



# Cashcow Inclusive Language

How does inclusive language make  
companies successful?

# Guiding Questions

This White Paper is dedicated to the use of inclusive language in business, how organizations can learn and practice it. In particular, this White Paper addresses the following guiding questions:



Why do we need inclusive language and inclusive cultures in business?

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How does it affect the economic strength and sustainability of businesses?

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What do organizations gain concretely when they rely on inclusive language?

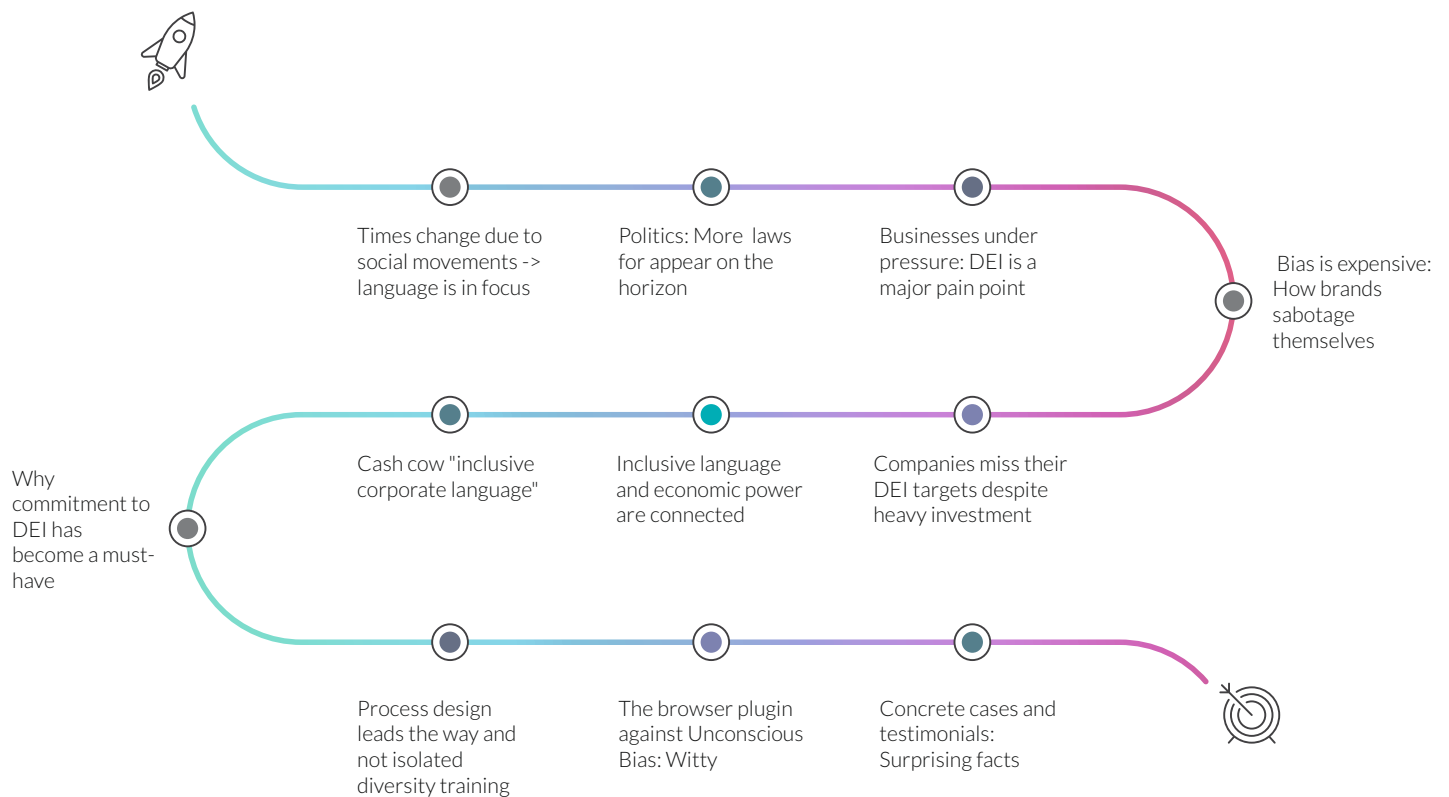
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What is an easy solution to inclusive language and inclusive culture?

