



INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE GUIDE

COMPASS



INTRODUCTION

Language has the ability to unite us, divide us, and to make your audience feel at *home*.

At Compass, our mission is to help everyone find their place in the world. We are a welcoming and inclusive community that respects and honors different religions, abilities, backgrounds, and identities with diversity. The language we utilize within our community is a direct reflection of our commitment to celebrating each other's differences.

We created this guide to provide all members of the Compass family with a reference to support the use of inclusive language. We will update this guide periodically to incorporate feedback and to ensure that every voice is heard.

If you note any outdated or offensive terms on this guide, please contact marketing@compass.com.

The words and phrases within this guide are recommendations. As a general rule, ask the individual/group what terms they prefer. **These recommendations are not an official language requirement set forth by Compass.**

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RACE, ETHNICITY, AND NATIONAL ORIGIN

The following is a list of the most common different identities, however, the *Department of Diversity Initiatives* suggests using the term preferred by the group or the individual.

AFRICAN AMERICAN/BLACK

EXPLANATION

Black and African American are not always interchangeable. Some individuals prefer the term Black because they do not identify as African and/or American.

Individuals may identify as African, Afro-Latinx, Afro-Caribbean, or other.

If referring to a group in general, use Black (uppercase).

EXAMPLE

Refer to groups as Black agents, Black employees, Black members, etc., not Blacks.

Consider the necessity of using race within your text. Ask yourself: "Would I mention 'White student' or 'White faculty member' when discussing others?"

ASIAN, ASIAN AMERICAN, PACIFIC ISLANDER, DESI

EXPLANATION

Asian refers to people who are citizens of countries in the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent, or to describe people of Asian descent. Asian Americans trace their origins to these regions.

Pacific Islander includes Native Hawaiian, Samoan, Guamanian, Fijian, and other peoples of the Pacific Island nations.

Desi refers to individuals whose cultural and ethnic identity are related to the Indian subcontinent and the diaspora.

Use Asian/Pacific Islander when referring to the relevant population in its entirety. Otherwise, use the preferred term of the individual or group.

Try to be specific when possible. For example, if you are referring to individuals from Japan, instead of saying "Asian", use "Japanese".

EXAMPLE

Refer to groups as Asian agents, Asian employees, Asian members, etc., not Asians.

Consider the necessity of using race within your text. Ask yourself: "Would I mention 'White student' or 'White faculty member' when discussing others?"

HISPANIC, LATIN(A/O), LATINX

EXPLANATION

Hispanic refers to people from Spanish-speaking countries.

Latino, Latina, or Latinx (pronounced la-teen-ex) is a person of Latin American descent who can be of any background or language. If the individual or group does not identify as either Latino or Latina, the gender-neutral term Latinx can be used. When referring to a group, generally use Latinx as it is gender inclusive.

EXAMPLE

People from Mexico, Cuba, and Guatemala who speak Spanish are both Hispanic and Latin(o/a)/Latinx.

Brazilians who speak Portuguese are Latin(o/a)/Latinx but not Hispanic.

Spanish-speaking people in Spain and outside Latin America are Hispanic but not Latin(o/a)/Latinx.

PEOPLE OF COLOR

EXPLANATION

Do not use the term minority to refer to individuals/clients from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. Instead, use “people of color/agents of color”.

EXAMPLE

Do not use the term “colored people”.

NATIVE AMERICAN

EXPLANATION

Native American is preferred unless the individual or group specifies otherwise.

Occasionally some prefer American Indian; however, this is not universal.

EXAMPLE

The term “Indian” is used only when referring to people from India, not for Native Americans.

UNDERSERVED/ UNDER-REPRESENTED

EXPLANATION

Do not use the term minority to describe students from diverse backgrounds.

When referring to multiple groups of agents/employees from diverse backgrounds, use “Underserved/Under-Represented”; however, use the specific group title when possible.

EXAMPLE

LGBTQ+ staff, Black agents, undocumented persons, Native Americans, etc.

