Words reflect workplace culture and can reinforce negative gender stereotypes. Stop using these common words and phrases, which harm women’s advancement opportunities, and focus on performance and outcomes instead.

**WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE**

**IMPACT**
Can put women in a stressful double-bind where they are either too soft or too hard and never just right.

**RESEARCH SAYS**
"SHE COMES ACROSS AS ABRASIVE."
To be perceived as competent leaders women are expected to be both assertive and warm.

**WHAT TO DO INSTEAD**
Shift attention away from style and focus on her work performance.

**IMPACT**
Diminishes women’s contributions, relegating them to “supporting” rather than “central/leading” roles.

**RESEARCH SAYS**
"SHE’S SO HELPFUL."
When women are praised for their supportiveness, they are less likely to be thought of as leaders.

**WHAT TO DO INSTEAD**
Describe her contributions to the project or team.

**IMPACT**
Puts unfair pressure on women to monitor and manage their emotional expressions.

**RESEARCH SAYS**
"SHE GETS OVERLY EMOTIONAL."
Women are seen as less competent and less deserving of high status positions when they display anger.

**WHAT TO DO INSTEAD**
Describe the consequences of her behavior without using labels.
Undermines women's identity and perceptions of their leadership abilities.

Women are often not perceived as capable leaders, despite qualifications and performance.

**WHAT TO DO INSTEAD**

Stop using code and explain what you mean other than "not her."

Undermines and discredits women's competence and qualifications to offer critical feedback.

When a woman gives critical feedback, people may brush her off as being incompetent.

**WHAT TO DO INSTEAD**

Don't make it about leadership style, but whether she is demonstrating good judgment.

**IMPACT**

**RESEARCH SAYS**

"SHE LACKS LEADERSHIP GRAVITAS."

"SHE SHOULD STOP BEING SO JUDGMENTAL."

**PAY ATTENTION**

Is the language you use different for women and men?

**QUESTION YOURSELF**

Are you unintentionally holding women to a higher standard?

**ASK FOR HELP**

Ask someone you trust to review your work for gendered language.

**FLIP THE SCRIPT**

Sources: