



**THE POLISHED
BUSINESS ENGLISH
WORKBOOK**



**GIVE YOUR ENGLISH
THAT EXTRA ZING, OOMPH,
PIZZAZZ... IN SHORT, A LEG UP!**



CHIARA
FOPPA
PEDRETTI

the polished
translator



VOL. 2, JANUARY 2023



WELCOME, POLISHED ENGLISH SPEAKERS!

As you may already know, I'm Chiara,
an English-Italian technical translator
and a business English tutor.

I've created the "POLISHED Business English
Workbook" to share useful knowledge and information
about the English language.

I've conceived this Workbook as a digital product and
all its assignments to be fulfilled digitally.

For the sake of our Planet,
I invite you not to print these pages.

This second issue is all about **inclusive English**.

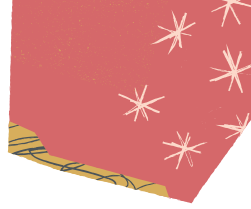
That's certainly a hot topic in many language
communities, and for a good reason. We'll discuss what
it looks like in English. **Happy learning!**

Chiara Foppa Pedretti
The POLISHED Translator



WORKBOOK CONTENT

- 04 A WORD FROM CHIARA - INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE:
WHAT, HOW, WHY
- 07 READING - A GUIDE TO WRITING INCLUSIVE
LANGUAGE AND COPY
- 11 WRITING & SPEAKING - 4 QUESTIONS
- 12 READING - EXAMPLES
- 16 LISTENING - VIDEOS AND PODCASTS
- 18 WRITING - REWRITING WITH GENDER-NEUTRAL
LANGUAGE
- 19 SPEAKING - SHARE YOUR OPINION
- 20 FINAL TAKEAWAYS
- 21 PRACTICE WITH ME!



Inclusive language: what, how, why

Using truly inclusive language means following good writing standards while, at the same, time respecting the people who read that content.



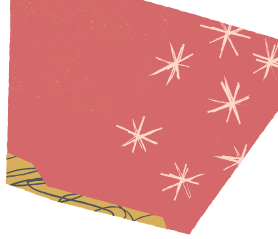
This is done by avoiding any gender stereotypes or expressions that discriminate against people because of their physical, functional, social, ethnic, or religious characteristics.

The goal is to communicate in plain, easy-to-understand English that makes any reader feel welcome and included, rather than excluded.

Ethics, Diversity, and Inclusion are now crucial issues for companies. There are two main reasons for this: (1) improving the well-being, and therefore also the productivity, of one's employees and (2) enhancing one's corporate image and "employer branding".

In particular, Diversity is understood as the set of peculiarities of every person's cultural, ethnic, religious, gender, and sexual orientation affiliations, which, in the workplace, must not only be respected but also valued in harmony with the context. This results in everyone's Inclusion, i.e. the ability to make all diversities coexist and cooperate in the best possible way, making them distinctive strengths of the organization.

This makes using inclusive language essential when writing texts for both internal (i.e. for a company's employees and stakeholders) and external use (i.e. for a company's customers, suppliers, partners, etc.).



Useful resources to get you up and running

1) UNITED NATIONS | Gender-inclusive language

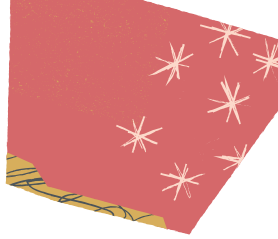
Key quote: "English has very few gender markers: the pronouns and possessives (he, she, her and his); and some nouns and forms of address. Most English nouns do not have grammatical gender forms (teacher, president), whereas a few nouns are specifically masculine or feminine (actor/actress, waiter/waitress)."

2) Google developer documentation style guide | Write inclusive documentation

Key quote: "Avoid ableist language; [...] Avoid unnecessarily gendered language; [...] Avoid unnecessarily violent language; [...] Write diverse and inclusive examples; [...] Avoid bias and harm when discussing disability and accessibility."



