



Guide To Inclusive Language

At Hello Seven, our mission is to help people make more money.

We specialize in working with women, BIPOC, LGBTQIA, people living with disabilities, and other folks from historically excluded communities. 75% of our clients are women of color.

Our vision is to create 10,000 millionaires by 2030.

Not everyone wants to be a millionaire. But for those who do, our goal is to help them achieve their goal without exhausting themselves in the process, and without sacrificing their health, integrity, or time with loved ones.

We can't achieve this mission if we're not inclusive of all groups in our community. That is why we prioritize inclusivity in all our communications.

Inclusive language is a crucial part of how we respect our team members, contractors, and clients, and of how we work to ensure that everyone in the Hello Seven universe feels welcome here.

Using inclusive language is not just the "politically correct" thing to do. It's not just "good business" either. Using inclusive language means respecting the realities of all human beings. It means preserving your relationships with the people you love. It means opening yourself to relationships with people you have yet to meet. It means welcoming folks of all identities into your physical, digital, and cultural spaces.

Using inclusive language is not an end in itself — it's part of a broader commitment to fostering diversity and justice in our respective communities.

We follow the guidelines below to ensure we're respectful of everyone in our community, and as a Certified Hello Seven Coach, we expect you to do so as well.

Please Note

This document is neither comprehensive nor static. It is unfinished and it will always be unfinished. Just like all of us, it's a work in progress.

We believe in constant learning and growing, and we know that inclusive language evolves over time. So as we learn and as the world shifts and changes around us, we will continue to update our Guide into the future.

Like Maya Angelou said, "Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better."

Do's and Don'ts

Here's a list of exclusive or harmful words and phrases, paired with why you should not use them, and inclusive words you can use instead.

Don't	Why NOT	Do
Don't use gender-specific terms like <i>guys</i> , <i>ladies</i> , <i>gals</i> , <i>boss babes</i> , <i>ladies and gentlemen</i> , etc. when referring to a group of people.	When you do this, you exclude folks who don't identify with the gender category you're naming and/or folks who don't identify within the gender binary* at all. <i>*Gender binary = Women and Men. The idea that only these two genders exist.</i>	Use gender neutral words like <i>people</i> , <i>folks</i> , <i>humans</i> , <i>y'all</i> , <i>team</i> , and/or community-specific nicknames, like <i>Shmillies</i> (that's what we call our Club members!).
Don't say <i>he</i> or <i>she</i> when talking about a hypothetical person whose pronouns you don't know. <i>For example: "I will onboard the new hire whenever he or she gets here."</i>	Doing this excludes folks who don't use "he" or "she" pronouns (for example, folks who use they/them pronouns).	Use gender-neutral, singular they/them pronouns instead. <i>For example: "I will onboard the new hire whenever they get here."</i>
Don't use the word <i>female</i> when referring to women.	1) The word "female" is sometimes used derogatorily. 2) The word "female" exists as a scientific category that legitimizes the gender binary — in other words, it takes a socially imposed condition ("gender") and turns it into a biologically certain reality ("sex").	Say <i>woman</i> and <i>women</i> instead, even as adjectives. <i>For example: Kamala Harris is the first Woman Vice President.</i>
Don't use the word <i>tribe</i> when referring to a group. <i>(Unless you yourself are part of a group</i>	The word "tribe" has a long, colonial history of being used to dehumanize, disenfranchise, and oppress indigenous groups all over the world. When we use it as a marketing tactic — or to refer	Use words like <i>squad</i> , <i>crew</i> , and <i>support system</i> instead. <i>(And if referring to groups that are</i>