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## What is inclusive language

Wikipedia defines inclusive language this way:

"Inclusive language aims to avoid offense and fulfill the ideals of egalitarianism by avoiding expressions that express or imply ideas that are sexist, racist, or otherwise biased, prejudiced, or denigrating to any particular group of people. (...) Its supporters argue that language is often used to perpetuate and spread prejudice and that creating intention around using inclusive language can help create more productive, safe, and profitable organizations and societies." (Link: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inclusive\\_language](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inclusive_language))

In Witty Works' view, inclusive language is even more. It's about:

- Addressing everyone. Many expressions we use to address someone or a group are actually often not inclusive. And that means that people who are less addressed also feel less engaged.
- Include everyone. We must be careful to use language that allows everyone to feel included. So it's up to us to find that vocabulary in terms of all dimensions of diversity: ethnic background, skin color, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical and mental abilities, age, socioeconomic differences, religious beliefs, education, culture, and many other dimensions.
- Creating a sense of belonging. Language has the power to create belonging. But it only does so when texts are written with emotionality, closeness, authenticity and at eye level. All of these characteristics of a text ensure that the human side is in the foreground. In short, when these characteristics are present in a text, it becomes clear that everyone can belong.



# Why do we need inclusive language in business?

In this White Paper, we will explore the thesis that inclusive language makes organizations more performant. After all, language is crucial: it shapes the way we feel, think and act. As such, it is capable of enabling positive change towards more diversity and inclusion. It can teach us to write with the reader's perspective in mind but can also teach us about our own mental patterns and behaviors.

To what extent exactly does inclusive language exert influence on the success and sustainability of our economy? What is the cost to organizations of foregoing inclusive language? And how is the shift to inclusive language made easier?

We provide relevant background information, study results and groundbreaking recommendations for action that make it easier for companies to firmly anchor inclusive language in their corporate language.



## Change of times brings language change

Our language is the reflection of our society and the reality of our lives. And our society is incredibly diverse: It unites people of different ethnic origins and nationalities, physical and mental abilities. It includes all genders and gender identities, all ages, all social origins, religions and world views.

Currently, we are living in very exciting times: Social change is palpably in full swing: diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) are the topics of the hour. Our language is not immune to this. It is the instrument that can put this change into words, that helps to understand and explain it.

Meanwhile, our language has taken a very prominent place in the public debate. It has been a long time since it has been discussed as passionately as it is today:

Gender-sensitive and inclusive language is new. Adopting and learning it, however, is not always easy. That's understandable: After all, critically questioning or even changing our habitual use of language, getting used to new words, is anything but done quickly. It takes a lot of attention and openness to detect unconscious bias in the language we are used to and to discard it. It takes knowledge and practice. And it takes good reasoning.

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## The Social Impact on Diversity in Business

The business world is becoming more and more globalized and the workforce becomes more diverse. At the same time, activists and organizations around the world are ensuring that the discussion about diversity, equality and human rights continues to gain momentum.

Social movements such as HeForShe, Black Lives Matter, #metoo and LGBTQIA+ have sharpened the focus on urgently needed diversity measures. New movements also bring with them a new vocabulary; valid phrases and wordings are increasingly being challenged. Language is being reshaped and enriched. And with it our behaviors.

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## Gen Y and Z: New values and inclusive demands

For consumers, and especially underrepresented groups, diversity and inclusion have become top criteria<sup>1</sup> when it comes to choosing brands. Also, with regard to the work environment: among Generation Y and Z, inclusive companies are in high demand<sup>2</sup>. They actively follow developments in the economy, demand change and specifically look out for companies that live it. By 2025, 75 percent of the global workforce will be Millennials, Inc. summarizes<sup>3</sup>. Ethnically and culturally, Millennials are the most diverse generation in U.S. history. Their cultural and ethnic diversity will even increase in the coming years, according to Pew Research Center estimates<sup>4</sup>. Wouldn't it be fatal for business to disregard their aspirations?

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1. <https://www.impactplus.com/blog/diverse-inclusive-marketing-statistics>

2. <https://hiring.monster.com/resources/workforce-management/diversity-in-the-workplace/workforce-diversity-for-millennials>

3. <https://www.inc.com/peter-economy/the-millennial-workplace-of-future-is-almost-here-these-3-things-are-about-to-change-big-time.html?trk=lms-blog-trust&src=bl-po>





# Companies under pressure: The pain points

According to a survey by Team Lewis, just 19 percent of the 2,600 Zoomers from 13 countries surveyed said they would work for a company that did not share their values<sup>1</sup>. And, as quoted above, this is also true for potential customers. Ergo: Companies that don't put diversity and inclusion on their agenda, don't even appeal to the majority of respondents. As a result, they miss the opportunity to win over diverse customer groups or attract talent. And to retain them, too.

