Junhua Wang, PhD

Team Oral Presentation on Inclusive Language

Words matter; words and phrases that we use in business communication send messages that can bring people together or isolate them and drive them further apart. The words we use are key to creating an inclusive, respectful, and welcoming working environment.

What is an inclusive language?

"Inclusive terminology" means terminology perceived or likely to be perceived as welcoming or at least neutral by everyone, regardless of their personal characteristics (such as race, color, sex, or gender). The Linguistic Society of America (LSA) in its Guidelines for Inclusive Language, defines inclusive language as "language that acknowledges diversity, conveys respect to all people, is sensitive to differences, and promotes equal opportunities."

Significance of using inclusive language at the workplace

Promoting and using inclusive language in day-to-day communication sends a powerful message to employees:

1. Reinforces diversity and inclusion as core values and central to the company culture
2. Shows that people are thinking about the impact of their language and behavior on others, creating a human-centric workplace that puts people first
3. Sets the stage for implementation of other inclusive practices
4. Actively discourages exclusionary language and conduct

Purpose of the activity: Raising awareness and supporting the use of inclusive language that centers the voices and perspectives of those who are often marginalized or stereotyped. By embracing inclusive language and encouraging others to do the same in business communication, students will not only communicate effectively with more people, but will also better adapt to the diversifying society and organizations in their future workplaces.

Task

1. **Read these inclusive language guidelines** and principles:

    - Handshake 70 Inclusive language principles
    - WSU Editorial Style Guide; Inclusive Language Guidelines
    - APA Inclusive Language Guide
    - Deloitte The Power of Inclusive Language

2. Get into teams with 4-5 members. For the team presentation, each team will present 2-3 inclusive language principles along with 6-10 non-inclusive items from your assigned categories below--try to relate the principles to the terms you choose. Consider choosing inclusive words/phrases that may especially benefit your peers. You are expected to conduct research and explain the origins for the problematic terms/phrases, why they are not inclusive, and offer suitable alternatives/replacements. In the last slide of your

presentation, please reflect as a team on what you've learned from the activity regarding DEI learning.

Each team chooses one of the following categories:

- Age, disability, incarceration, religion
- Sexual orientation, gender, and gender identity/expression, including pronoun usage
- Race, ethnicity, culture
- Socioeconomic status, veteran status
- National origin; native and indigenous nations
- Others: pejorative language, violent language, etc.