<i>that has been legally or politically classified as a “tribe” and that is how you choose to identify.)</i>	generally to a group of friends or folks with common interests — we take this history lightly, disrespect the realities of peoples currently and historically classified as “tribes” by law or dominant custom, and cause harm.	<i>legally classified as “tribes,” do your research to understand whether the proper term might be “nation” or “people” instead.)</i>
Don’t use the word <i>citizen</i> when referring to people in general.	When we refer to people generally as “citizens,” we exclude those who may not be citizens of the country they live in.	Use more politically neutral terms like <i>people</i> and <i>folks</i> instead.
Don’t use words like <i>crazy, psycho, nuts, deranged</i> or <i>insane</i> as everyday adjectives.	These words are derogatory terms for people with mental health conditions — using them casually takes that reality lightly, and causes harm.	Try <i>ridiculous, absurd, nonsensical, unimaginable, ingenious</i> , or whatever works in context.
Don’t use mental health issues as metaphors for everyday behavior. E.g. calling something <i>depressing</i> .	Using mental health issues as metaphors in everyday speech is harmful to those who are actually grappling with those very real issues.	Instead of <i>depressing</i> , try <i>frustrating, troubling, heartbreaking</i> , etc.
Don’t refer to the color <i>nude</i> .	The concept of the color “nude” centers the reality of white people by associating nudity with fair skin tones, and thus upholds white supremacy.	Try <i>beige, tan, pink, or peach</i> instead.
Don’t make assumptions about how someone prefers you talk about their disability — instead, refer to someone’s disability the way they want you to refer to it.	Some folks prefer that you follow the “people-first” rule (e.g. “a person with a disability”) and other folks prefer you don’t (e.g. “a disabled person”). Neither rule necessarily applies to all people or to all types of disabilities.	If in doubt, do research and/or ask the person or group how they choose to identify. Disabled people are not a homogeneous group, and they may self-identify in various ways. These identities should be respected and recognized.

Don't tell people to do things that they physically might not be able to do — like <i>walk</i> or <i>drive on over</i> to a place — if the action is not essential to what you're describing.	Here you're excluding folks with disabilities that prevent them from doing the action in question (e.g. folks who can't walk or drive).	If you're referring generally to going or getting somewhere, use more general terms like <i>head on over to</i> , <i>get over to</i> , etc., instead of naming a specific action like walking or driving.
Don't use the word <i>lame</i> to talk about things you don't like.	The word <i>lame</i> was historically used derogatorily against folks with disabilities.	Say <i>uncool</i> , <i>boring</i> , <i>unimaginative</i> , or whatever you actually mean instead.
"Indian giver, Indian style" "word salad" "Whip _ into shape" "Pow-wow" "Tribe"	Fact check words that could come from appropriation (even if you've heard it used in phrases). We want to be clear and intentional with the words we use. For Example: A powwow is a celebration of Native American culture in which people from diverse indigenous nations gather for the purpose of dancing, singing, and honoring the traditions of their ancestors.	Instead of "pow wow," use "chat" or "let's talk" or "get together." Instead of "tribe," use "group" or "squad." Instead of "whip into shape," use "work out" or "strengthen your ___ muscle."
Capitalize the word Black when referring to a race of people	The style guide of the American Psychological Association declares, as it has for a generation: "Racial and ethnic groups are designated by proper nouns and are capitalized."	

Pronouns

Here's what it could look like in practice in your business or organization:

- Ask (don't require) all team members to include their pronouns in their email signatures, Zoom names, and Slack handles.
- When you have live calls with clients, ask that they add their pronouns to their Zoom names, or verbally ask for their pronouns.
- Whenever needed, provide directions and explanations for your clients who may not understand why you're asking that they share their pronouns. A good example of this could be: *We don't assume anybody's pronouns (or anything else about the identities of others, really!), so we always ask to make sure that we're not disrespectful of anyone's gender identity.*

Accessibility

Your communications cannot be inclusive if they are not accessible. Here's what this looks like in practice:

