











North America

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE GUIDE

WORDS MATTER -
Guide to Using Inclusive Language



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We recognize diversity as all individual characteristics that define us, going beyond demographic descriptors. Diversity is the intersection of our individual backgrounds and experiences, and the unique perspectives that we each have as a result. Almost all forms of identity that distinguish us from one another contribute to cognitive diversity. Embracing cognitive diversity – differences in thought patterns, information processing, and problem-solving – primes organizations for more innovative thinking, and, therefore, growth.

What is diversity, equity, and inclusion

Diversity ensures that all the ways in which people differ are represented in an organization. Equity creates fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people. Inclusion brings everyone together and fosters a culture of respect and belonging.

Why we use inclusive language

Whether giving a presentation, writing a press release, conducting a review, or simply talking with colleagues, inclusive language ensures that individuals and groups feel welcome, respected, and safe. It also helps lead to a diversity of ideas, creativity, and innovation.

Principals of Inclusive language:

- Put people first before their characteristics
- Describe who people are, instead of what they are not
- Don't group people under generalities

Let's learn about...

- Race and Ethnicity
- Disabilities
- Mental Health
- Age
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender
- Military
- Socio-economic Status



Race and ethnicity are not the same. Race is a social-political construct associated with certain physical characteristics and ancestry. Ethnicity is one's national origin and its associated culture, language, and beliefs.

Native American (Race)

Not Hispanic or Latino. A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North America and South America (including Central America), and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment. (Other terms: Alaskan Native, First Nation, or Indigenous person).

African American or Black (Race)

The two terms are NOT interchangeable. For example, African, African American, and Afro Caribbean refer to someone with African ancestry. However, it is not inclusive of people who are from places other than Africa. The accepted and preferred way to refer to someone is as a Black person. We capitalize Black as it refers to individuals in the African diaspora.

White (Race)

Refers to someone with ancestral origins in Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East. Caucasian is no longer used to refer to white people.

Asian and Asian American (Race)

Asian refers to someone with ancestral origins in the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam. Asian American refers to a person living in the US with Asian ancestry.

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (Ethnicity)

A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

Hispanic or LatinX (Ethnicity)

Hispanic refers to people that originate from Spanish-speaking countries.

LatinX refers to people who descend from Latin-American countries—but whose language isn't necessarily Spanish. LatinX is an inclusive gender-neutral term used in lieu of Latino (Latin Man) or Latina (Latin Woman) to refer to a person of Latin American descent.

Two or More Races

A person who identifies with more than one race.



A disability is any condition of the body or mind (impairment) that makes it more difficult for the person with the condition to do certain activities (activity limitation) and interact with the world around them (participation restrictions). Disability affects approximately 61 million, or nearly 1 in 4 (26%), people in the United States living in communities. Disability affects more than one billion people worldwide.

According to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, people “. . . with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory [such as hearing or vision] impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.”

There are many types of disabilities, which maybe genetic or inherited, such as those that affect a person’s:

- Vision
- Movement
- Thinking
- Remembering
- Learning
- Communicating
- Hearing
- Mental health
- Social relationships

Although “people with disabilities” sometimes refers to a single population, this is a diverse group of people with a wide range of needs. Two people with the same type of disability can be affected in very different ways. Some disabilities may be hidden or not easy to see.

According to the World Health Organization, disability has three dimensions:

1. Impairment in a person’s body structure or function or mental functioning; examples include loss of a limb, vision, or memory.
2. Activity limitation, like difficulty seeing, hearing, walking or problem solving.
3. Participation restrictions in normal daily activities like working, engaging in social and recreational activities, and obtaining health care and preventive services.

Disability Inclusion

Including people with disabilities in everyday activities and encouraging them to have roles like their peers who do not have a disability is disability inclusion. This requires making sure that adequate policies and practices are in effect in our organization.



Use Inclusive Language

The terms used for people with disabilities all too frequently perpetuate stereotypes and false ideas. While some words/phrases are commonly used by many, including those with disabilities, usage is likely due to habit rather than intentional meaning. Conscious thought about what we say, and when we say it, may help to more positively reshape how we communicate about disability in society.

