Inclusive Communication at Greiner

Quickguide

We at Greiner want to communicate inclusively in our everyday work life. This allows us to break down barriers, strengthen empathy and belonging, and avoid discrimination.

This guide serves as quick support for communicating inclusively in our everyday work. For a deep dive into inclusive communication and background information, we recommend reading our detailed inclusive communication guidelines.

greiner.for.all

Gender-inclusive language

Inclusive communication primarily includes **gender-inclusive language**. Formulations using the generic masculine form are exclusionary for all other genders and should be avoided.

[↗] **Find out more:**

Stereotypical depictions should be avoided or consciously challenged. The following links provide extensive collections of gender-inclusive terms and expressions and can be consulted if there are any uncertainties:

UN Women Gender Inclusive Guidelines

ECAS Gender Inclusive Language

⊗ Non-inclusive language	✓ Omitting the masculine reference word	✓ Using the passive voice	✓ Using the plural	✓ Using they/their
Each manager should send one of **his** employees to the meeting.	Each manager should send one employee to the meeting.	One employee should be sent to the meeting by each manager.	Managers should send one of their employees to the meeting.	Each manager should send one of their employees to the meeting.
The colleague must submit **his** project on Monday.	The colleague must submit the project on Monday.	The project must be submitted on Monday.	*Note: If we talk about a specific colleague, using the plural is not possible.*	The colleague must submit their project on Monday.

Avoid ⊗	Correct ✓
Only one gender is directly addressed, everyone else is implicitly included.	All individuals and genders at whom a text is directed are directly addressed.
Gender stereotypes are reinforced through language: Businessmen, chairman, secretary	Gender neutral expressions are used when we are not sure of whom the audience is composed: Representatives, chairperson, assistants
Including gender references that add complexity without need: "A new business owner needs enough money to establish his or her business."	Omitting references to gender when they are not necessary: "A new business owner needs enough money to establish a business."

Stereotypical ⊗	Gender-inclusive ✓
Cleaning lady	Facility Management
Foreman	Supervisor
Policeman	Police officer
Fireman	Fire fighter
Stewardess	Flight attendant

Avoiding Discrimination

Discrimination means, among other things, devaluing or excluding people through our language. At Greiner we are committed to the fight against discrimination. We have put together a list of the most common forms of discrimination and examples of how they can manifest themselves in everyday life.

An extensive list of discriminatory and inclusive language can be found at:

APA Equity Diversity Inclusion Language guidelines

Let's fight against discrimination. Let's fight against …

Sexism
Sexist language begins with the idea that men and women have different strengths and weaknesses "by nature". These are some examples of words and phrases that should be avoided:

- × The stronger / weaker sex.
- × Men are rational / women are emotional.
- × girl (not as a mere description but when directly addressing someone)
- × "Real men…" …don't cry/don't show emotions.

Racism
Racism in language is often characterized by a perception of foreign cultures as fundamentally different from one's own culture. In most cases, the following examples can be interpreted as racist and should therefore be avoided:

- × "She looks so exotic."
- × "Where are you really from?"—as a follow-up question, although the question "Where are you from?" has already been answered.
- × "Your German is great"—based on the assumption that someone can't be "from here" because of their skin color.
- × "Can I touch your hair?"—especially for Black people with frizzy hair.
- × The N-word, in any context.

Homophobia & Transphobia
Discrimination against homosexual and trans people is particularly recognizable in everyday language. Examples of this are:

- × Gay, not as a mere description, but as a synonym for "weak" or " feminine" or as a general insult.
- × "Who is the man and who is the woman in the relationship?"
- × "Fag", "tranny", etc.
- × Rumors about a person's sexuality or gender identity without their knowledge or consent.
- × For trans and non-binary people, the deliberately incorrect use of pronouns (he / she / …).

Ableism
The word "disability" is unproblematic, the problem are social perceptions of disability. It is not people who are disabled, it is the environment that is disabling, as this world is not barrier-free.

- × Terms like "impairment" or "special needs" are euphemistic and ignore the social and structural dimension of disability.
- × The term "handicapped" reinforces a deficit-oriented understanding of disability and should be avoided.
- × The term "retarded" is discriminatory, especially when used as a synonym for "stupid" or "incapable."