A WORD FROM CHIARA



3) Think with Google | Striving for a more inclusive workplace? Start by examining your language

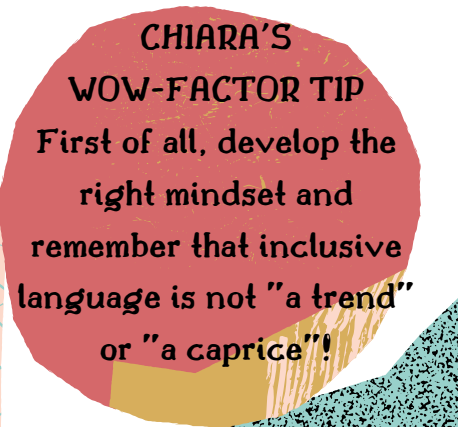
Key quote: "76% of companies cite diversity and inclusion as a value or priority, while just 22% of employees report being aware of relevant efforts at their companies."



4) National Institute for Health Research | A guide to creating inclusive content and language

Key quote: "Web content has the potential to be accessed by people all over the world, with a wide variety of characteristics and lived experiences. By being mindful of this and taking time to understand the people you are talking to, you will actively include more people in the conversation."

**CHIARA'S
WOW-FACTOR TIP**
First of all, develop the
right mindset and
remember that inclusive
language is not "a trend"
or "a caprice"!





READING

Let's read a post from the web about writing inclusive language, especially when writing content for your company, be it a marketing text, an internal code of conduct, or anything in between.

Don't worry too much if you don't understand every single word, but focus on grasping the general meaning.

Watch out, I'm going to ask you a few questions at the end!

DIFFICULTY DEGREE: Medium



A Guide to Writing Inclusive Language and Copy, by Scarlett Payne

GLOSSARY

Hop on the bandwagon = To join, follow, or support something only after it becomes successful or popular

Crushing importance = Tremendous, very strong

The pen is mightier than the sword = The written word is more effective than violence as a means of social or political change

Hint = Something that you say or do in an indirect way in order to show somebody what you are thinking

Ableist = Related to unfair treatment of or negative attitudes towards disabled people

Demeaning = Putting somebody in a position that does not give them the respect that they should have

Viable = That can be done or that will be successful

Prominent = Important or well known

Enforce = To make sure that people obey a particular law or rule

Add up = (in this text) To make a total

By all means = Certainly

Drop = (in this text) To stop doing or including something



READING

Last year took us all for a ride, and the beginning of 2021 has **hopped on the bandwagon**. Between #BlackLivesMatter and Trump's second impeachment, a few things have become clear. And one of these has been budding for a long time now: the **crushing importance** of equality and inclusivity.

[...] Today we're going to talk about how to bring inclusivity into your writing. Why?

Because **the pen is mightier than the sword**. And because, sometimes, cliches are cliches for a reason.

When it comes to creating inclusive content, you need to do more than post a piece for national celebrations like Black History Month or International Women's Day. Instead, you need to write every piece – every blog, social post, newsletter, email, landing page and so on – with inclusiveness in mind. It means being aware of word choice and formatting for accessibility.

It's also a matter of educating yourself on all the types of people to be conscientious of. You need to understand that inclusivity encompasses race, ethnicity, nationality, culture, gender, sex, sexual orientation, disability, mental health, education level and more.

- 26% of the US population has a disability.
- 20% of the US population suffers from mental illness.
- 5% of the US population is LGBT.

This is but a taste of the United States' diversity and a **hint** of the need for inclusive copy.

[...] How to Make Your Copy Inclusive

When you start writing, always take a "Global First" perspective to account for cultural diversity. Imagine that anyone from anywhere in the world can and will be reading what you write. In the era of the internet, this isn't too far from reality.

While there are tools that can help you with specific terminology and concepts (we'll get into those further down), there are rules to follow when writing your UX copy.

Be Inclusive of Culture, Race, Ethnicity and Nationality

- Monitor your use of regional phrases and words.
- Be careful of cultural references that not everyone will understand due to age or geography.
- Use the respective person's preferred choice when referring to races, ethnicities and nationalities.

Be Inclusive of Gender, Sex and Sexuality

- Embrace gender diversity and don't assume that readers are female or male, heterosexual, cisgender and so on (e.g., use the term partner instead of girlfriend or boyfriend).
- Stick to gender-neutral pronouns like they.
- Use gender-neutral job titles (e.g., firefighter instead of fireman).
- Don't use gender as a substitute for a trait (e.g., manly for strength).