The report cited gender and ethnicity as the most important diversity attributes for a company. Business cannot afford to ignore these values. Instead, it must recognize the need, take the new requirement seriously and introduce appropriate measures for more diversity. The keyword is commitment. If there is commitment, diversity is anchored and lived in the corporate culture. Corporate language plays a key role here.



## Politics: Guidelines, requirements and explicit laws

More diversity in business: unfortunately, it doesn't happen voluntarily. In Germany, the equal participation of women and men in leadership positions - in the private and public sectors - has been regulated by the Second Leadership Positions Act FöPoG II since August 2021<sup>2</sup>. The Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG)<sup>3,4</sup> are also now increasingly confronting business with the diversity target.

1. <https://www.teamlewis.com/heforshe/>

2. <https://www.bmfsfj.de/bmfsfj/service/gesetze/zweites-fuehrungspositionengesetz-fuepog-2-164226>

3. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Environmental\\_social\\_and\\_corporate\\_governance](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Environmental_social_and_corporate_governance)

4. <https://www.bundesregierung.de/breg-de/themen/nachhaltigkeitspolitik/nachhaltigkeitsziele-verstaendlich-erklart-232174>

The European Parliament is committed to gender equality and has stated that it will implement this obligation - including by using gender-sensitive language. Why? Because language reflects and influences attitudes, behavior and perceptions, according to the guidelines Gender-neutral Language in the European Parliament. The guidelines were developed to ensure that gender-sensitive language is used in the EU Parliament itself and in the drafting of legislation. Among other things, the guidelines provide concrete solutions for the English language.<sup>1</sup>

Now the business community is facing increasing pressure: advertisers, communication professionals and management teams around the world are facing new challenges: They have to comply with social demands and now also political requirements. With the spotlight clearly on diversity, equity and inclusion, the pressure is also being pushed further in the public debate. And it quickly becomes apparent which company is getting started, which is still hesitating, which is already living DEI and which is making backward-looking missteps. This is because the complexity of the topic of DEI and its speed of implementation is high. This also increases the error rate, which sometimes results in severe penalties.



## Bias is expensive: Discrimination costs the economy a lot of money

When CrossFit CEO Greg Glassman sent a racist tweet in June 2020, neither his apology nor the company's open letter did any good: CrossFit lost partnerships, advertising contracts and hundreds of affiliates worldwide, according to The Guardian.<sup>2</sup> By the time Glassman resigned, the brand's loss of reputation had cost it millions of U.S. dollars. Thinking back to the headlines of Uber<sup>3</sup> and Fox News<sup>4</sup> in 2017, when it was revealed that exclusion, racism, and misogyny were lived and tolerated internally, showed again and in every way: the price of a toxic, discriminatory work culture is bitter and very high.

Discrimination costs. It weakens brands and companies. Surveys clearly show how costly discrimination is to business. One of the highest items: employee disengagement. In 2017, Gallup estimated that American companies lose \$450 billion to \$550 billion annually because of it.<sup>5</sup>

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1. Link: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/151780/GNL\\_Guidelines\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/151780/GNL_Guidelines_EN.pdf)

2. Link: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/jun/10/greg-glassman-crossfit-ceo-resigns-george-floyd-protest-coronavirus-tweets-conspiracy-theories>

3. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/22/technology/uber-workplace-culture.html>

4. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/25/business/media/fox-news-racial-discrimination-lawsuit.html>

5. <https://news.gallup.com/businessjournal/162953/tackle-employees-stagnating-engagement.aspx>





## How exactly do these costs come about?

The Disrupt Bias, Drive Value study<sup>1</sup> found that workplace bias is closely linked to employee dissatisfaction: That's because people who felt discriminated against in the workplace were also less productive as a result. Bias inhibits innovation, says study co-author Sylvia Ann Hewlett in an interview with Forbes<sup>2</sup>:

For example, people affected by bias said they did not share their ideas and market solutions with the company. Loyalty and attachment to the company also dwindled: those people who felt discriminated against were more than three times as likely (31 percent to 10 percent) to say they planned to leave their current jobs within a year. And with that, pooled knowledge and a lot of experience are lost. At the same time, the economy has to invest in talent acquisition, in costly recruiting processes. But these processes will miss their target if concrete measures for more diversity and inclusion continue to be lacking.

How can this vicious circle be broken?



## Diversity and inclusion flushes money into the company

Studies show that companies that embrace diversity are more successful. One finding from the McKinsey report Diversity wins: How inclusion matters (2020)<sup>3</sup> is that diverse leadership teams and economic out performance are directly linked. The data set includes more than 1,000 large companies from 15 countries. The interaction between diverse leadership teams and economic outperformance actually increases over time, it says. This makes Diversity as a business case absolutely valid in the future.

