

The **EQUITABLE COMMUNICATIONS** GUIDE

a **ROADMAP** for
EVALUATORS in the **SOCIAL SECTOR**

October 2023

INNOVATION NETWORK

WRITTEN BY
SHELLI GOLSON-MICKENS
ALISSA MARCHANT
ARANZAZÚ JORQUIERA JOHNSON

VISUALS BY
KAYLA BOISVERT

Dear reader,

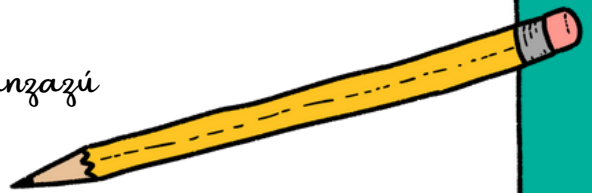
This guide was conceived in summer 2022, after years of working with non-profits, foundations, philanthropies, and other evaluators. We wanted to fill a gap we perceived in the field—that while there were many resources available on equitable evaluation, and many on evaluation communications, we couldn't find any on *equitable evaluation communications*!

Aranzazú Jorquiera Johnson developed the first draft of this guide. The current evolution was written by Shelli Golson-Mickens and Alissa Marchant. Kayla Boisvert provided content revisions and illustrated the guide. The final guide was reviewed by Cory Georgopoulos and Rebecca Perlmutter.

This guide represents the thought leadership of many people in the evaluation community. It brings together principles and techniques from a wide range of sources—check out all the resources in this guide and the bibliography! We are grateful to those people who have supported our journey towards more equitable communications.

In solidarity,

Shelli, Alissa, Kayla, Aranzazú
and the Innovation Network team



PREFERRED CITATION

Golson-Mickens, S., Marchant, A., Boisvert, K., & Jorquiera Johnson, A. (2023). Equitable Communications Guide: A Roadmap for Evaluators in the Social Sector. Innovation Network. <https://www.innonet.org/news-insights/resources/equitable-communications-guide/>

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION
page 3

ARE YOU
READY?
page 10

HOW TO
COMMUNICATE
EQUITABLY
page 14

GUIDEPOSTS

DEVELOP A PRACTICE OF
SELF-REFLECTION

TREAT OTHERS HOW
THEY WANT TO BE TREATED

CENTER MARGINALIZED PEOPLE,
VOICES & EXPERIENCES

USE ANTI-RACIST NARRATIVES TO
CHANGE MINDS & FURTHER EQUITY

WHAT'S
NEXT?
page 37

BIBLIOGRAPHY
page 43

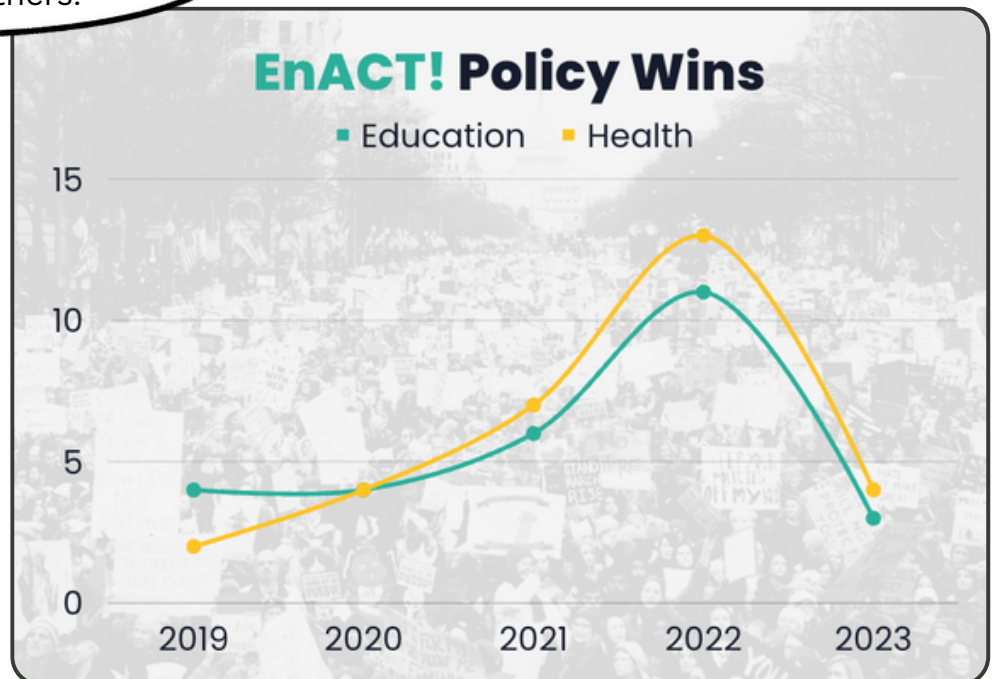
Introduction

Welcome!

This graph shows an advocacy group's policy wins from the past five years. They started by winning a few more policies each year, until last year there was a drop.

If someone just saw the graph, they might think this group did worse or was less successful last year. But I know that they actually felt more successful. They decided to spend more time getting to know the people who are most affected by the issues they care about and working with community and grassroots groups. They wanted to make sure the lived experiences of these people were reflected in new policies. **So, they didn't win as many policies, but they built stronger relationships, had a bigger impact, and improved their chances for sustainability.**

As an evaluator, I know that how I communicate these findings and tell the story makes a huge difference in how people understand the work of this advocacy group and their ability to use the data with their partners.



Introduction

What is this guide?

As evaluators, we choose which stories and quotes are most relevant and which recommendations to show first. Language has power, especially in our reports and presentation of findings. It is used to make important decisions about how programs should change and who benefits.

Evaluation benefits from a culture that values the written word over other ways knowledge is shared, such as through oral histories and storytelling. This ‘worship of the written word’ was identified by Tema Okun as a [characteristic of white supremacy](#). It shows up through an emphasis on traditional literature, elevation of people with writing skills (often educated White people), and the blaming of communities who do not respond to written communication. While our choices about how we communicate our findings can confront this reality, we can also recognize the power our own writing can have.

This document provides guidance for evaluators in the social sector to reflect on and wield our power to disrupt injustice and relinquish power to those whose stories fill the pages of our reports.

This guide is not a replacement for bias trainings, data equity guidelines, or anti-racist strategies. We are still growing and learning, too, figuring out what it means to further justice and equity, including in our communications. But we hope this guide can be a reference when you share the important messages and stories of the people who trusted you with their hopes and fears. Your evaluation is one way they can speak truth to power.

Although we sought to be as thorough as possible when writing this guide, we recognize that our use of language changes as society continues to evolve. This highlights the most important point we emphasize in this guide: **to communicate equitably, it is essential to center those whose stories you are telling**. Ask them what they need and think, offer a platform to share their own stories when possible, and reflect together on how best to talk about their experiences.

Equitable communications is a journey—not a destination. We hope that this guide can be your roadmap—but remember, maps need to be updated as things change.

Introduction

Who is Innovation Network?

At our heart, we are a nonprofit organization that focuses on learning and evaluation, specializing in measuring advocacy efforts. This has led us to working with amazing advocates who are shifting the policy landscape and creating social change. A core component of that is centering equity by elevating the power of those closest to the issues.

Their successes in shifting power have inspired our own efforts to embed equity in our evaluation work and organizational processes. However, we struggled to find comprehensive resources around one important part of our work: evaluation communications. So, we decided to create this guide to fill that gap and offer strategies to fellow evaluators in the social sector, so we can harness our power for social change.

We are not experts in equitable communications. But some of us know what it feels like for others to speak on our behalf and lose a piece of our identity. Others of us have perpetrated the same violence on others and want to do better. We have drawn on the work and guidance of thought leaders in other sectors to write the content found in this guide.

We, of course, are writing from our own positionalities. We are all cis women with the privilege of advanced degrees. But we also come from various racial and ethnic backgrounds (we are Brown, Hispanic, and White) and geographical backgrounds (we come from Massachusetts, South Carolina, DC, and Peru). We name our identities to recognize our potential biases, perspectives, and experiences, and how these may shape this guide.



Introduction

Who are we?



Hello! My name is Shelli. I am a public health researcher by training, but my passion directed me to evaluation and learning! In every project, I am always eager to find new ways to support equity in practice.



Hi! I'm Alissa! My first career was in communications. Now, I am building a framework for measuring collective power in coalitions and finding new ways of working to disrupt paternalistic power dynamics.



Welcome! I'm Aranzazú. I am a diversity, equity, belonging, and inclusion professional with an educational background in international development and a firm believer in the power of collaboration.

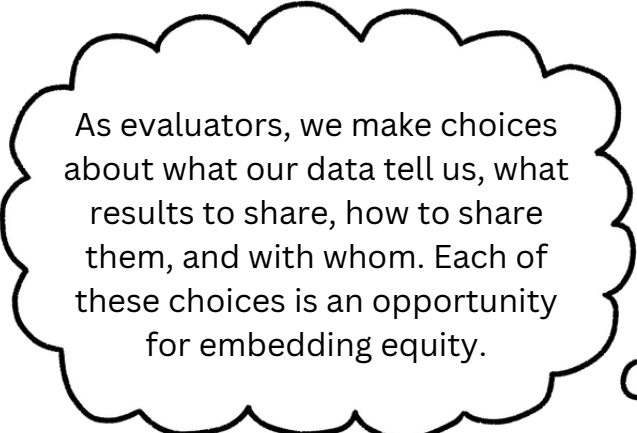


Hey there! I'm Kayla. As a former teacher, I do applied research to improve education systems worldwide. I hope to see all children, youth, and families have opportunities for learning, growth, and holistic wellbeing.

Introduction

What is equitable communications?

In this guide, we're concentrating on one part of our job as evaluators—communications. When we say 'communications', we're talking about promoting our evaluation results, sharing lessons learned, increasing community awareness of important issues, influencing decision-makers, and other ways we use and communicate evaluation findings. We can share evaluation messages in various ways, including reports, presentations, summaries, community exhibits, policy briefs, and more.



As evaluators, we make choices about what our data tell us, what results to share, how to share them, and with whom. Each of these choices is an opportunity for embedding equity.



What is equitable communications?

So, what is *equitable communications*? There are many definitions of equity, and it has varied meanings to everyone. To us, equitable communications in evaluation means:

- 1 Authentically sharing our findings in a way that people connect with, that is inclusive and respectful of them and their culture.
- 2 Ceding a platform to the voices of racially and ethnically marginalized people, poverty-affected people, women, LGBTQ+ people, and people with disabilities.
- 3 Building relationships with communities who are often left behind.
- 4 Countering dominant narratives, false binaries, and the centering of Whiteness and dominant cultures.
- 5 Humanizing and affirming the dignity and rights of all people.
- 6 Reflecting our diverse realities and uplifting the world we want to see in the future.
- 7 Situating findings in historical, social, political, and cultural realities.
- 8 Interpreting findings in a way that reflects the lived experiences of the people most impacted by the issue.
- 9 Encouraging the evolution of social justice conversations.