- Be descriptive in hyperlinks, so folks who use screen readers have an easy time understanding what you're linking to.
- Use high color contrast on ad copy, social media, and within emails to make text easy to see.
- Vary font sizes, call outs, bolding, and italics to make content easier to engage with. Avoid hyphenated words when possible.
- Whenever possible, in code, use [alt text](#) on images for easy context providing for cursor hovering and screen readers.
- Use closed captioning in Zoom meetings (e.g. [Rev.com](#)).
- Add closed captions to all videos you create, and transcripts to audio files (*Note: there are many apps and programs that can do this for you — check with your video service provider to turn on automatic captioning when available*).
- Make a habit of asking your community what accessibility features they need. Always be open to not only hearing feedback, but also to actually implementing changes that are requested. Although there are lots of things we can do in advance to make our spaces more accessible, the best way forward is to ask early and often to set up everyone in your community for success.
- Communicate your accessible practices. It should be standard practice to make your communications accessible, but when you make changes for accessibility, communicate how and where folks can access tools like transcripts and closed captioning.

Note: Hello Seven is either already implementing or in the process of implementing the practices above.

Complexity and Jargon

You never want to exclude folks who may not understand complex terms or jargon. Here's what this looks like in practice:

- In general, write to a 6th grade reading level — in other words, if you wouldn't say it to a 12 year old, find a different way to say it. You *can* talk about complex ideas in simple terms.
- If complex terms or jargon can't be avoided, define them (either on the spot, in footnotes, or with a glossary).
- For complex concepts — like inclusive language — make guides to educate your community members on these issues.

What To Do When You're Called Out

When you're called out for using exclusive language, your first move should be to listen. ESPECIALLY if the person calling you out is a member of a marginalized group that you are not a member of.

All of us, even the most marginalized folks, have some degree of privilege. When you get called out, your job is NOT to defend yourself, explain yourself, justify your actions, or otherwise make excuses.

Your job is to listen, repair the harm done where you can, and change your behavior moving forward.

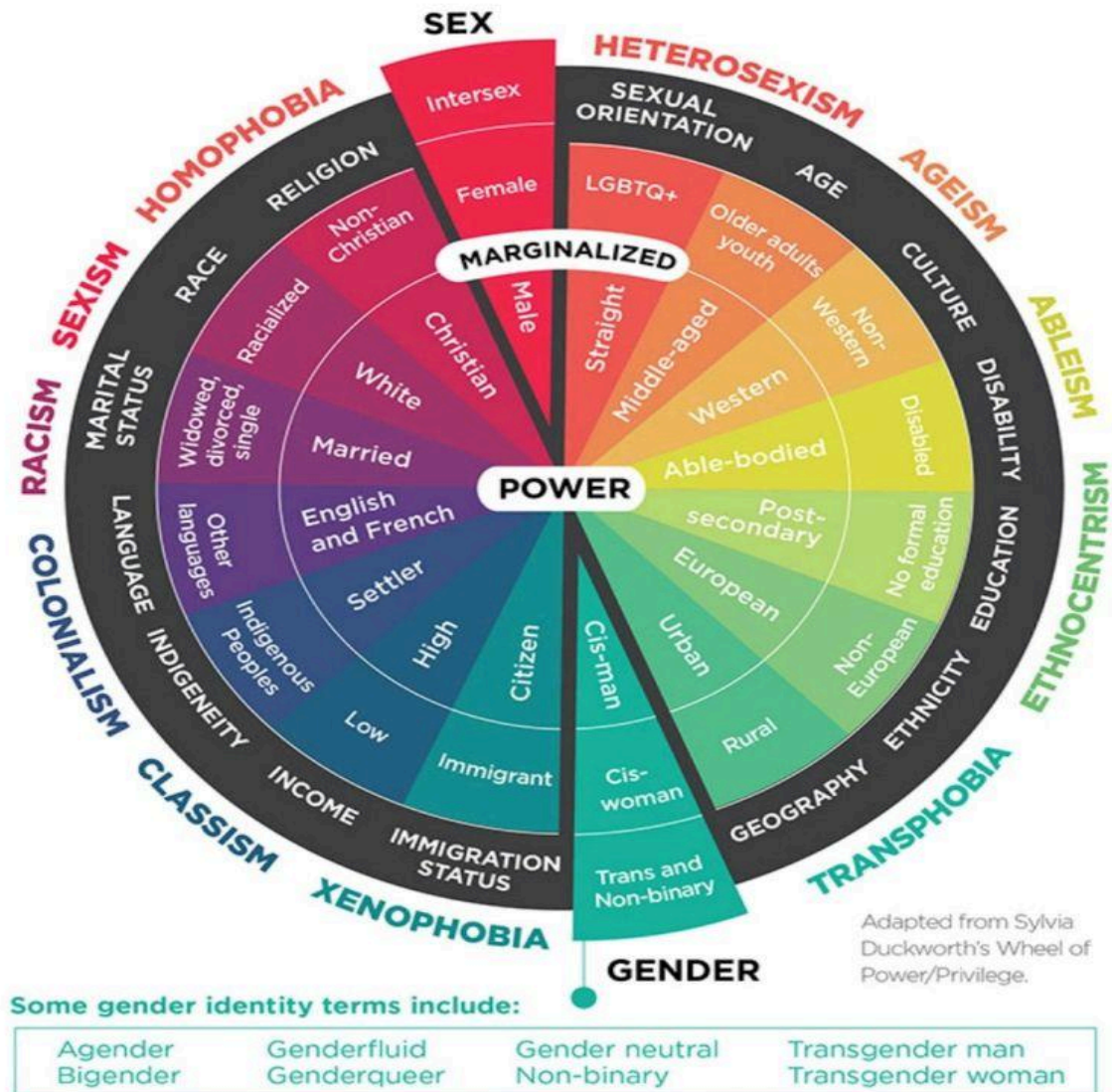
If you want to better understand your own privileges, take a look at the chart below.