An environment with high diversity and an inclusive culture has clear advantages, Businesswire also summarizes the findings from the Global Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Market Report 2021<sup>4</sup>: Diverse companies generated 2.5 times more cash flow per employee:in. Inclusive teams were more than 35 percent more productive. And the outlook continues to be promising:

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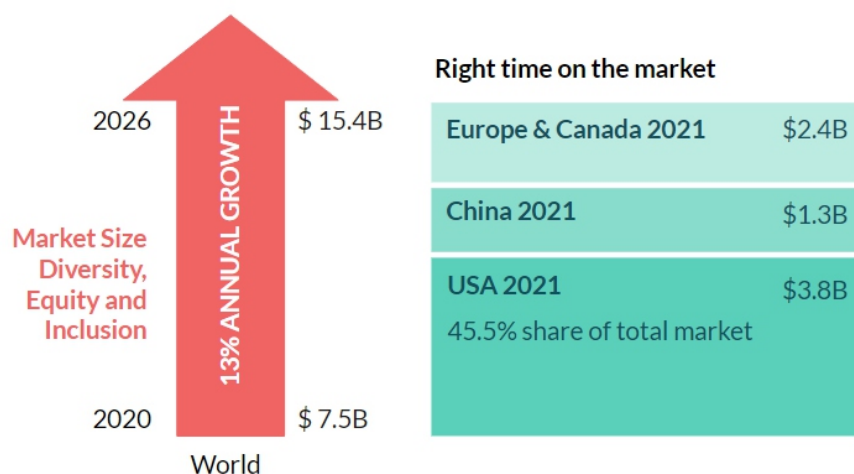
1. [http://www.talentinnovation.org/\\_private/assets/DisruptBias-DriveValue\\_Infographic-CTI.pdf](http://www.talentinnovation.org/_private/assets/DisruptBias-DriveValue_Infographic-CTI.pdf)

2. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/kathycaprino/2017/10/26/new-data-reveals-the-hard-costs-of-bias-and-how-to-disrupt-it/>

3. <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/diversity-and-inclusion/diversity-wins-how-inclusion-matter>

4. 1. <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20220121005307/en/Global-Diversity-and-Inclusion-DI-Market-Report-2021-A-Successful-Company-is-One-Which-Implements-DEI-Not-Only-as-a-Moral-Obligation-but-also-as-a-Business-Imperative---ResearchAndMarkets.com>

The global diversity and inclusion market was estimated at \$7.5 billion in 2020. By 2026, it will reach a revised size of \$15.4 billion, according to the November 2021 forecast by Global Industry Analysts Inc.<sup>1</sup>



In short, DEI is a solution to the pain points of organizations. And it is here to stay and not a passing phenomenon. If companies want to benefit from this trend, they need to think and act inclusively. Again, inclusive language plays a crucial role here so that they can address and retain diverse customer groups and talent.

## Side Note: Inclusive companies are also more attractive to investors.

Diversity is also well received in the business world itself: A report by the Allbright Foundation<sup>2</sup> states that donors' expectations of companies are also rising. International investors in particular are increasingly demanding diversity in management, it says. The report concludes that the first German holding companies are beginning to tie profit-oriented investment to social and sustainability criteria.

1. <https://www.strategyr.com/market-report-diversity-and-inclusion-forecasts-global-industry-analysts-inc.asp>

2. [https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5c7e8528f4755a0bedc3f8f1/t/60ca5e501233fb3164140c1d/1623875167416/Allbright-Bericht-Juni-2021\\_Börsenneulinge.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5c7e8528f4755a0bedc3f8f1/t/60ca5e501233fb3164140c1d/1623875167416/Allbright-Bericht-Juni-2021_Börsenneulinge.pdf)



# Heavy investment in DEI measures: Money wasted?

Many companies are already investing into DEI measures knowing the positive effect it can have. Almost all fortune 500 and more than half of the mid-sized companies in the US invest into diversity programs.<sup>1</sup>

Partly because politicians are imposing diversity requirements, the business community is investing sometimes horrendous sums in large-scale diversity measures. If we look at the USA, CNN<sup>2</sup> reported already back in 2015 that Google was planning to invest USD 150 million in internal and external diversity measures. The goal: Hire diverse Googlers<sup>3</sup> - get more women and more minorities excited about tech and attracted to Google. The same was true for companies like Apple and Intel.

