



MC No. 12, s. 2005

MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR

TO : ALL HEADS OF CONSTITUTIONAL BODIES; DEPARTMENTS, BUREAUS, OFFICES, AND AGENCIES OF THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT; LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS; STATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES; GOVERNMENT-OWNED-OR-CONTROLLED CORPORATIONS WITH ORIGINAL CHARTER

SUBJECT : Use Of Non-Sexist Language In All Official Documents, Communications, And Issuances

Pursuant to CSC Resolution No. 050433 dated March 30, 2005, government officials and employees are encouraged to use non-sexist language in all official documents, communications, and issuances.

In line with the government's efforts to integrate women's concerns in its plans and programs through the years, the Civil Service Commission continuously undertakes gender mainstreaming activities, taking extra efforts in promoting gender-sensitivity in the bureaucracy. Beginning June 2000, gender and development (GAD) perspectives have been integrated in the conduct of civil service examinations partly through the use of non-sexist language in the test items. This has led to the Commission's active campaign on the use of gender-fair language.

Language is a very essential tool in communication. It articulates consciousness, reflects culture, and affects socialization. Hence, the need to recognize the importance of transforming language from traditional usage to a more liberating one, that which is gender-sensitive.

Since government employees and officials encounter gender issues everyday, the use of non-sexist language in preparing letters, memoranda, and other issuances, will encourage them to make a conscious effort to avoid implicit and explicit discriminatory language against women or men. This, in turn, will help promote gender-sensitivity in the bureaucracy.

Attached are some suggestions on how to use non-sexist language.

Please be guided accordingly.


KARINA CONSTANTINO-DAVID
Chair

March 31, 2005

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Republic of the Philippines
Civil Service Commission
 Constitution Hills, Batasang Pambansa Complex, Diliman 1126 Quezon City

100 Years of Service;
 Civil Service at its Best,
Mamamayan Muna

Use of Non-sexist Language
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RESOLUTION NO. 050433

WHEREAS, Section (2), Article IX-B of the 1987 Constitution provides that the Civil Service embraces all branches, subdivisions, instrumentalities and agencies of the Government, including government-owned or controlled corporations with original charters;

WHEREAS, Section 12 (3), Chapter 3, Title I (A), Book V of the Administrative Code of 1987 provides that the Commission shall promulgate policies, standards and guidelines for the Civil Service and adopt plans and programs to promote economical, efficient and effective personnel administration in the government;

WHEREAS, the government has been exerting effort to integrate women's concerns in its plans and programs over the years;

WHEREAS, the Commission recognizes that since language articulates consciousness, reflects culture, and affects socialization, it is a very important tool in communication, and as such, it is important to transform language from traditional usage to a more liberating one, that which is gender-sensitive;

WHEREAS, requiring the use of non-sexist language in common day-to-day activities, such as preparing letters, memoranda, and other issuances, will encourage government employees and officials to make a conscious effort to avoid implicit and explicit discriminatory language against women or men, thereby helping promote gender-sensitivity in the bureaucracy;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Commission resolves to encourage all government officials and employees to use non-sexist language in all official documents, communications, and issuances.

Quezon City, MAR 30 2005

KARINA CONSTANTINO-DAVID
 Chair

J. WALDEMAR V. VALMORES
 Commissioner

CESAR D. BUENAFLOR
 Commissioner

Attested by:

REBECCA A. FERNANDEZ
 Director IV

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SOME SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO USE NON-SEXIST LANGUAGE

1. **ELIMINATE THE GENERIC USE OF *HE*, *HIS*, OR *HIM* UNLESS THE ANTECEDENT IS OBVIOUSLY MALE BY:**
 - a. **using plural nouns**

TRADITIONAL:	The lawyer uses his brief to guide him.
SUGGESTED:	The lawyers use their briefs to guide them.
 - b. **deleting *he*, *his*, and *him* altogether, rewording if necessary**