Language is the way we code our understanding of the world around us. How we say certain things creates meaning and constructs patterns and associations in our minds—for better or worse. These patterns have the power to perpetuate racism, coloniality, White supremacy, sexism, ableism, and so on—or they can disrupt it.

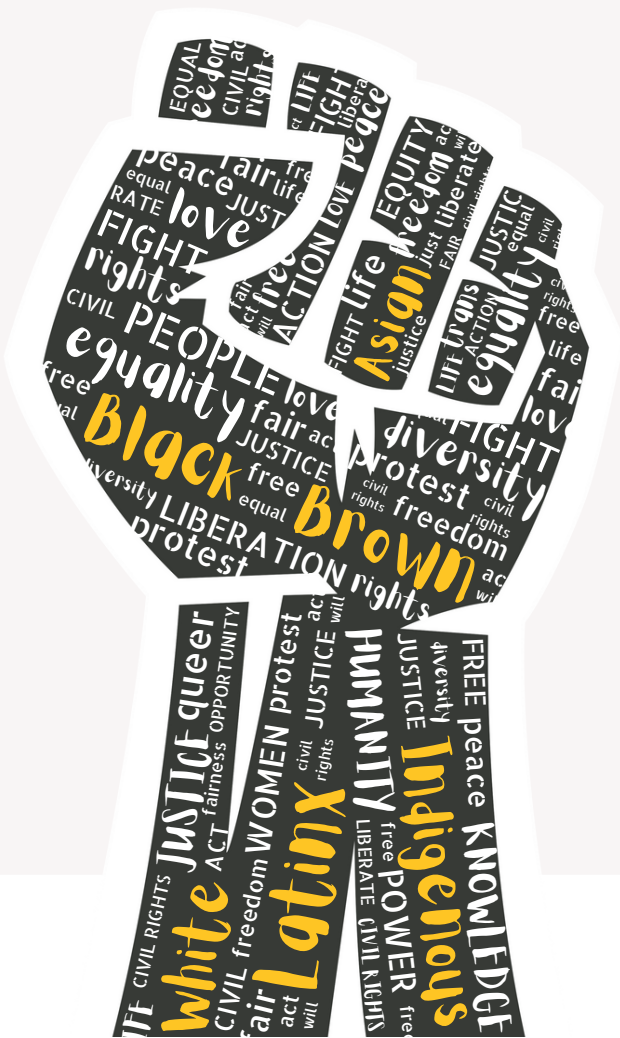




MORE RESOURCES

In this guide, we focus on communicating findings and do not cover sample selection, data collection methods, or data analysis and visualization. However, these are also important areas of work that require equitable practice. There are some great resources available that discuss specific strategies to incorporate equity in data practices, such as:

- Equitable Evaluation Initiative (2017). [Equitable Evaluation Framework](#)
- Informing Change (2022). [Data Ethics Guidebook: Cultivating an Ethical Mindset in Research & Evaluation](#)
- We all Count. [Data Equity Framework](#)
- Schwabish, J. & Feng, A. (2021). [Do No Harm Guide: Applying Equity Awareness in Data Visualization](#)



DID YOU KNOW?



Language holds tremendous power as it conveys values and has been harnessed to uphold racist structures. There is ongoing debate about capitalizing racial groups, like Black, Brown, Indigenous, and White. In this guide, we choose to capitalize these terms to recognize the profound influence and significance these cultural identities have in our lives. We also capitalize White because the failure to do so upholds the legacy of centering and normalizing White experiences, ultimately marginalizing other identities. For more information, [see this statement from the MacArthur Foundation.](#)

Are you ready?



Are you ready?

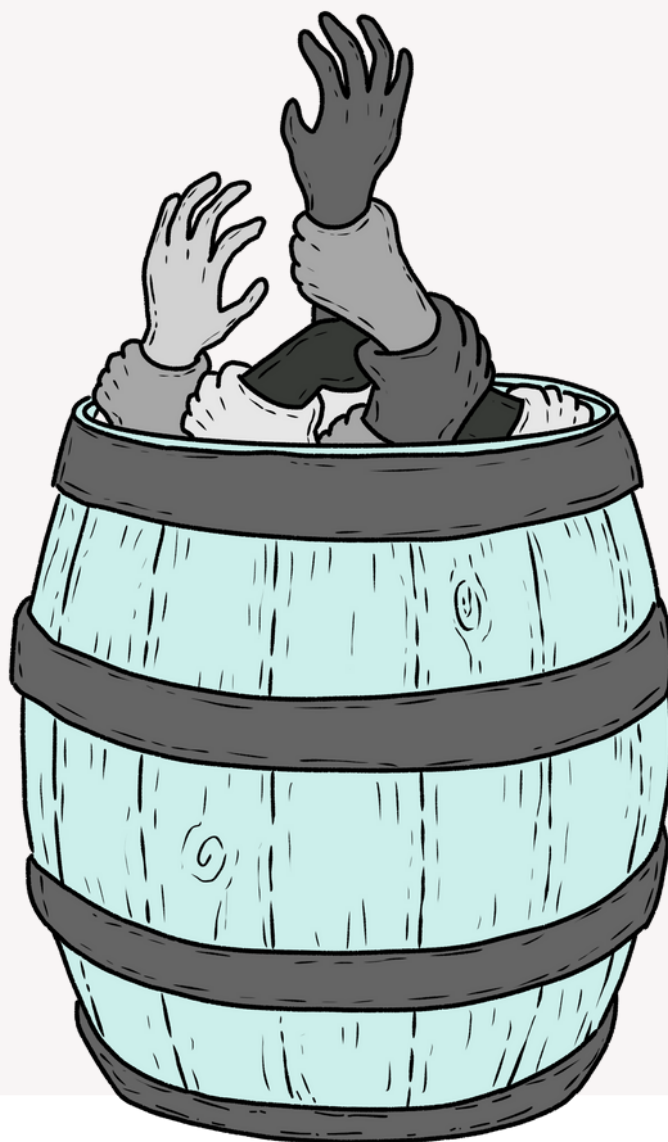
Three mindsets for communicating equitably

It is easy to live in our privilege, whatever it may be, and fail to support those more marginalized than we are. Developing equitable practice takes work. Some of the most challenging work that we must do is the work on ourselves.