Be Inclusive of Disabilities

- Ensure that your copy follows accessible design best practices.
- Be detailed and add descriptions for hyperlinks for screen reader use. [...]
- Avoid **ableist** language (e.g., dumb or lame).
- Include accurate, detailed alt text for accessibility.
- Be Inclusive of Mental Health Challenges
- Don't refer to mental health challenges as metaphors for everyday challenges (e.g., saying feeling anxious or depressed when you mean feeling stressed or upset).
- Don't use mental health challenges as synonyms (e.g., OCD for meticulous or bipolar for rapidly changing). [...]

Be Inclusive of Education and Non-Native Speakers [...]

- Improve readability by using shorter sentences, cutting unnecessary words and making paragraphs smaller.
- Improve comprehension with simpler words and writing at a lower reading level. An 8th-grade reading level or below is ideal. You can use a tool like the Hemingway Editor to check yours.
- Avoid industry jargon the average person won't understand.
- Include a glossary if you use lots of unknown words.
- For activities, give step-by-step instructions, keep steps simple and provide visual guidance as a backup.

Other Inclusive Writing Tips

- Educate yourself on relevant industry-specific inclusivity issues (e.g., inclusivity for medical copy).
- Say exactly what you mean, and don't use terms that can be used to discriminate or offend (e.g., crazy or dumb).



READING

- Avoid **demeaning** euphemisms (e.g., differently-abled, victim or afflicted).
- Never rely on stereotypes.
- Avoid offensive humor.
- Focus your writing on interests over demographics.
- Make sure that images used represent diversity.
- Incorporate testimonials from diverse populations.
- Choose content topics that are inclusive and welcoming of all people.
- Be inclusive of readers' different needs and goals by using information architecture that is skimmable, including hierarchies, headers and bullet points.

Helpful Tools for Inclusive Copywriting

Rules for inclusivity continue to update as society becomes more aware of its microaggressions and unwelcoming words. So, as a copy editor, how do you ensure that you're keeping up with the times or saying the right thing?

One way is to ask, but that's not always a **viable** option. You can also look to **prominent**, inclusive social media figures and see what they're saying, but that's not all-encompassing or guaranteed.

The best and easiest option is to use external tools and guidelines that stay current for you. [...]

More Than the Written Word

While making your writing inclusive is a huge step forward, you need to do more. **Enforcing** true diversity and equality requires a deeper look at your business practices and incorporating inclusion initiatives. It's about the final message you send when everything **adds up**, and it includes hiring for diversity, the treatment of staff and your company's brand culture.

So, **by all means**, **drop** the gendered pronouns and make your content accessible. [...]

[Original post [here](#).]

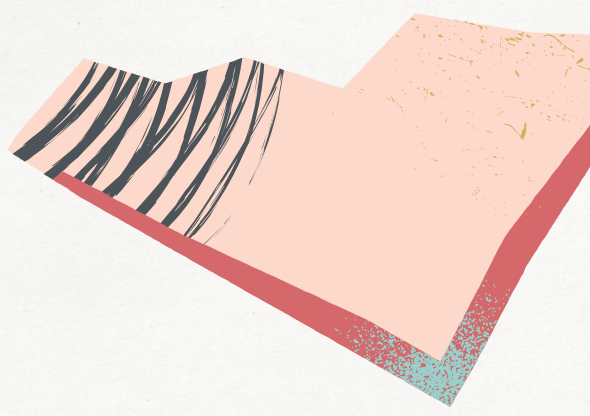


WRITING & SPEAKING

4 questions

Answer these questions in writing and/or orally, alone or with a colleague or friend.

- 1) What tip did you like the most and why?
- 2) What tip was the most unexpected for you and why?
- 3) Do you agree or disagree with the general ideas expressed in the article?
- 4) What suggestions are you going to apply to improve the inclusiveness of your company's content?



Examples

We'll now take a look at some examples of non-inclusive language and some possible alternatives.