Terms describe a group only in terms of their disabilities and not as people. Humanizing phrases emphasize the person even if the adjective of the disability is included. For example, there is a growing advocacy to reframe brain differences, not deficits. The term 'neurodiversity' is thought to expand our understanding of developmental disorders like attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), which offers a wider view of 'normal.' When in doubt, check with the individual to learn which terms s/he/they might prefer.

Use these guidelines when addressing or referring to people with disabilities:

- Avoid portraying as superhuman the accomplishments of a person with a disability. This inadvertently implies that a person with a disability lacks, or has very limited skills, talents, or unusual gifts.
- Avoid labeling persons and putting them in categories, as in the handicapped, the disabled, the deaf, the learning disabled; use terminology such as: people with disabilities, or a person with a disability.
- Do not minimize individual differences that distinguish one person with a disability from another with the same disability, by using a phrase such as garden variety (specific disability) to refer to an individual or group of individuals with similar disabilities.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Disability rights are civil rights. The Americans with Disabilities Act, ADA, is a law that protects people with disabilities from discrimination in many areas of public life.

The ADA prohibits discrimination based on disability in employment, state and local government, public accommodations, commercial facilities, transportation, and telecommunications. It also applies to the United States Congress.

To be protected by the ADA, one must have a disability or have a relationship or association with an individual with a disability. An individual with a disability is defined by the ADA as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who has a history or record of such an impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment. The ADA does not specifically name all the impairments that are covered.

Canada - Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, 2008

Mexico - Ley General Para La Inclusion de Las Personas Con Discapacidad



Mental health describes the state of a person's emotional and psychological well-being. This includes one's ability to cope with everyday stresses and work productively. When discussing mental health, it is important to note that there are no absolutes. Mental health exists on a spectrum. The purpose of this guide is to address stigma around mental illness and equip employees with person-first language tools for discussing mental health concerns with fellow employees.

Mental health condition or disability

Because of perceived stigma, some people are calling for an end to the use of the term mental illness, suggesting instead "a person diagnosed with a psychiatric disorder" or "a person with a mental health history."

Addict

The American Psychiatric Association recommends avoiding the words addict and alcoholic, suggesting instead "someone experiencing a drug or alcohol problem."

Recovering or In Recovery

Use recovering or in recovery from to refer to someone trying to overcome active addiction, for example, "someone recovering from an opioid addiction."

Depression

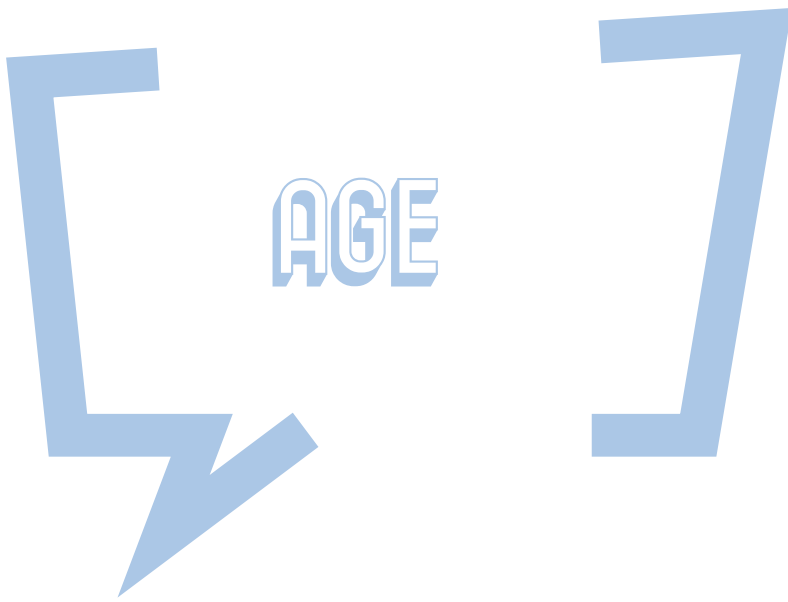
It is characterized by a loss of interest in activities, persistent fatigue, difficulty in concentrating and making decisions, persistent feelings of emptiness or hopelessness, and abnormal eating habits. Its proper name is major depressive disorder. Only refer to someone as having depression if they've been formally diagnosed by a licensed medical professional.