Age discrimination
Age discrimination can occur towards both younger and older individuals. The following statements should be avoided:

- × "He/she won't learn that anymore" when talking about older people and technology.
- × "He/she has too little experience to be taken seriously" when talking about younger people and their supposed competence.
- × "We are a young, dynamic team and are looking for support" has an exclusionary effect on older people in job advertisements.
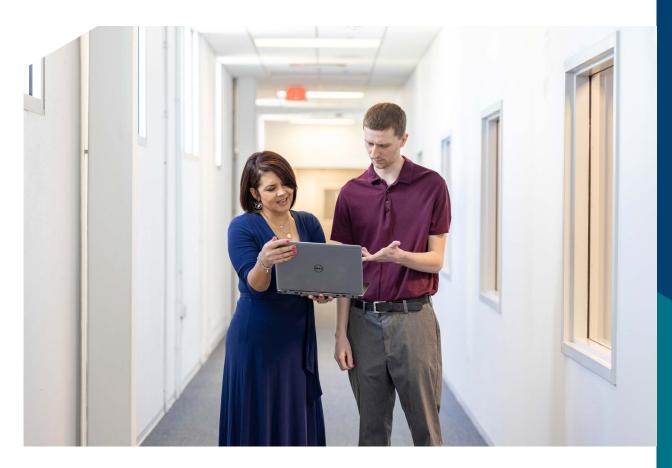
Discrimination based on social status
This form of discrimination is reflected in language, for example, when poverty is associated with personal failure or a lack of intelligence. It also surfaces when people are shunned who cannot afford specific things.

> **Important to note**
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> **Discrimination cannot be recognized or combated simply by applying a specific rule.** Discrimination depends on many things and the respective context is particularly important. In our everyday work, we want to address people the way they want. If we are unsure, we can simply **ask the person how they would like to be addressed**.

Inclusive job advertisements

The inclusive design of job advertisements is particularly important, as prospective applicants are the people who will make up Greiner in the future.

The following points can be used to check advertisements for inclusiveness:

☐ Is gender-inclusive language used for the job title?

Female applicants often do not feel addressed when the generic male form is used and do not apply (e.g. "Supervisor" instead of "Foreman").

☐ Are **stereotypically male words such as "assertive" or "stress-resistant"** and **stereotypically female words such as "reliable" or "team-oriented"** balanced out in the job advertisement? Studies show that women do not feel addressed by advertisements with too many stereotypically male terms.

Gender decoder tools can support you in checking your job ad for gender-coded words.

☐ Does the job ad contain explicit references to Greiner's corporate values and commitment to DEI?

("At Greiner we see diversity as our strength and therefore welcome all applications—regardless of gender, nationality, ethnic and social origin, religion / belief, disability, age, sexual orientation and identity")

☐ Does the job advertisement encourage applications also **if not all qualifications** are met?

Background: Women usually only apply when they meet all qualifications, men already apply when they meet just over half of the qualifications.

☐ Does the job advertisement avoid images or words which suggest that **only people with certain identity characteristics** are wanted?

These can be photos of, for example, an exclusively white group of people. Phrases like "we are a young, dynamic team" may convey that older people are not wanted.

☐ Is the advertisement aimed at one or more protected groups, such as women or people with disabilities? If so, is there a clear statement on **preferential hiring** of people from under-represented groups in the case of equal qualifications?

Inclusive meetings

The following questions can help in making sure that meetings are inclusive:

To make meetings as inclusive as possible, several measures can be taken in the realm of communication.

☐ Can the **agenda be sent out in advance** so that participants can prepare?

☐ Is it ensured that **all participants can grasp the content**? Is consideration given to people with disabilities (contrast in presentations, sign language interpreting,...)? Is attention paid to the clearest possible pronunciation and is speaking in dialect avoided?

☐ Is the **reason for the meeting** communicated and the **agenda presented** at the beginning?

☐ Are the **rules for communication** clarified in advance?

Common examples are: not interrupting others, explicitly encouraging alternative perspectives, muting oneself in virtual meetings when not speaking, encouraging participants to share their preferred pronouns if they want.

☐ Are **people who get interrupted** actively **given the floor** again?

(e.g. "Wait, I would still like to hear Rachel's thoughts")

☐ Is it communicated **when questions are welcome**? Are participants allowed to ask questions at any time or is there a planned question and answer session?

☐ Is space created purposefully **for agreement** but also **for doubt**?

☐ Are **notes taken** and sent out after the meeting?

Feedback, questions, or ideas regarding inclusive communication at Greiner? We believe that a guide for inclusive communication has to be available in all languages spoken at Greiner. That's why we are looking for volunteers who would like to help us translate the guide, including local specifics. Please contact us at diversity@greiner.com

**Inclusive Communication
at Greiner**

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Greiner AG
Greinerstrasse 70
4550 Kremsmünster, Austria

www.greiner.com

Contact

Greiner AG Diversity Team
diversity@greiner.com

greiner