5662. Change Minimum Characters to Satisfy One of Three Conditions

My Submissions (/contest/weekly-contest-225/problems/change-minimum-characters-to-satisfy-one-of-three-conditions/submissions/)
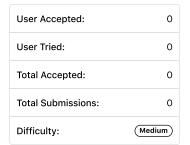
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You are given two strings `a` and `b` that consist of lowercase letters. In one operation, you can change any character in `a` or `b` to **any lowercase letter**.

Your goal is to satisfy **one** of the following three conditions:

- **Every** letter in `a` is **strictly less** than **every** letter in `b` in the alphabet.
- **Every** letter in `b` is **strictly less** than **every** letter in `a` in the alphabet.
- **Both** `a` and `b` consist of **only one** distinct letter.

Return *the **minimum** number of operations needed to achieve your goal.*

User Accepted:	0
User Tried:	0
Total Accepted:	0
Total Submissions:	0
Difficulty:	Medium

Example 1:

```
Input: a = "aba", b = "caa"
Output: 2
Explanation: Consider the best way to make each condition true:
1) Change b to "ccc" in 2 operations, then every letter in a is less than every letter in b.
2) Change a to "bbb" and b to "aaa" in 3 operations, then every letter in b is less than every letter in a.
3) Change a to "aaa" and b to "aaa" in 2 operations, then a and b consist of one distinct letter.
The best way was done in 2 operations (either condition 1 or condition 3).
```

Example 2:

```
Input: a = "dabadd", b = "cda"
Output: 3
Explanation: The best way is to make condition 1 true by changing b to "eee".
```

Constraints:

- $1 <= a.length, b.length <= 10^5$
- `a` and `b` consist only of lowercase letters.

JavaScript ▾

```
1  /**
2   * @param {string} a
3   * @param {string} b
4   * @return {number}
5   */
6  var minCharacters = function(a, b) {
7
8  };
```

Use Example Testcases