Suicide

Avoid the terms failed attempt or successful attempt as they depict suicide as a goal, project, or solution. Some argue that the term commit implies that suicide is a criminal act. When discussing a death by suicide, say the person has "died by suicide." This language implies the facts around the cause of death and the language is neutral.

Use these guidelines when addressing or referring to people with mental health challenges:

- Say: "person with a mental health condition"
- Say: "a person with a mental health issue" or "person experiencing a mental health issue"
- Say: "X lives with a mental health condition"
- Don't Say: "they are mentally ill" or "they are not normal"
- Don't define the person by their mental health issue
- Use terms like "suffer" or "suffering"
- Don't Say: "X is mentally ill"
- Don't Use terms like schizophrenic, bipolar, OCD to describe behaviors or traits.



Ageism affects people of all ages. Age can be used to diminish a person's capabilities and devalue their contributions and ability. Generally, there's no need to refer to a person as young, old, or any age in between and mention exactly their ages. There are generational stereotypes for each age group (generation, by birth year). The definitions below offer a more realistic view of each:

Traditionalists, born before 1946

Stereotypes: Unable/unwilling to learn new things, afraid of technology, rigid

Facts: Older workers value the opportunity to learn new technology and information. Many work out of necessity or because they find it meaningful. They are engaged and want to keep their minds active.

Baby Boomers, born between 1946 and 1964

Stereotypes: Privileged, self-righteous, materialistic, collecting a check until retirement, and resistant to change

Facts: Baby Boomers are retiring later but not just to amass cash; they believe they still have something to contribute. They have a strong capacity and willingness to learn new tasks, processes, and technologies.

Generation X, born between 1965 and 1980

Stereotypes: Skeptical, cynical, and disaffected

Facts: These employees are strong independent workers who push for new perspectives and flexibility. They are critical thinkers who are technologically agile.

Generation Y/Millennials, born between 1981 and 1994

Stereotypes: Entitled, self-centered, demanding, job-hoppers, and hypersensitive

Facts: Studies have found that Millennials stay with employers as long as Gen Xers at the same age. Their perceived oversensitivity is more often a desire for equity and inclusion, good values that contribute to customer loyalty and higher sales.

Generation Z, born after 1995

Stereotypes: Always on devices, no interpersonal skills, spoiled, unmotivated/lazy, not loyal, consistent job seekers, inexperienced

Facts: The youngest cohort is motivated to discover how to work smarter using technology. They excel at processing information and are mobilizers and organizers.

Gen Z/iGen/Centennials born between 1995-2010

Stereotypes: Short attention span, bounce rapidly among their smartphones, tablets and computers, very low tolerance for traditional advertising, very cultured and culturally accepting, more sensitive to gender equality and race relations

Facts: For Centennials, technology is not a consumer item but a tool that facilitates access to communication, exchange, education, and entertainment (a more pragmatic attitude). Furthermore, Centennials are true digital natives; they are considered as the generation best prepared for understanding and using future innovations.

SEX AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Sex comprises biological and physiological characteristics, including reproductive organs and hormones. Sex is assigned at birth and is not synonymous with gender.

Sexist language or sexism is prejudice or discrimination based on sex or gender. Remember, we are humankind, not just mankind, and language should reflect the fact that women make up 49.6% of the world's population.

Use the same adjectives to describe achievements of either sex and never use terms or phrases that diminish or exaggerate abilities of either sex.

Never use job titles that link the job to a single sex when either sex can perform the job.

If you must use "each" or "every," try to avoid using pronouns, for example.

- Do say "Each employee must complete the project by Thursday."
- Don't say "Each employee must complete his project by Thursday."

Sexual Orientation

The type of sexual, romantic, emotional/spiritual attraction one has for others, generally based on the gender relationship between the person and the people they are attracted to. Note: an individual's sexual orientation is independent of their gender identity.

