

Gender-sensitive Communication

Pronouns

| Gender | Subject | Object | Possessive | Possessive | Reflexive |
|---------|---------|--------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Female | She | Her | Her | Hers | Herself |
| Male | He | Him | His | His | Himself |
| Neutral | Ze | Hir | Hir | Hirs | Hirself |

To ensure you avoid gendered pronouns, please take a look at the following exemplary sentence and proposed alternatives.

| Gendered pronouns | Solution | Alternatives |
|---|---|--|
| When every participant contributes his own ideas, the discussion will be a success. | Use his or her | When every participant contributes her or his own ideas, the discussion will be a success. |
| | Change the sentence to a plural | When all participants contribute their own ideas, the discussion will be a success. |
| | Rephrase to omit pronoun | The discussion will be a success when every participant contributes ideas which that participant had thought of. |
| | Use the gender neutral pronoun ze | When every participant contributes hir own ideas, the discussion will be a success. |
| | Use you (if speaking directly to an audience) | When each of you participants contributes your own ideas the discussion will be a success. |
| | Use an or the in place of the pronoun | When every participant contributes an original idea, the discussion will be a success. |

| Gendered pronouns | Solution | Alternatives |
|--|--|--|
| The contractor should make his request for changing the report in two weeks. | Use his/her | The contractor should make his/her request for changing the report in two weeks. |
| Anyone disagreeing with this statement should give his reasons. | Change the sentence to a plural | All those (anyone) disagreeing with this statement should give their reasons. Tip: Use the singular plural with caution. |
| You can always read a doctor's bill but you can never read his prescription. | Use her/his | You can always read a doctor's bill but you can never read her/his prescription. |
| A researcher was awarded a price for his research paper. | If the gender of the researcher is not known, replace pronouns with articles: use the or a | A researcher was awarded a price for the/a research paper. |
| When preparing the final report for the client, please send him all accompanying material in an annex. | Remove the pronoun | When preparing the final report for the client, please send all accompanying material in an annex. |
| Every conference participant must send in his presentation two weeks prior to the date. | Remove the pronoun or use gender-neutral pronoun ze | Every conference participant must send in the presentation two weeks prior to the date. Every conference participant must send in hir presentation two weeks prior to the date. |