These three principles orient us in doing this hard work:

Equity is about success for all of us!

Have you ever heard the expression, ‘crabs in a barrel’? The idea is that we are all restrained in a small and uncomfortable container, and to escape we must compete to get to the top. For some people, this concept reflects society today and the ways that systemic oppression has been reinforced over the years. Entire groups of people have been disenfranchised to maintain the privilege and supremacy of others. But this approach is all wrong! We all thrive as a community when we can coexist equitably. We must have a genuine desire to lift each other up as we rise, especially communities that have been economically or socially marginalized and often unrecognized.



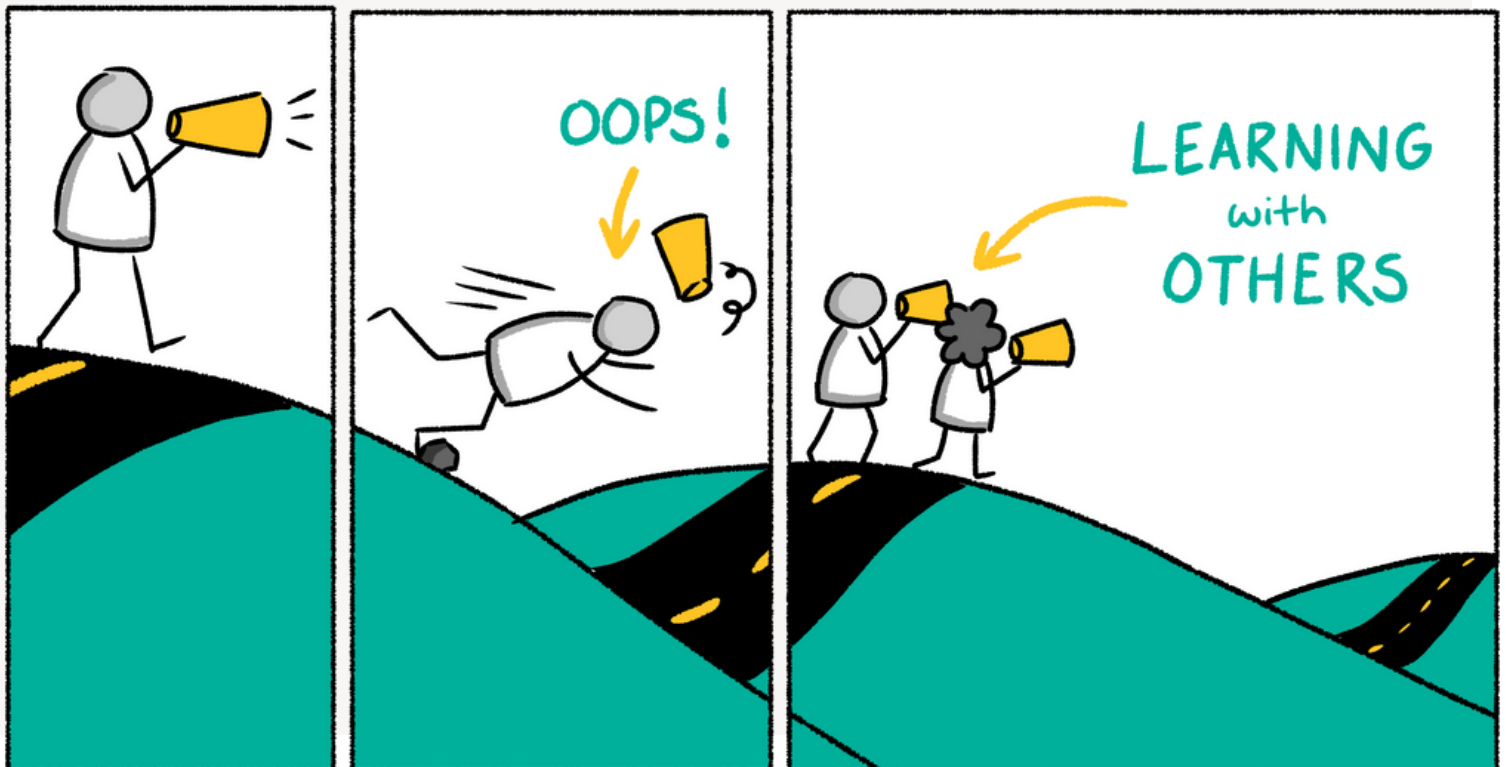
Three Mindsets for Communicating Equitably

Equitable communications requires self-reflection.

While having the desire to support equity is easy, the work that is required to genuinely act is much more difficult. We can have the best intentions, but if we are not careful, we can reinforce harm to entire communities. We must recognize that equity is not just academic. Nor is it just employing the strategies outlined in this guide. We can learn these skills, but continuous self-reflection is key to understanding our contribution to inequitable systems and how we can become disruptors instead of contributors. This is not a passive process.

This is a learning journey we will never master.