"But all this research and money simply isn't making enough of a difference, said Sylvia Ann Hewlett a few years later in an interview with Forbes. "Women and people of color are still underrepresented in leadership positions."

The latest report from Google proves her right even today: just 33.1 percent of all "Googlers" were women in 2021 - of which, in turn, only 3.4 percent were PoC (People of Color) women.<sup>4</sup>

1. <https://hbr.org/2016/07/why-diversity-programs-fail>

2. <https://money.cnn.com/2015/05/06/technology/google-diversity-plan/>

3. <https://blog.google/outreach-initiatives/diversity/doing-more-on-diversity/>

4. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/kathycaprino/2017/10/26/new-data-reveals-the-hard-costs-of-bias-and-how-to-disrupt-it/>



## Despite high investments in DEI: Why do companies miss their targets?

Investing in diversity efforts is high-priced. Many people and organizations are involved, many management workshops and team seminars are held. And yet it turns out: processes stagnate, success fails to materialize, and companies miss their diversity goals. Why?

"Your organization will become less diverse if you require managers to go to diversity training."



- Frank Dobbin,  
Harvard University



Lack of success measurements: Often, rolled-out diversity measures are not followed by downstream results monitoring. There is a lack of automated analysis and insights that can document and highlight progress.

High cost factor and personnel expenditure: The high investments in diversity measures have an impact. If they have no effect, companies are understandably unwilling to make them again.

Diversity training is good, but it rarely has a lasting effect. Worse still, they can prove counterproductive.<sup>1</sup> Studies<sup>2</sup> have even found a kind of defense mechanism among participants.

In her book "What Works: Gender Equality By Design,"<sup>3</sup> researcher Iris Bohnet argues that deeply rooted biases cannot be dissolved with unconscious bias training

1. <https://hbr.org/2016/07/why-diversity-programs-fail>

2. [https://hbr.org/2019/07/does-diversity-training-work-the-way-its-supposed-to?ab=at\\_art\\_art\\_1x1](https://hbr.org/2019/07/does-diversity-training-work-the-way-its-supposed-to?ab=at_art_art_1x1)

3. <https://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article/gender-equality-design-building-inclusive-productive-workplace/#:~:text=A%20new%20book%20by%20Harvard,Wharton%20reviews%20key%20takeaways%20from>



# From Rethink to Redesign: Using language as a tool

Instead of investing billions of dollars in formal diversity training, the focus should more be on behavioral change.

But how can we redesign corporate culture towards more inclusion, make everyone aware of bias?



## 70/20/10 Learning Model

First we have to understand how human beings learn.

In their study<sup>1</sup>, Lombardo and Eichinger found that human beings learn in the following ways:

# 70%

of learning happens on-the-job when solving daily challenges and tasks, e.g. from our own experiences we are making in little steps

# 20%

of learning comes from feedback of others or working on case studies

# 10%

of our knowledge comes from courses and reading

1. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/70/20/10\\_Model\\_\(Learning\\_and\\_Development\)#cite\\_note-Lombardo-1](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/70/20/10_Model_(Learning_and_Development)#cite_note-Lombardo-1)

So it is important to understand that we cannot “teach” Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. It has to be an experience that we go through ourselves, each individually, on a continuous basis, and in little steps.

Our brain is not made for absorbing big chunks of knowledge. It forgets too quickly again. And in today’s digital world, where we process so much information, the attention span has actually come down.



## Microlearning

That is where microlearning comes into play.

“Microlearning focuses on the design of learning activities through micro steps in digital media environments, which already is a daily reality for today's knowledge workers. These activities can be incorporated into learner's daily routines and tasks. Unlike "traditional" e-learning approaches, microlearning often tends towards push technology through push media, which reduces the cognitive load on the learners.”<sup>1</sup>

So, in order to make employees learn inclusive behavior, become aware of their own biases or learn how to write inclusively, this must happen through microlearning.

And this is where language comes into play.

Language serves as a tool for several goals:

- It is an everyday tool. Thus it can be used as the basis for microlearning.
- It shapes our reality. Hence, if employees learn how to write inclusively, they are agents of change themselves.
- Using it as a basis for microlearning, learnings can be conveyed in little steps.
- Each person can learn at their own rhythm, without being observed by others. The individual is not exposed in its learning process and therefore feels safer. Psychological safety, especially when learning about own biases, is crucial to the learning process.

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1. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Microlearning>



Short: Language can be used as a transport media to:

- make employees aware of their own bias in language (as explained above) and learning about inclusive behavior
- learn how to write inclusively

All this, every day, while writing, on the go.