TRADITIONAL:	The architect uses his blueprint to guide him.
SUGGESTION:	The architect uses a blueprint as a guide.
 - c. **substituting articles (*a*, *an*, *the*) for *his*; using *who* instead of *he***

TRADITIONAL:	The writer should know his readers well.
SUGGESTION:	The writer should know the readers well.
 - d. **using *one*, *we*, or *you***

TRADITIONAL:	As one grows older, he becomes more reflective.
SUGGESTION:	As one grows older, one becomes more reflective.
 - e. **using the passive voice**

TRADITIONAL:	The manager must submit his proposal today.
SUGGESTION:	The proposal must be submitted by the manager today.
2. **ELIMINATE THE GENERIC USE OF *MAN*. INSTEAD, USE *PEOPLE*, *PERSON(S)*, *HUMAN(S)*, *HUMAN BEING(S)*, *HUMANKIND*, *HUMANITY*, *THE HUMAN RACE*.**

TRADITIONAL:	ordinary man, mankind, the brotherhood of man
SUGGESTION:	ordinary people, humanity, the human family
3. **ELIMINATE SEXISM IN SYMBOLIC REPRESENTATIONS OF GENDER IN WORDS, SENTENCES, AND TEXTS by:**
 - a. **taking the context of the word, analyzing its meaning, and eliminating sexism in the concept**

TRADITIONAL:	feelings of brotherhood, feelings of fraternity
SUGGESTION:	feelings of kinship, solidarity
TRADITIONAL:	the founding fathers
SUGGESTION:	the founders, the founding leaders
TRADITIONAL:	the Father of relativity theory
SUGGESTION:	the founder of relativity theory, the initiator of relativity theory
 - b. **finding precise words to delineate the thing itself from supposedly sex-linked characteristics**

TRADITIONAL:	Titanic was a great ship, but <u>she</u> now rests at the bottom of the sea.
SUGGESTION:	Titanic was a great ship, but <u>it</u> now rests at the bottom of the sea.



TRADITIONAL: "Don't let Mother Nature rip you off! She's out to kill your car's new finish... Stop her..."
SUGGESTION: "Don't let Nature rip you off! It's out to kill your car's finish... Stop it..."

4. ELIMINATE SEXUAL STEREOTYPING OF ROLES BY:

a. using the same term for both genders when it comes to profession or employment

TRADITIONAL: salesman, stewardess
SUGGESTION: sales agent, flight attendant

b. using gender fair terms in lexical terms

TRADITIONAL: sportsmanship
SUGGESTION: highest ideals of fair play

c. treating men and women in a parallel manner

TRADITIONAL: I now pronounce you man and wife.
SUGGESTION: I now pronounce you husband and wife.

d. avoiding language that reinforces stereotyping images

TRADITIONAL: a man's job, the director's girl Friday
SUGGESTION: a big job, the director's assistant

e. avoiding language that catches attention to the sex role of men and women

TRADITIONAL: working mothers, spinsters or old maids
SUGGESTION: wage-earning mothers, unmarried women

TRADITIONAL: busboys, chauvinist pigs
SUGGESTION: waiters' assistants, male chauvinists

5. ELIMINATE SEXISM WHEN ADDRESSING PERSONS FORMALLY BY:

a. using Ms. instead of Mrs.

TRADITIONAL: Mrs. dela Cruz
SUGGESTION: Ms. dela Cruz

b. using a married woman's first name instead of her husband's

TRADITIONAL: Mrs. Juan dela Cruz
SUGGESTION: Ms. Maria Santos-dela Cruz

c. using the corresponding titles for females

TRADITIONAL: Dra. Concepcion Reyes
SUGGESTION: Dr. Concepcion Reyes

d. using the title of the job or group in letters to unknown persons

TRADITIONAL: Dear Sir
SUGGESTION: Dear Editor, Dear Credit Manager, Dear Colleague