

On the I-Word

Webmaster rather deplores the abuse of the I-Word - the first person pronoun. It is a quirk he has recognized, in himself, for some time and with which he struggles quite a bit. He has a pretty good idea where his aversion to the I-word came from. It is because he is surrounded by members of the I-generation (aka the Me-generation). Webmaster is part of the Us-generation, so he used to use "we" whenever possible, rather than the I-word. But he came to realize that many would accuse him of abusing the editorial "we", or - heaven forbid - the Royal We! [He was careful not to slip and tack on an extra "e" there!] But that got a bit cumbersome. So he spent quite a lot of time constructing communications in such a way that NO pronoun was required. This took a bit of effort, but - being fairly proficient at the use of English - Webmaster was able to get the job done. At least in written communications. In oral communications it was/is more difficult and - in conversations with friends - it can be almost impossible.

But as Webmaster started to become Webmaster, he saw a rather simple way out of the conundrum: he simply began to refer to himself as Webmaster. It took a bit of getting used to, but he grew into it (while he was growing into being Webmaster). And now he is quite comfortable with it. In written communications he rarely slips - although sometimes he does not take the path less traveled but reverts to his previous game of just avoiding the I-word. The problem of exactly how to handle his problem in spoken communication remains of course, but he is working on that. All told he believes he has saved the world many thousands of "I"s and hopes to save even more before he gets to The Bottom Line.

It should be noted that the use of Webmaster (vs. the I-word) has a number of additional positive consequences - at least so far as Webmaster sees it. Others may not see it that way, so Webmaster will leave it to them to think about the other consequences - and whether any of them are "positive".

The bottom line here (as opposed to The Bottom Line" of all these pieces) is that Webmaster does not think he is all that important and, by avoiding the I-word, he is in essence saying that he hopes the reader will think about the message and NOT about the messenger.