In the introduction, we said that equity is a *journey*. That is because we do not know everyone's experience, and learning about new cultures is an ongoing process. Learning as a journey means approaching this work from a space of curiosity, reflection, and respect. We will make mistakes, we will be called out for our mistakes, and we should be willing to grow from these mistakes. There is always more to learn.



Are you ready?

Communications strategy 101

This guide includes approaches for ensuring your evaluation communications are equitable. It does not provide a background to the field of communications, but we have included some resources that you may find useful throughout the guide!

To make the most impact, apply the approaches in this guide to your overall communications strategy:

REACH EVERYONE

Make a plan to ensure your message is seen. Find **new ways** to share your content, from social media to in-person gatherings.

REFLECT & REFORM

Look back at your past communications to **learn and improve**. Make your team more diverse and representative of your audience.

SET YOUR GOALS

Clarify **why** you're communicating. Identify **who** you want to communicate with.

MIX MEDIA

Choose **how** to share your message, whether it's videos, graphics, writing, or **all of the above!** Make content that speaks to your audience, whatever format you choose.

FIND YOUR ANGLE

Create messages you want to share. Adapt messages for **your specific audience**.

EVEN BETTER!

MORE RESOURCES

- Fisher-Rowe, J. (2019). [Vision, Values, and Voice: A Communications Toolkit](#)
- O'Neil, G. [A Guide: Integrating Communication in Evaluation](#)
- Pell Institute and Pathways to College Network (2017). [Develop a Communications Plan](#)
- Asibey, E., Parras, T., and van Fleet, J. (2017). [Are we there yet? A Communications Evaluation Guide](#)

How to Communicate Equitably



DEVELOP A PRACTICE of
SELF-REFLECTION

TREAT OTHERS HOW
THEY WANT TO BE TREATED

CENTER MARGINALIZED PEOPLE,
VOICES & EXPERIENCES

USE ANTI-RACIST NARRATIVES to
CHANGE MINDS & FURTHER EQUITY

Guidepost 1

Develop a Practice of Self-Reflection

Equitable communications is a learning journey that requires intention and self-reflection. We can communicate more equitably by understanding ourselves, those around us, and how our communications affect others. It also means being humble and knowing that we won't always get it exactly right, but that's okay. Every mistake is an opportunity for growth. Self-reflection allows us to keep getting better on this journey, and it ensures we make an effort to [lift others as we climb.](#)

Strategy 1

Get curious about yourself and others

Equitable communications may be difficult when we are not familiar with different cultural values and practices, or when we do not know people from different cultural identities. This means we should get curious and learn about ourselves and others.

Learn about your own culture.

Culture is something we all have! Part of developing an equitable and culturally responsive practice is getting to know the cultures we are a part of. Culture is often used to describe the customs, norms, practices, and beliefs of a group of people with a shared identity. This can be anything from the foods people eat and the traditions they participate in to the expressions and idioms they use to communicate their unique beliefs. An important part of understanding others' cultural experiences is to understand your own. What aspects of your race, age, gender, sexual orientation, ability, nationality, and other identities shape how you think, act, and feel? Unfortunately, not all people can access information about their own culture because of historical and ongoing oppression and cultural erasure. In these cases, other ways to learn could be speaking with friends,

family members, and community elders/knowledge keepers, reading historical archives or diverse literature, and exploring museums.

Form genuine connections.

It is hard to feel connected to groups of people that we do not associate with regularly. Forming genuine connections with people who are different from us can increase our commitment to equity and show up in our communications. Look at your regular associations. Do you spend a lot of time with others who share identities with you? If so, you are not alone! It is common for our family, friends, neighbors, extracurricular associates, congregation members, and even our hairstylists to share our identities. Look for ways to branch out! By finding opportunities to respectfully and authentically engage with others who do not share our identities, we are better able to connect with, understand, and support each other.

Strategy 1: Get Curious about Yourself and Others

Experience different cultures regularly.

We do not all live and work in environments that help us connect with different cultures easily. Some towns, cities, workplaces, and even social locations are made up of people with similar backgrounds. However, even in homogeneous spaces, we can still experience diversity.

Some Ways to Experience Other Cultures



Visit your local museum



Read culturally diverse books



Explore culturally diverse films, music, & content



Research other cultures' history, cuisine, & wildlife



Browse culturally diverse websites

Interrogate privilege.

To overcome historical marginalization, we need to understand all the ways that some people have advantages in society and how our own privileges come through in how we talk and act. When we don't think about how our actions can affect different groups of people, especially those with multiple marginalized identities, we might accidentally reinforce harm. To recognize other cultures, we should consider where our privileges are and recognize that such privilege may not extend to others in the same way. When communicating, think about your message and ask: Why is this important? Is this narrative culturally sensitive? Are people from diverse backgrounds interested in this? Find ways to consider the feelings of those who do not share your privilege and tailor your messages for them.

HOT TIP: Respect Differences

When you want to make real connections and get to know other cultures, it's important to do it with respect. By following these strategies, you'll meet people who have their own traditions and ways of doing things.

Embrace and appreciate those differences!

MORE RESOURCES

- Moon, T.R. (2011). [Implicit Association Test](#)
- University of Arizona Global Campus (2023). [How to Experience Other Cultures When You Can't Travel](#)

Strategy 2

Acknowledge your own limitations

Existing in a social world means we have learned values, attitudes, and beliefs, which often uphold existing power structures and continue to oppress groups with less privilege. As evaluators, it is our responsibility to examine and address our own biases and have the humility and courage to learn along the way.

Acknowledge and address your biases.