## The case for inclusive language

### How we interpret language depends on our unconscious patterns

Our language is strongly associated with unconscious images. Look at the Kiki-Bouba effect<sup>1</sup> 95% of people surveyed all over the world in all different languages associated a round form with the word “Bouba” and a spiky form with the word “Kiki”.

Words trigger unconscious images in our mind's eye. The images triggered are associated with our own experiences or patterns in life, mostly unconsciously stored somewhere in our brain. That means that depending on the patterns we have learnt during our lives, we interpret the world differently. Our interpretation of language highly depends on our own socialisation. So it makes a difference which words we use, because they have the power to trigger certain images within our readers. This also means that language plays an active role in shaping our own views or the views of our readers. Thus, language is not a mere symptom of our environment, but it is an active agent in shaping reality. (If you want to read more about unconscious bias and bias in language, read our blog posts -> <sup>2</sup> and <sup>3</sup>)

### Want to make a riddle to test your inner images?

"Three different doctors said that Paul is their brother yet Paul claims he has no brothers. Who is lying?"

(see solution at the end)

1. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bouba/kiki\\_effect#:~:text=The%20bouba%2Fkiki%20effect%20is,in%201929%20using%20nonsense%20words](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bouba/kiki_effect#:~:text=The%20bouba%2Fkiki%20effect%20is,in%201929%20using%20nonsense%20words)

2. <https://www.witty.works/en/blog/introduction-to-unconscious-bias-and-its-effects-series-on-bias-i>

3. <https://www.witty.works/en/blog/post/what-is-inclusive-language>

## How we use language affects how we decide

The Foreign-Language Effect, a study by the Universities of Chicago and Barcelona provides insight. "Would you make the same decisions in a foreign language as you would in your first language?" is the leading question<sup>1</sup>. Yes, most people would answer intuitively. But the opposite is true:

The scientists Hayakawa, Costa, Foucart and Keysar used several experiments to investigate the effects of using a foreign language on the factors risk, reasoning and morality.

**The result:** the use of a foreign language reduced bias in decision making. It dissolved the framing effect of the first language. Even more, the use of a foreign language lowered the fear of risk of loss and increased the willingness to make bets with a positive expected value - both fictional and real.

**Why this effect?** A foreign language triggers increased deliberation, they say. It can create a psychological distance and reduce emotions. The explanation for this, the scientists assume, lies in the fact that a foreign language can create a greater cognitive and emotional distance than the first language can.

**So:** Words matter more than you think. The beginning of diversity and inclusion in business lies in our use of language.

If words influence our feelings, thinking and behavior, then they also have the power to exclude or include. For this reason, the influence of language on corporate culture and how we come across in our communication should not be underestimated in any way.

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1. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1364661316301218>



# Inclusive language: What do companies gain?

How does inclusive language influence the economic strength and sustainability of companies, what do they actually gain when companies increasingly use inclusive language, internally or externally?

When companies set diversity and inclusion as targets, their use of language is crucial. Because only if diverse target groups see themselves represented in the presentation of a brand and feel included in the language of a company will they also feel addressed and involved.



## What are the economic benefits of inclusive language?

Inclusive language is critical to business success. It brings impact to all divisions of a company and proves to be a real cash cow. Five facts:

- ① **Developing new audiences:** 70 to 80 percent of all purchasing decisions are made by women<sup>1</sup>. According to Marketing Week, two-thirds of women surveyed skip ads they perceive as negatively stereotyping women<sup>2</sup>. Companies that overhaul their marketing campaigns and meet this standard in their use of language can tap into new target groups.

1. <https://www.inc.com/amy-nelson/women-drive-majority-of-consumer-purchasing-its-time-to-meet-their-needs.html>

2. <https://www.marketingweek.com/harmful-gender-stereotypes-advertising/?trk=lms-blog-trust&src=bl-po>

