

Practical next steps to develop equitable language at your organization:

1

Conduct an informal audit of your recent grant proposals and marketing materials and compile a list of the ways in which your clients are described. Is it consistent? Person-centered? How could you incorporate more person-centered language?

2

Have a coffee chat or round table between program staff and fundraising staff to discuss the systemic issues your clients are facing. Ask program staff to provide examples or directly include people that you serve, as appropriate.

3

Consider how you can stress systems rather than symptoms in the ways in which you describe your clients.

4

Develop a regular practice to talk to those you serve about what language they prefer to use to describe themselves.

5

When conducting your annual board assessment, ask the question, "Does the racial composition of our board reflect the people in the community our organization serves?"

6

Review the diversity of the members of your Nominating Committee. It will be a challenge to recruit diverse board members if your Nominating Committee isn't diverse.

7

Consider asking the chair of your Nominating Committee to reach out to GinaKaye Maddox, the Diversity on Board facilitator at Leadership Akron, to make her aware of upcoming board openings you are looking to fill so that we can create awareness of our graduates.

8

Evaluate any personal reactions you might have to any of these outcomes or to the work it takes to make your language more equitable. Seek resources to help you grow and to recommend for your colleagues.

Other Resources:

- [Racial Equity Resource Guide Glossary](#)
- [A Progressive's Style Guide](#)
- [An Ally's Guide to Terminology](#)
- [ADA National Network: Guidelines for Writing About People with Disabilities](#)
- [The National Assembly of State Arts Agencies: Inclusive Language Guide](#)
- [American Psychological Association: Bias-Free Language Guide](#)
- [Shelterforce: Guide to Racially Loaded Community Planning and Development Terms](#)