NATIONAL ORIGINS

EXPLANATION

Do not hyphenate national origins even if they are used as adjectives. The use of the hyphen is rooted in the history of the “hyphenated American”—an epithet used during the late 19th century to the early 20th century to ridicule Americans of foreign birth or origin.

Additionally, identifiers such as African American, Native American, Asian American, are never hyphenated—even if they are used as adjectives.

EXAMPLE

Irish American, Polish American, Japanese American, etc.

IMMIGRATION STATUS

EXPLANATION

Do not use the word “illegal immigrant” or “illegal alien” to refer to individuals who are not U.S. citizens/permanent residents, who do not hold visas to reside in the U.S., or who have not applied for official residency.

These words dehumanize the individual by stripping their identity down to legal status. Instead of saying “illegal immigrant” or “illegal alien”, use “undocumented”.

EXAMPLE

Undocumented clients; Undocumented individuals, etc.



SEXUALITY AND GENDER

LGBTQ+ is an acronym for sexual and gender identities. It is important not to conflate gender and sexuality when reviewing these different identities. An individual's gender identity is their internal perception of their gender and how they label themselves, whereas an individual's sexuality refers to the types of sexual, romantic, emotional/spiritual attraction one has the capacity to feel for others. We have provided a list of identities that you should know.

Note: This list is not exhaustive and you may learn of other identities not included on this list.

LGBTQ+

DEFINITION

Shorthand or umbrella term for individuals who have a non-hetero/cis-normative gender or sexuality. LGBTQ+ stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer. The '+' includes all other non-hetero/cis normative identities not included within the LGBTQ acronym.

GAY

DEFINITION

Men who are attracted to other men. Some individuals refer to lesbian women as 'gay women'. Generally, do not do so unless preferred by the group/individual.

LESBIAN

DEFINITION

Women who are primarily attracted to other women.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

It is not appropriate to use the word "homosexual" or "WSW" (women who have sex with women).

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

It is not appropriate to use the word "homosexual" or "MSM" (men who have sex with men).

BISEXUAL

DEFINITION

An individual who experiences attraction to both men and women.

TRANSGENDER

DEFINITION

A gender description for someone who has transitioned (or is transitioning) from living as one gender to another.

Transgender can sometimes be written as Trans*.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

It is not appropriate to ask a transgender individual which part of their transition they are currently in.

A biological man who is transitioning into a woman is a transgender woman or transwoman.

A biological woman who is transitioning to a man is a transgender man or transman.

QUEER

DEFINITION

An umbrella term to describe individuals who do not identify as straight and/or cisgender.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

It is important to consider the context when using the word queer as it was formally used as a derogatory word. It has since been reclaimed.

Never add 'a' in front of the word.

Example: He is Queer.

GENDER NON-CONFORMING

EXPLANATION

A gender identity label that indicates a person who identifies outside of the gender binary (binary: man or woman).

CISGENDER

DEFINITION

A gender description for when someone's sex is assigned at birth and gender identity corresponds in the socially constructed and socially expected way.

ALLY

DEFINITION

A typically straight and/or cisgender person who supports and respects members of the LGBTQ+ community.

NO N USAGE

DEFINITION

In an effort to be more inclusive, Compass encourages you to use gender-neutral nouns. Gender-neutral language helps eliminate assumptions about an individual's gender identity or sexual orientation based upon their appearance.

Below is a list of everyday words that can be rephrased in gender-neutral terms.

INSTEAD OF:

Fireman

USE:

Firefighter

Policeman

Police Officer

Salesman

Salesperson, Sales Associate

Mailman

Mail Carrier

Man and Wife

Husband and Wife; Partners

PRONOUNS

Plural pronouns are becoming more widely accepted as gender-neutral singular pronouns. It is permissible and grammatically correct, per MLA and APA guidelines, to rewrite singular pronouns using a form of 'they' if you cannot rephrase your sentence to be plural rather than singular.