THE CHECK YOUR PRIVILEGE CHART

SOCIAL IDENTITY CATEGORIES	PRIVILEGED SOCIAL GROUPS	BORDER SOCIAL GROUPS	TARGETED SOCIAL GROUPS	ISM
Race	White people	Mixed-race people (with recent white ancestry)	Asian, Black, Latinx, Indigenous people	Racism
Color	White-presenting people	People with light brown/tan skin	People with dark skin	Colorism
Sex	Men	———	Women, intersex	Sexism
Gender	Gender-conforming cis men and women	Gender-ambiguous cis men and women	Transgender, nonbinary people	Transgender oppression
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual people	Bisexual people	Queer, lesbian, gay people	Heterosexism
Class	Rich, owning, upper-middle-class people	Middle-class people	Working class, poor people	Classism
Ability/Disability	Temporarily able-bodied people	People with temporary disabilities	People with disabilities	Ableism
Religion	Protestants, secular	Roman Catholics	Jews, Hindus, Muslims, Indigenous religions	Religious oppression
Age	Adults	Young adults	Elders, children	Ageism, Adulthoodism
Language	Fluent English-only speakers	Bilingual speakers of English	Speakers of languages other than English	Language oppression
Education	College-educated people	High-school-educated people	People without formal high school education	Elitism
Documentation	US citizens	US residents	Undocumented people	Xenophobia

Source: The "Matrix of Intersectionality" from *Farming While Black: Fire Farm's Practical Guide to Liberation on the Land* by Leah Penniman, adapted from *Teaching for Diversity and Social Inclusion*, 2nd ed., Routledge, 2007.

Understanding Intersectionality in Power and Privilege





This document's creation was based on Hello Seven practices, feedback from current and past clients, and consulting with Hello Seven team members who are a part of the LGBTQIA+ community, disabled team members, team members who have chronic illnesses, and those who are otherwise directly affected by and invested in our inclusive language practices.

We thank everyone involved in creating this Guide for their insight and passion.

This document was last updated in February 2023.

If you have suggestions on what to add to this Guide, please email info@helloseven.co.