- ④ **Sales:** 75 percent of Zoomers surveyed said they would boycott brands that engaged in any form of discrimination in their ad campaigns, according to the results of McKinsey's 'True Gen' study (2018)<sup>1</sup>. In contrast, more than 4 in 5 consumers would prefer to shop with an inclusive brand, according to LinkedIn State of Sales 2021 surveys - even if other brands had the same offering.<sup>2</sup>
- ④ **Productivity:** Studies show that productivity is directly related to employee satisfaction. When it comes to an inclusive work environment, in a survey by Deloitte<sup>3</sup>, 83 percent of Millennials surveyed said they were more motivated if their employers promoted a culture of diversity and inclusion. When employees find themselves reflected in corporate language, they feel seen and valued. This increases satisfaction and productivity in teams, which in turn feeds into enjoyment of work, team building and belonging.
- ④ **ESG and UNSDG:** Inclusive language helps achieve the social criteria in the ESG and Goals #5 and #10 in the UNSDG more quickly.
- ④ **Compliance:** Inclusive language can ensure that companies and their employees use language that is in line with today's events and developments. This can prevent "shitstorms" from happening since care has already been taken to choose the right words beforehand.
- ④ **Talent Acquisition:** Employers who place a high value on diversity and inclusion are seen as attractive, forward-looking and modern brands, especially by Gen Y and Gen Z. Inclusive language in employer branding attracts a more diverse workforce<sup>4</sup>
- ④ **More drive, more innovation:** In a professional environment that values diversity, lively exchange and knowledge transfer takes place. Knowledge is shared instead of stashed away. And unconventional ideas are also unleashed. This creates innovation, according to researchers Hewlett, Marshall and Sherbin in their article How Diversity Can Drive Innovation<sup>5</sup>

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1. <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/consumer-packaged-goods/our-insights/true-gen-generation-z-and-its-implications-for-companies?trk=lms-blog-trust&src=bl-po>

2. <https://business.linkedin.com/sales-solutions/b2b-sales-strategy-guides/the-state-of-sales-2021-report?trk=lms-blog-trust&src=bl-po>

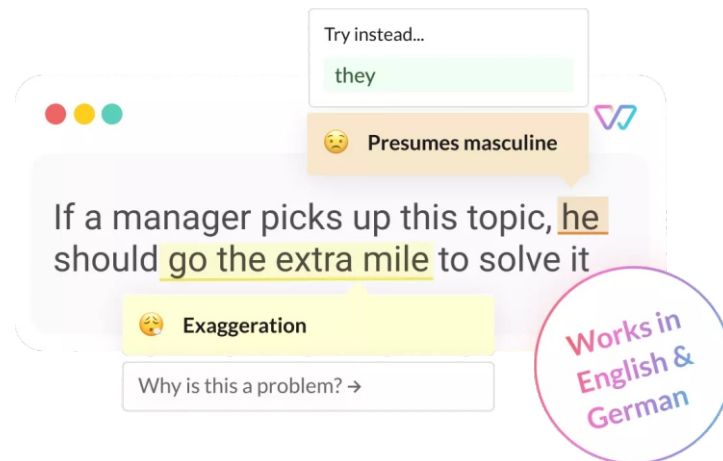
3. <https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/us/Documents/about-deloitte/us-inclus-millennial-influence-120215.pdf?trk=lms-blog-trust&src=bl-po>

4. <https://www.ziprecruiter.com/blog/removing-gendered-keywords-gets-you-more-applicants/>

5. <https://hbr.org/2013/12/how-diversity-can-drive-innovation>

**Extra:** Inclusive language changes culture. Using inclusive language in the work environment makes Unconscious Bias visible. It raises awareness, sensitizes, and lays the foundation for a welcoming culture in action. Companies whose corporate language is inclusive and whose teams use inclusive language are unlikely to make discriminatory comments or act in an exclusionary manner. Employees adapt their behavior step-by-step change towards an inclusive culture. In this way, companies protect themselves from costly consequences of toxic cultures and severe penalties.





# Inclusive language via click: ‘Witty’ - the inclusive writing assistant

When companies set themselves more diversity and inclusion as a goal, they should first rethink their own use of language. This is precisely where Witty - the inclusive writing assistant comes in.

Inclusive corporate language doesn't happen overnight or with one workshop. It is a learning process that has to be sustained. It takes time, knowledge, awareness and sensitivity - and a roll out in the whole company. With a sustainable change in language, sustainable change in culture can be achieved.

## That's exactly where ‘Witty’ comes into play:

For organizations who want to ensure fast, cost-efficient and sustainable DEI, the Business-to-Business Software-as-a-Service ‘Witty’ enables them to control brand voice, create inclusive business communication and foster inclusion with a de-biased language AI. The tool, in form of a browser plugin, identifies obvious discrimination and unconscious stereotypes in language and proposes via click inclusive alternatives. Even more, Witty clarifies, educates, and raises awareness about Unconscious Bias via microlearning bites explaining the biases that lie behind expressions. Thus, ‘Witty’ helps companies embed and use inclusive language consistently in their communications and train inclusive behavior via microlearning bites. Companies gain more than control over their language use: They gain valuable insights on the topic, confidence in the application of their corporate language and get a groundbreaking formula in their hands: fast, well-founded and via click.

And as a plus: Organizations can store their own custom language rules in Witty, therefore making sure that everyone writes with the same brand voice.