DIFFICULTY DEGREE: Easy to difficult

Example 1: Gendered VS non-gendered terms

Gendered Terms

TERM TO RECONSIDER	ALTERNATIVE TERM TO USE
Man/Woman	Person or individual
His document	Their document
Salesman, saleswoman	Salesperson, sales representative
He/him/his she/her/hers	They/them/theirs
Man up	Be brave
Female scientist, male scientist	Scientist

HubSpot

[Source [here](#)]

eee

Example 2: More gendered VS non-gendered terms

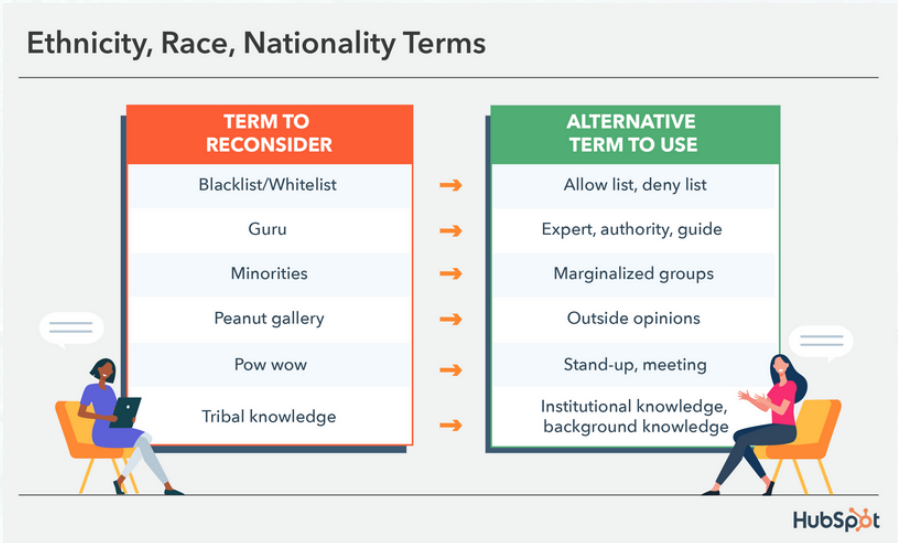
Gendered noun	Gender-neutral noun
man	person, individual
mankind	people, human beings, humanity
freshman	first-year student
man-made	machine-made, synthetic, artificial
the common man	the average person
chairman	chair, chairperson, coordinator, head
mailman	mail carrier, letter carrier, postal worker
policeman	police officer
steward, stewardess	flight attendant
actor, actress	actor
congressman	legislator, congressional representative
Sir (in "Dear Sir," etc.)	Dear Editor, Dear Members of the Search Committee, To Whom it May Concern

[Source [here](#)]

eee



Example 3: Terms related to ethnicity, race, nationality, and culture VS inclusive terms



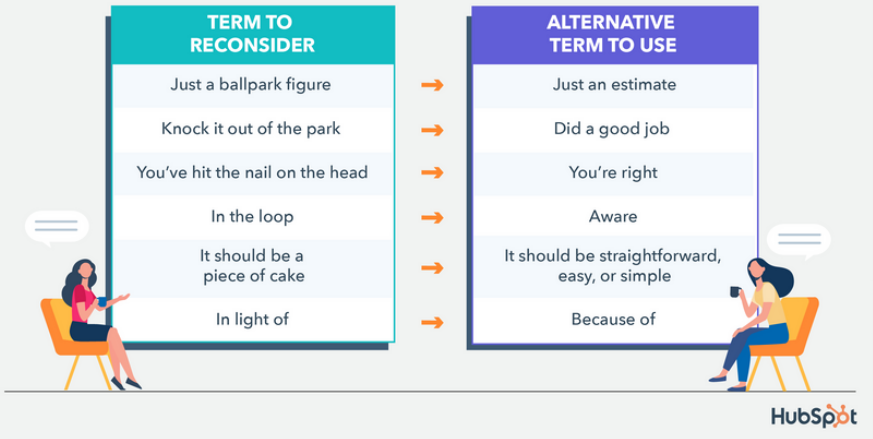
[Source [here](#)]





Example 4: Slang and jargon VS plain language

Plain Language



[Source [here](#)]



LISTENING

ollee

It's time to practice our listening skills with a few videos and podcasts discussing topics related to the inclusive language world!

