The Government has committed to set up a task force to study the problem.

Better: The Government has given a commitment to set up a task force to study the problem.

Better: The Government has committed itself to setting up a task force to study the problem.

Better: The Government is committed to setting up a task force to study the problem.

Best: The Government has promised to set up a task force to study the problem.

or: The Government has agreed to set up a task force to study the problem.

or: The Government has decided to set up a task force to study the problem.

or: The Government will set up a task force to study the problem.

COMPOSE – COMPRISE

Compose: The parts compose the whole.

Comprise: The whole comprises the parts.

Thus: Fifteen deputy ministers compose this committee.

or: This committee comprises 15 deputy ministers.

PRESENTLY

For many people, “presently” means “soon”. For others, “presently” means “now”.

For the sake of clarity, avoid using the word.

REGRETTABLE – I REGRET

One of the definitions of “regrettable” is “deserving censure”. Do not use it as a synonym for “I regret”, which means “to feel or show regret”. You might regret that you were unable to attend the meeting, but that doesn’t mean that it was regrettable that you did not go.

KEY

“Key” is an ambiguous modifier unless preceded by “the” or “a”.

Wrong: The consultation process is key to securing public support.

Right: The consultation process is a key to securing public support. [In other words, the consultation process is vital, but it is not the only factor that is vital.]

or: The consultation process is the key to securing public support. [In other words, the consultation process is the pivotal factor.]