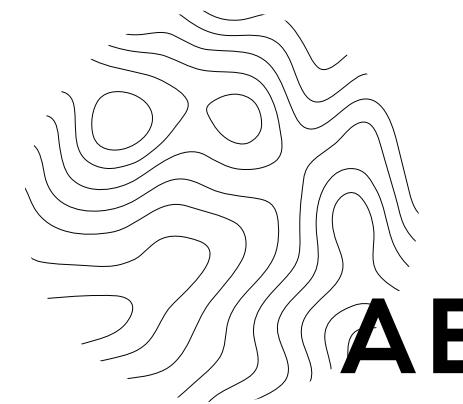
Here is a list of the most common pronouns used. As always use the preferred pronouns of the individual. You may see more pronouns outside of this list.

Subjective	Objective	Poss. Adj.	Poss. Pronoun	Reflexive	Pronunciation
She	Her	Her	Her	Herself	Pronounced as it looks
He	Him	His	His	Himself	Pronounced as it looks
Ze	Zim	Zir	Zirs	Zirself	Pronounced Zay or Zee/ Zim (rhymes with them)/Zir (rhymes with their)
They	Them	Their	Theirs	Themselves	Pronounced as it looks

EXAMPLE

Each author was chosen based on his or her research.

Authors were chosen based on **their** research.



ABILITY STATUS AND (DIS)ABILITIES

When discussing language surrounding (dis)ability status, Compass recommends approaching the conversation with a “People First” mentality:
People with (dis)abilities are people first.

ABILITY STATUS AND (DIS)ABILITIES CONTINUED

When referring to an individual with (dis)abilities it is important to identify them as a person with a (dis)ability, not a disabled person; person on the autism spectrum, not autistic or autistic person.

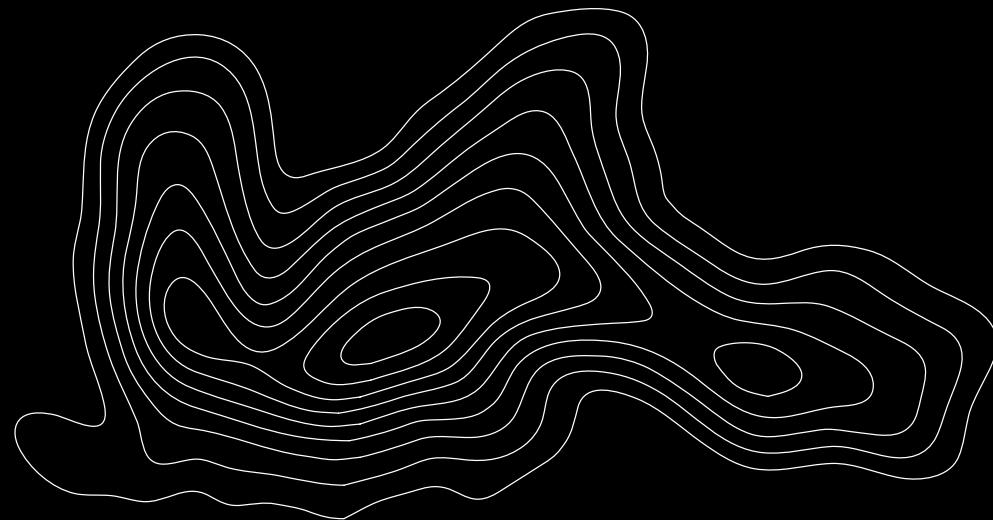
The “People First” mentality should also be applied when discussing mental illness. A person with a mental illness is a person first. When referring to an individual with mental illness it is important to identify them as a person living with a mental illness, rather than a mentally ill person.

Use the term accessible rather than disabled or handicapped to refer to facilities. Avoid outdated, offensive words such as handicapped, retarded, crazy, etc. Avoid using self-diagnosing language such as, “I’m OCD,” and “I’m having an anxiety attack right now,” unless these mental illnesses have been diagnosed.

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE

Please contact marketing@compass.com regarding questions, comments, suggestions, and/or concerns regarding this inclusive language guide.





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