Biases are deeply ingrained, unconscious assumptions that we make about others. They can inform how we communicate with others and how we act with them. If we do not confront our biases, we can inadvertently and continuously reinforce harmful stereotypes. To acknowledge our biases, we can think deeply about the assumptions that we hold and how they may be tied to certain groups or identities. Then, we can work to change them by educating ourselves, allowing others to challenge our assumptions, being willing to accept feedback, and embracing diverse perspectives.

DID YOU KNOW?

Stereotyping is not harmless!

Stereotyping can lead to negative outcomes that affect everything from our own **individual performance** to health care to public safety. For example, research has shown that doctors **underestimate women's reports of pain** in comparison to men. This happens for **Black patients** in comparison to White patients, too. Stereotypes affect everyone's behavior, whether we realize it or not, and no matter how good our intentions.



Strategy 2: Acknowledge Your Own Limitations

Give people (and yourself) space to learn.

Confronting our biases and changing our thinking is not a one-and-done process. We are learning as we go, and we will probably make mistakes along the way. We must give ourselves and others the space to grow. And we need to admit when we make mistakes. For us to learn, we must reckon with the ways that we have inadvertently harmed others in the past and be careful not to repeat our mistakes. It's okay for others to point out our mistakes, and we should be ready to feel uncomfortable and apologize sincerely. Then, we can take what we've learned forward on our journey. People of color may be more aware of their identities, as they are often on the receiving end of mistakes and have experienced harm. As people learn and grow, evaluators of color can recognize

it is not your responsibility to explain injustice to others. Please practice self-care and avoid burnout.

Share what you've learned about equity with others.

As we learn ourselves, we can help reduce harm by sharing our lessons with others. The more that we share our lessons as a community, the more we can grow together. When we learn something new, we can share a post on our social media or organizational website, or speak to other evaluators. Spread the word! If you did not know, we guarantee that there are others that don't know as well. But, while these conversations are important, they may not always be safe or our responsibility without respite as people from marginalized identities. Make sure to prioritize your self-care.



MORE RESOURCES

- Myers, V. (2013). What if I say the wrong thing? 25 Habits for Culturally - Effective People.
- Myers, V. (2014). [How to Overcome Our Biases? Walk Boldly Toward Them](#)
- Tatum, B. (2017). Why are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? And Other Conversations About Race
- Dibinga, O., & Dyson, M.E. (2023). Lies About Black People: How to Combat Racist Stereotypes and Why It Matters
- Oluo, I. (2018). So You Want to Talk About Race
- The National Museum of African American History and Culture (2023). [Talking about Race](#)

Guidepost 2

Treat Others How They Want to be Treated

We feel seen when we are respected for what makes us who we are: from the identities we are born with to the experiences that formed us. As evaluators, an important way to demonstrate respect to people is by recognizing and appreciating how their experiences affect how they see the world. We can do this by sharing their stories accurately and allowing them to identify how they want to be talked about.

Strategy 1

Respect your audience's experience

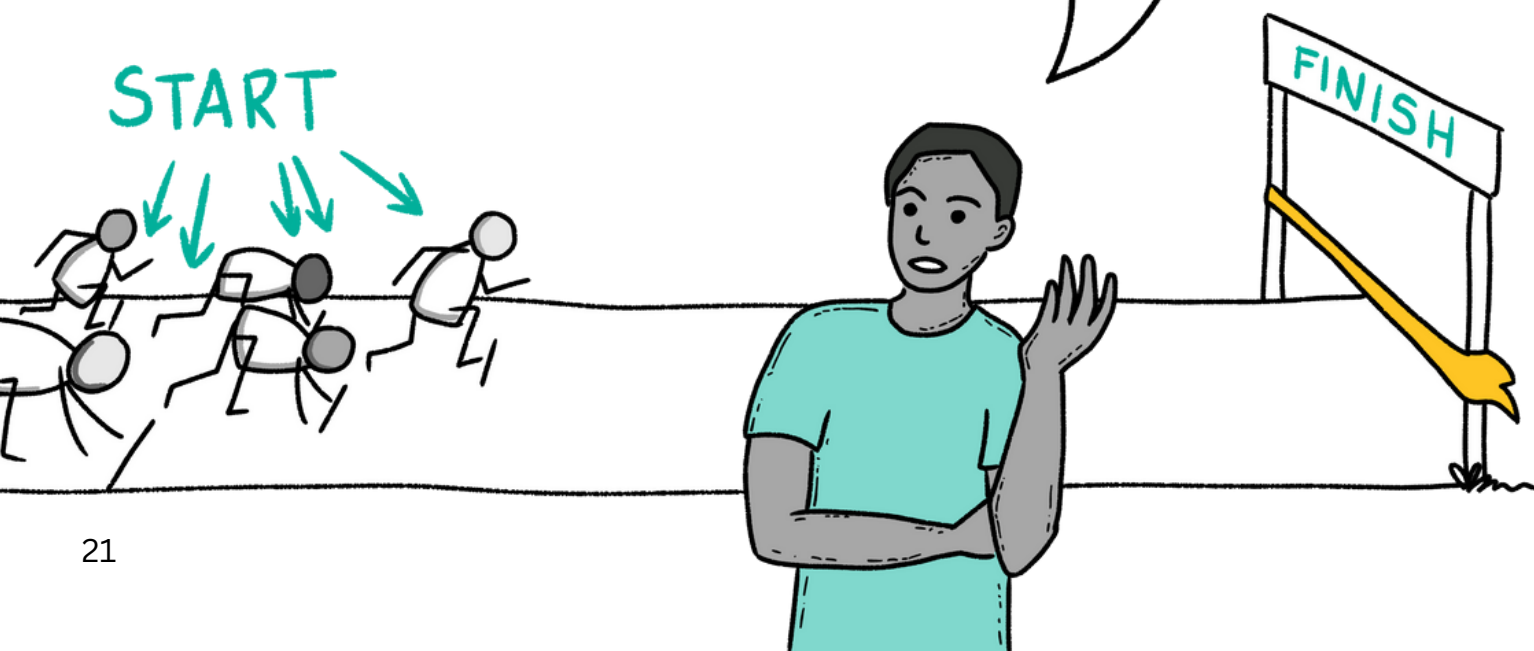
Although often invisible, life experiences make us who we are. Sometimes, our words can trigger negative experiences for others based on factors that we do not recognize, such as trauma and internal conditions. We can also elicit negative experiences when generalizing groups overall. As evaluators, we can avoid harmful triggers and generalizations. Rather, our communications should facilitate healing.