CHIARA'S WOW-FACTOR TIP

After listening and understanding each video/audio file, try to implement the "shadowing" technique. To do so, listen again and repeat what the speaker says in real time – word for word, sound for sound, with as little delay as possible. This will especially improve your pronunciation and intonation.

1) Gender-inclusive Language - How to avoid sexism

DIFFICULTY DEGREE: Easy

2) How to Understand Inclusive Simplicity - Inclusive Language | Tollejo Marketing Strategy

DIFFICULTY DEGREE: Easy

3) Why inclusive language is so important! | Personal Politics | Episode 04

DIFFICULTY DEGREE: Medium

4) Why is inclusive marketing the mission?

DIFFICULTY DEGREE: Medium

LISTENING

ollee

5) Why Inclusive Language Is Important For Businesses

DIFFICULTY DEGREE: Difficult

6) Julie Kratz | Lead Like an Ally: What It Takes to Be an Intentionally Inclusive Leader

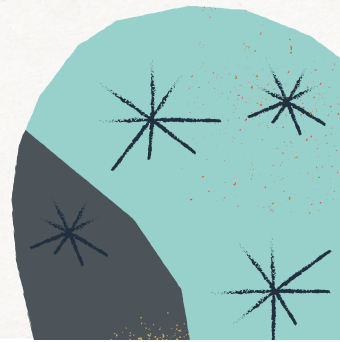
DIFFICULTY DEGREE: Difficult

7) Getting Inclusive AF with Vivian Acquah

DIFFICULTY DEGREE: Difficult

8) Getting Inclusive AF with Zach Nunn

DIFFICULTY DEGREE: Very difficult







WRITING

It may now be a good time to practice your writing skills!

1) Try to rewrite these sentences using a more inclusive and welcoming language.

- A professor should correct his students' papers according to this set of predetermined guidelines.
 - All sales associates and their wives are invited to the picnic.
 - From the beginning of time, mankind used horses in one way or another.
 - Each laboratory assistant must perform the experiment at least once before he teaches it to the class.
 - Though occasionally she may be called on to help others in the office, a secretary should take orders only from the manager she supports.
 - Although he is blind, Mr. Morin is an excellent group leader.
 - The female lawyer asked questions to both the mailman and the salesman.
 - Eric is very intuitive for a man.
 - Twenty-First-Century Parenting shows you how to persuade your husband to do his share of childcare chores.
 - Mr. Paez, Mr. O'Connor, and Tonya will represent our office at the convention.
- 

2) Now, revise one of your own blog posts, articles, or newsletters and see what can be improved based on what you've learned so far.





SPEAKING

Let's end this up with a speaking practice.

If possible, find a colleague or friend for this exercise. Otherwise, you can speak aloud on your own, maybe recording your voice and listening to it afterwards.

Reflect on why you consider (or not) important to use inclusive language in both your personal and professional life.

How inclusive is your company's culture?

How inclusive are its written contents?

Can you find some good or bad examples?

all



FINAL TAKEAWAYS



If you've made it to this final page, great job! :)

I hope you've learned something interesting, gained new insights, and found at least one improvement area to boost your English' inclusiveness.

If you ask me, the main takeaway of this Workbook would be once again (as often happens with English) to keep it simple. In this case, that means **using plain language, which goes straight to the point while being gentle and respectful.**

We all want to be treated with **kindness and respect**, don't we? This is also true **as readers**. Therefore, let's keep it in mind as writers and producers of texts of any nature. It doesn't take a great effort, but the benefits are huge (sometimes, more than we could imagine).



PRACTICE WITH ME!

As well as "The POLISHED Translator", working to build a bridge between English and Italian speakers especially through technical translations, I'm also a certified English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher.

Would you like to practice your speaking skills with me over a Skype call?

Would you like me to read the texts you've written for the assignment on page 18 and give you my feedback?

No worries, I can do that.

Just drop me an e-mail at chiara@chiarafoppapedretti.it.



I'LL SEE YOU
IN THE NEXT WORKBOOK ISSUE!