## How Witty works

Witty is an analysis tool that marks non-inclusives terms and expressions while you are writing. You work with a browser plug-in that automatically checks web-based texts for non-inclusive language in all your communication thanks to an unbiased language AI data model. Whether in emails, on websites, in social media posts or other web texts: The algorithm checks diversity dimensions and flags words and word combinations that are unconsciously discriminatory or non-inclusive. Via click, the user is provided with a formulation aid - in this case: an inclusive word alternative. Users can click to learn more about the background of the words marked as critical and choose an alternative. Witty works practically like a spelling program for inclusive language. By the way: it also checks spelling and grammar.

In order to stay atop language developments, Witty's vocabulary is built together with special interest associations, constantly filling in their language know how in their specific diversity dimension.



## The benefits of the software

Whether product development, sales/marketing, human resources or corporate branding: companies that live diversity and use inclusive language win across the board. Witty is the first building block in this process:



Witty triggers cognitive, behavioral changes in the users.



It sensitizes teams sustainably through its daily use



The learning factor is high and is refreshed daily. Thus, what has been learned does not fizzle out.



Costly diversity workshops become either redundant or its learnings are made sustainable due to the augmenting power of 'Witty'



The tool offers companies full control over their brand communication



Security and risk minimization: no mistakes, no shitstorms, no lawsuits



Compliance with ESG and UNSDG requirements



Witty is multilingual by design and includes gender-specific languages



It integrates the accumulated knowledge and background information from social movements



On the pulse: Witty is continuously developed and updated.



The tool works ad-free.

Get the freemium version Witty Me now!



## Cases & Testimonials

Witty works as a plug-in for all major browsers. It is easy to implement and use. The tool detects unconscious stereotypes in web texts in real time and suggests new, inclusive phrases that users can accept or reject. In this way, you retain full creative freedom when writing.

Numerous industries already rely on Witty: insurance, banking, technology,

industry, tech startups, consulting firms and media. These are the top 3 arguments from our customers' feedback:

Secure communication. Since the introduction of Witty, customers have regularly reported to us on the use of the tool. The main feedback we receive:

- Organizations feel more secure in their internal and external communication.
- The software helps them avoid risks that could damage their image. For example, shitstorms due to unconscious misstatements in social media posts.
- Employees love to write inclusively, because it is now so easy.
- Organizations are highly supported in their efforts towards more diversity and inclusion as the tool raises bias awareness.

### Using Witty has effects in...

## Corporate culture



"Witty was great to integrate into our daily work routine thanks to its quick and easy use. It has raised our awareness of inclusive language and is absolutely recommendable for supporting the learning process in relation to unconscious bias."

Carolin Ahrens,  
HR Management Executives  
Deutsche Bahn



High and sustainable learning factor. With software that employees use on a daily basis, they also learn continuously about their own biases. The use of Witty in the work environment ensures that unconscious stereotypes are recognized. Employees can adapt their behavior accordingly, therefore building inclusive cultures.

## Brand voice

“

«With Witty's tool we improved our brand voice. Within weeks diverse candidates and existing employees felt more involved.»

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Alexander Ilic,  
Executive Director  
ETH AI Center



**ETH AI CENTER**

Teams that rely on Witty not only feel more confident in external communication: they are sensitized to diversity and inclusion. And thus can position their brand more inclusively. The positive effect of this: openness, interest, respect, and a living culture of welcome that makes their brand stick.

## Talent acquisition

“

«Witty identifies linguistic hurdles in our ads that kept us from attracting diverse talent. We increased the share of applications from diverse talents from 0-5% to 30%.»

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Swithun Mason,  
Managing Director  
Masonbreese



Organizations that have made job applications more inclusive, they received significantly more applications from highly qualified women. Instead of 0 - 5%, now 30%. By using inclusive language in their job advertisements, more target groups felt addressed and involved. This shows in practice what studies have long proven: Addressing the right target groups and talent is key. Inclusive language has a noticeable effect.



## Reimagine brand voice and team mindsets with inclusive language, with Witty

Would you also like to design your corporate communications in such a way that they include all diversity dimensions and address all target groups? Do you already have a picture of how an inclusive culture can be lived in your company and what potential you will unlock with inclusive language use? Make our freemium version available to your teams!

Witty for your team!

Witty aims to get things moving: it allows everyone in the team to install it via browser plug-in and optimize their own language use.

## CONTACT

You have questions and want to learn more?  
We look forward to hearing from you!

### Solution:

No one is lying.  
The three doctors are his sisters.