Commonly used terms

- **Lesbian:** A woman who is attracted to other women.
- **Gay:** A person who is emotionally, romantically, or sexually attracted to members of the same gender. Men, women, and non-binary people may use this term to describe themselves.
- **Bisexual:** A sexual orientation that describes a person who is emotionally and sexually attracted to more than one gender.
- **Transgender:** Describes a person whose gender identity and assigned sex at birth do not correspond.
- **Questioning:** An individual who is uncertain of their gender identity or sexual orientation. *Please Note—you may see LGBTQIA+ sometimes used in place of LGBT or LGBTQ. It is an abbreviation for lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender-questioning-intersex-asexual.
- **Ally:** A person, group or organization advocating for a nondominant social group, working together for equity and social justice.

Avoid making assumptions about marital or family relationships. In these cases, leverage the generic label instead:

<u>Gender Specific Label</u>	<u>Generic Label</u>
Husband / Wife	Partner
Mother / Father	Guardian

- Always listen for and respect a person's self-identified terminology. If someone refers to their spouse as "husband" or "wife", then you should use the same language when referring to their spouse"
- Avoid outing someone's sexual orientation or transgender status. Be sure to talk to the person before advocating on their behalf.

GENDER IDENTITY

One's innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both or neither – how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. One's gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth. Do not make assumptions about an individual's gender identity or sex assigned at birth. Always listen for and respect a person's self-identified terminology.

Human Rights Campaign Glossary

- **Cisgender:** A term used to describe a person whose gender identity aligns with those typically associated with the sex assigned to them at birth.
- **Gender fluid:** A person who does not identify with a single fixed gender or has a fluid or unfixed gender identity.
- **Non-binary:** An adjective describing a person who does not identify exclusively as a man or a woman. Non-binary people may identify as being both a man and a woman, somewhere in between, or as falling completely outside these categories. While many also identify as transgender, not all non-binary people do. Non-binary can also be used as an umbrella term encompassing identity such as agender, bigender, genderqueer or gender-fluid.
- **Transgender:** An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. Being transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation. Therefore, transgender people may identify as straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, etc.
- **Transitioning:** A series of processes that some transgender people may undergo to live more fully as their true gender. This typically includes social transition, such as changing name and pronouns; medical transition, which may include hormone therapy or gender affirming surgeries; and legal transition, which may include changing legal name and sex on government identity documents. Transgender people may choose to undergo some, all or none of these processes.



Gender-inclusive pronouns

Pronouns are the words we use to refer to ourselves and others and are an important part of our daily lives. In English, the most common personal pronouns are he/him/his and she/her/hers, which are typically used to refer to people who identify their gender (identity) as masculine or feminine, respectively. They/them/theirs is another common set of pronouns that is used by many non-binary people. Since some pronouns are gendered ("she/her" and "he/him"), it is important to be intentional about the way we use pronouns as we all work to create as inclusive an environment as possible.

Human Rights Campaign Resources, Understanding Pronouns

He/Him/His

The pronoun sequence, he/him/his/himself, is most attributed to those who identify as men. However, we cannot guess an individual's gender identity by knowing their chosen pronoun.

She/Her/Hers

The pronoun sequence she/her/hers/herself is most attributed to those who identify as women. However, we cannot guess an individual's gender identity by knowing their chosen pronoun.

They/Them/Theirs

The pronoun sequence they/them/theirs/themself(themselves) is most attributed to those in a group. However, we also can use they/them/theirs/themself as a singular pronoun, meant to be more encompassing of gender.

Ze/Hir/Hirs

Another common pronoun sequence, ze(zie)/hir/hirs/hirself, is a common gender inclusive pronoun. However, we cannot guess or assume an individual's gender identity by knowing their chosen pronoun.

Use "they" appropriately, whenever possible.

- Use the singular they when referring to a person whose gender is unknown or irrelevant to the context
- Use they when referring to a known person who prefers they as their pronoun
- Say "Employees must hand in their reports by 2:00 pm."
- Say "The employee should call the HR manager."

Use the neutral pronoun "one."

- Say "A client in Boston is likely to invest more than one in Syracuse."

Suggestions/examples/actionable

Starting meetings with "I'm Andrew my pronouns are"



EssilorLuxottica's commitment to the military is embedded at every level of our organization. We support active members of the military, military members transitioning to civilian life, the National Guard, and reservists, as well as military veterans, spouses, and families.