Use asset-based framing.

Victim-blaming—at the individual and systemic level—is baked into our language and protects those with privilege and power. And evaluation often is designed to identify challenges groups of people are facing. However, language can be used instead to counteract oppressive narratives. In your evaluation, you can do this by showing the strength, agency, and resilience of people of marginalized identities. You can share stories of success and highlight assets, as well as gaps.

The **'achievement gap'** says students are performing differently. It assumes the same starting point and blames those students who can't keep up.

The **'opportunity gap'** highlights unequal and unfair starting points. It assumes, given equitable resources, context, and histories, all students can achieve. **It puts the burden of change on the system, not the student.**



Strategy 1: Respect Your Audience's Experience

Focus on behavior or condition, not labels.

Using person-first language communicates that we know a person is more than their actions or condition. It also recognizes that people's mental health issues, substance abuse, or physical health concerns can emerge from biological factors or real challenges earlier in life, rather than a personal or moral failing. Consider if the best way to communicate is by using person-first language, like 'people with disabilities' or 'person with diabetes'. Remember, though, that people have preferences for how they identify. The best approach is to ask people their preferred terms and use those.

Build power by creating choice.

The expression of trauma—whether it is interpersonal or systemic violence—is tied to a sense of powerlessness. Using commands like, "Read this report," can remind a person of their past abuse and reinforce the powerlessness they feel. Your communications can build a person's sense of their own power by

creating choices and a sense of agency and autonomy. This can be done by 'inviting' people to respond to a survey or reminding them that they can refuse to answer certain questions that they aren't comfortable with. Also consider building community norms that recognize how it can be challenging to share experiences with one another.

Use non-violent language.

Images of violence and abuse can feel threatening or bring up horrible memories for many people, including those who have experienced marginalization and other forms of trauma. However, violent language is part of our regular vocabulary. When sharing evaluation findings about violence, consider how much information or detail is needed. Be careful of metaphors or expressions that use violent language as well—how many times have we suggested someone 'take a stab at' something, instead of suggesting they 'try' something? Using non-violent language can create a sense of safety.

MORE RESOURCES

- Grim, E. (2021). [Words Matter: Adopting Inclusive and Non-Violent Language in our Work](#)
- International Organization for Adolescents (2021). [Trauma-Informed Language to Use when Working with Survivors of Youth Sex Trafficking](#)
- Victoria State Government. [Communicating with People with Trauma Related Disorders](#)

Strategy 2

Respect each dimension of a person's identity

As evaluators, we often work with populations who have been ‘othered’, and we have the power to correct that language. Instead, we can celebrate, value, and respect differences. Respecting each person’s identity requires an intentional confrontation of existing biases and embracing complexity. Above all, it means each person has the power to create and show up comfortably with their own identity.

Use narratives and visuals that disrupt stereotypes.

Terms such as ‘black list’ or ‘blackballed’ rely on the symbolism that black is bad. This can uphold unconscious racial bias and be used to dehumanize the Black community. By choosing words and images that go against implicit biases, we force our minds to think beyond societal limitations, dismantle injustice, and tell a more accurate story. In your evaluation work, think deeply about the history and meaning behind the words you choose. Consider language that complicates and disrupts harmful beliefs about groups of people who are often excluded or disadvantaged by evaluation studies.

Tell a nuanced story.

In the evaluation field, it is common to exclude certain groups of people from

our study when the sample size isn’t large enough to be representative or find statistically significant results. This excludes people of those identities that are often already marginalized in our society. It is our responsibility as evaluators to include these communities in our data sets and explore nuances within aggregated groups, such as racial groups, that can reveal important differences. We as a field are still learning how to build small population methodologies and tell these nuanced stories while generating meaning and maintaining the confidentiality of respondents. While we build our capacity for this, we can disaggregate data and reveal limitations of our analyses to communicate about the subgroups within traditional categories and be transparent about who our data can—and cannot—represent.

Strategy 2: Respect Each Dimension of a Person’s Identity

Create space for multiplicity.

No two people are the same, and our reality is complex. Yet too often in evaluation we make generalizations and assertions about groups labeled neatly in our spreadsheets. The reality is that there is variation within groups—as well as overlap between groups—that can compound people’s experiences with injustice. When we tell others’ stories, we want them to see their whole selves reflected, not just a small part. Be sure to tell a wide range of stories in your communications, especially those that are uncommon. Consider what is the right amount of detail to convey people’s complex experiences while still respecting their privacy and autonomy. Be careful of generalizations that you use, which can disregard individual experiences.

Allow people to self-identify.

