

Inclusive Words Matter

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Let's have that conversation



Why?



Stories

Outside looking in
Inside looking out



Words matter



What can we do?

Why?

- Microaggressions
 - Accept that some people are hurt
 - Message gets lost
- Genuine rethinking
 - Bias
 - Privilege
- Celebrate our progress
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Stories

- Outside looking in
 - 1978
 - <https://viquidill.wordpress.com/2016/11/12/1978-my-personal-harassment-story/>
 - New employee



Stories

- Inside looking out
 - Uppity
 - Ninja
 - Autism ally
https://youtu.be/W_dZyVK-9iY
 - Pride ally
<https://viquidill.wordpress.com/2022/06/18/pride-month-i-want-to-be-a-better-ally/>



Story Time

We invite you to share yours

Words matter: Guru

- **Guru**
 - This is a Buddhist and Hindu term for a revered spiritual leader. Using it in other contexts may be disrespectful.
- **Alternatives**
 - Expert
 - Authority
 - Mentor
 - Coach
 - Leader

- **Blindly**
 - Visual impairments do not make people incapable of good decision-making.
- **Alternatives**
 - Carelessly
 - Thoughtlessly
 - Ignorantly

**Words
matter:
Blindly**

Words matter: Grandfather

- **Grandfathered (or grandfather clause)**
 - This references Black voter suppression laws enacted during the US Jim Crow era.
- **Alternatives**
 - Legacy
 - Exempt
 - Exception

- **Grandmother (when referring to ease of use)**
 - Phrases like “so easy your grandmother can use it” imply that older people, particularly women, can’t be experienced and competent with technology.
- **Alternatives**
 - Novice
 - Beginner
 - Inexperienced

**Words matter:
Grandmother**

Words matter: Crazy / Insane

- **Crazy / Insane**
 - These terms stigmatize mental illness and may be considered offensive by some within the community.
- **Alternatives**
 - Unreal
 - Ridiculous
 - Baffling
 - Absurd

Words matter: Master

- **Master**

- “Master” is connected to slavery, so try to avoid it when describing a person. Many companies are also removing this term from code repositories, such as GitHub (Microsoft) and Android (Google).
<https://www.scrum.org/forum/scrum-forum/40445/renaming-master-scrum-master>
- Make an exception if there’s genuinely no good alternative, such as a “master’s degree”.

- **Alternatives**

- Expert (for a person)
- Leader (for a person)
- Main (for a branch)
- Trunk (for a branch)
- Principal (for data)
- Primary / Secondary
- Leader / Follower
- Parent / Child
- Main / Replica
- Producer / Consumer

- **Tribal knowledge**
 - Using this term casually diminishes the importance of tribal association for Indigenous peoples.
- **Alternatives**
 - Institutional knowledge
 - Group understanding
 - Unwritten rules

**Words
matter:
Tribal
Knowledge**

Words matter: Hold Down the Fort

- **Hold down the fort / Circle the wagons**
 - These terms originated with colonizers protecting literal forts and wagons from what they saw as “vicious” and “intruding” Native Americans.
- **Alternatives**
 - Watch
 - Secure
 - Protect
 - On-call
 - Keep the lights on

- **Sanity check**

- This term stigmatizes mental illness.

- **Alternatives**

- Safety check
 - Double-check
 - Verify reasonableness
 - Smoke test
 - Quick check
 - Second opinion

**Words
matter:
Sanity
Check**

Words matter: Dummy

- **Dummy value (or variable)**
 - “Dummy” and similar terms stigmatize mental disabilities. The alternatives are clearer.
- **Alternatives**
 - Placeholder
 - Example

- **Lame**
 - This term stigmatizes people who have difficulty walking.
 - **Alternatives**
 - Poor
 - Shoddy
 - Foolish

**Words
matter:
Lame**

Words matter: Guys / Girls

- **Guys/Girls**
 - “Guys” is not inclusive of women. Although many women are fine with it, many others are not.
 - In the workplace, “Girls” implies women are “less than” adults.
- **Alternatives**
 - Everyone
 - Folks
 - You / You all

- **Politically Correct / PC**

- This term is used as a pejorative when prioritizing the convenience of the speaker over the hurt caused to anyone else. We choose to make this effort not for appearances or to mollify anyone, but because trying to treat people better is simply the right thing to do.

- **Alternatives**

- Respectful
- Kind
- Welcoming
- Inclusive
- Considerate

**Words
matter:
Politically
Correct /
PC**

What can we do?

Educate yourself

- Understand your privilege
- Be a good ally

Normalize the discussion

- Reminding others
- Drop the mic

Follow the money

- Support businesses and individuals

When we know better, we can do better

- So let's do it!



Story Time

We invite you to share yours

Questions?

- Connect with me
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/viquidill/>