Active duty

Refers to full-time duty in the active military. It includes reservists on full-time training duty. Persons in the Reserve or National Guard are not full-time active military personnel, although they can be deployed at any time if the need should arise.

Veterans

Refers to a person who actively served and was honorably discharged from the military, naval, or air service. In 2016, the definition was expanded to include National Guard members and reservists who have honorably served for at least 20 years.

Reservists

Each branch of the military has a Reserve that's under the command of their respective military branch (e.g., Army Reserve are under the command of the Army). The Reserve maintains trained units to be available for active duty stateside or overseas in the armed forces when needed. They are otherwise civilians, and in peacetime have careers outside the military. Reservists usually train on an annual basis to refresh their skills.

National Guard Members

The National Guard consists of the Army National Guard and the Air Force's Air National Guard. While federally funded, the National Guard is organized and controlled by states. The National Guard assists communities endangered by storms, floods, fires, and other disasters. The National Guard deploys both in the continental US and overseas to perform a wide array of peacekeeping missions as well as defend the nation against foreign enemies. Like Reservists, they are otherwise civilians, and in peacetime have careers outside the military.

Be respectful and sensitive to the unique experiences and needs of those who have served.

Acknowledge service while understanding some topics are inappropriate. Remember, military veterans have proven, highly valuable skills and talents.

Gender-inclusive military terms

All branches: Refer to members as troops or service members.

Air Force: Refer to all as "members of the Air Force."

Army: Refer to members as soldiers.

Coast Guard: Refer to all as "members of the Coast Guard."

Marine Corps: A Marine, regardless of sex, is simply called a Marine. Do not refer to Marines as soldiers.

Navy: Refer to members as sailors, officers, or pilots. Do not use the term seamen unless it is their rank.

Reserves: Refer to all as "members of the Reserve," reservists, or soldiers.

National Guard: Refer to all as "members of the National Guard," or soldiers.



SOCIO- ECONOMIC STATUS

Socio-economic status is the social standing or class of an individual or group. It is often measured as a combination of education, income, and occupation. It encompasses not only income but also educational attainment, occupational prestige, and subjective perceptions of social status and social class.

Examinations of socio-economic status often reveal inequities in access to resources, plus issues related to privilege, power, and control. Using words like disadvantaged or underprivileged paint a dire picture of individuals without power. It suggests that advantaged people or privileged people are better without defining what that means.

Classism

The assignment of characteristics of worth and ability based on actual or perceived social class, and the attitudes, policies, and practices that maintain unequal valuing based on class.

Class privilege

Encompasses the unearned advantages, protections, immunities, and access experienced by a small class of people who typically carry special status or power within a society or culture.

Use these guidelines when addressing or referring to the socio-economic status of others:

- Use person-first language.
- Define income brackets and levels, if possible, like "people whose incomes are below the federal poverty threshold"
- People experiencing homelessness
- People who are homeless
- People in underserved communities
- People in emergency shelter
- People in transitional housing
- People receiving welfare benefits



RESOURCES

Language is always evolving. Be open to continually learning how individuals and groups self-identify.

Conscious Style Guide

Articles and resources on differing abilities, age, ethnicity and race, gender, sexual orientation, and more.

The Diversity Style Guide

More than 700 terms related to race, differing abilities, age, sexual orientation, and more.

Avoiding Bias

Walden University Writing Center

Includes generalization, evidence, self-awareness, objectivity, and sensitivity.

General Principles for Reducing Bias

American Psychological Association

Principles for writing about people without bias.

Racial Equity Resource Guide: Glossary

W.K. Kellogg Foundation

A common vocabulary essential to avoid misunderstandings.

Speaking of Inclusion...

Center for Legal Inclusiveness

Common examples of ableist language.

Who You Calling 'Young Lady'?

AARP Disrupting Aging

Ageist language that needs to change—now.

Additional Resources

- National Association of Black Journalists: Style Guide
- National Center on Disability and Journalism: Style Guide
- National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association Stylebook: Supplement on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Terminology
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- National Center on Disability and Journalism Language Style Guide
- Disability Laws and Acts by Country/Area | United Nations Enable



For additional guidance on using inclusive language, send your questions to

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