In our current political climate, tensions are high around the labels placed on our identities. Within groups, there are differences in how people self-identify. Surveys of Hispanic adults have shown that many reject labels placed on them such as ‘Hispanic’ and ‘Latinx’ and prefer to identify by their country of origin. Due to the diversity within groups, different cultural elements are not always shared. It can also make someone feel invisible by describing a group as ‘people of color’ when describing a specific group, like Afro-Latinos. Ask people in your study how they identify. Use the language they choose to describe themselves and the cultural elements that are relevant to them.



DID YOU KNOW?

Beyoncé changed the lyrics of her song due to ableist language

When informed by organizations that advocate for the rights of people with disabilities and the public that her lyrics were ableist, Beyoncé re-recorded and re-released the song ‘Heated’ from her Renaissance album in 2022. This level of public outcry and advocacy has also impacted other artists and brands in the past, including Lizzo, Taylor Swift, Paramore, Black Eyed Peas, and many others.

Photo by [Raph_PH](#), “[BeyonceSpurs010623](#)”, modifications: background removed, licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#)

HOT TIP!

Be a Language Learner, not the Language Police!

Sometimes it can feel like we are fighting injustice by fighting for less harmful language. But that may not always be the case. For example, many people choose to self-identify as alcoholics, despite the stigma often associated with the term. Language and preferences are always changing, too.

We suggest allowing for a broad range of terminology, and instead focusing on the *impact of our words* rather than our perception of what the words mean or our intentions. Using a term with respect has the best impact. And if you are told you have used a term someone does not identify with? Acknowledge the harm done, apologize, and use the person's preferred term moving forward. Give yourself (and others) grace.



MORE RESOURCES

- Schwabish, J. & Feng, A. (2021). [Do No Harm Guide: Applying Equity Awareness in Data Visualization](#)
- Thomas, H. & Hirsch, A. (2016). [A Progressive's Style Guide](#)

Strategy 3

Make content easy to find, understand, and use

'Accessibility' is a term used by able-bodied people in the dominant culture. It describes how they must change a design that works for them to fit someone who may be different. This is only necessary when the design was created without consideration for others. Just and equitable access allows all people to easily take in our message, without additional efforts that are distracting. The easier people can understand the point you are trying to make, the better they can learn. Our strategies go beyond simple accessibility to creating content that decenters the author and creates something for everyone to engage with as their authentic selves.

Create multilingual materials and spaces.

Non-English speakers are continually marginalized in the US. To have language justice, everyone should feel like they can speak and learn in the language in which they can best communicate their ideas. Our first step is to secure translation and interpretation services by those with appropriate qualifications. But accessibility goes beyond translation and interpretation. Everyone should take a role, from slowing speech to allowing time for interpretation. Accessing content should not be the job of minority language speakers.

Assume some readers have trouble seeing and set up your document so they can hear it.

In the US, 7% of the population has difficulty with their vision. Make your content better for them by setting up digital content for screen readers often required for government programs under 508 compliance. Add meaningful text alternatives for images and include informative page titles. Test color contrast so people with color blindness can read your content. This is not hard, but does take time, and is unfortunately ignored all too often. People with good eyesight can acknowledge their privilege and design for people with different abilities than themselves.

Strategy 3: Make Content Easy to Find, Understand, and Use

Use clear language to communicate with people, not at them.

Jargon is exclusionary language used to uphold existing power structures. Short sentences, active voice, and simple vocabulary invite more people to the ideas you are presenting. It allows them to translate those ideas to their own experiences, absorbing them more fully into their consciousness. One test is looking at the reading level of your content in Word or another app, like Hemingway. Keep in mind that the [average reading level of a native-born person in the U.S.](#) is roughly fifth grade.

Format documents for easy understanding.

Long blocks of text are daunting and difficult to digest for most people, no matter how great we as authors think they are. Make your main points stand out by using clear headings and breaking information into small, easy-to-understand sections. This uses human psychology to your benefit to communicate your message.

Speak to people where they are, how they expect it, and do it generously.

As evaluators, it is our responsibility to know what findings are relevant to whom, and to deliver it into the hands of those people. This is easier said than done! Different audiences want different content and have different expectations for what that content looks like. Adapt your communications for platforms where people are already talking. Talk to your audience to understand where that is, whether it's at informal in-person events, on social media, or in an interactive webinar with PowerPoint slides. This allows you to connect with people in their own communities and build a stronger connection. You may need to find new places to share your findings and find champions to promote it. You also may need to come to terms with the fact that some of the findings or details you are most proud of are not relevant or necessary to share with certain audiences.



MORE RESOURCES

- Communities Creating Healthy Environments. [Language Justice Toolkit](#)
- Colblindor. [Color Blindness Simulator](#)
- ADA Site Compliance (2021). [508 Compliance Checklist](#)
- Rivenburgh, K. (2019). [The PDF Accessibility Guide](#)
- AChecker. [Web Accessibility Checker](#)
- [Hemingway App](#)



HOT TIP!

Treat Your Audience Like They Pay You!

Whether you're accountable to a supervisor, client, or board, you would never share something with them that they couldn't read because it's in a different language. And you wouldn't give them content that uses words or images they find disrespectful. **Yet, this happens all the time with communities that are oppressed!**

Equitable communications allows people to engage with content in a way that speaks directly to them, is designed for them, and is respectful of their knowledge and experience. Shift your mindset by thinking about the people you are communicating with as if they're the one who signs your paycheck!



Guidepost 3

Center Marginalized People, Voices, and Experiences

Often, it is our voices as evaluators that tell the stories of people who are part of our evaluation, particularly the stories of people who are marginalized and the impact of that oppression. The most important thing we can do to ensure our communications are equitable is to use our power to amplify the voices of those people whose stories we are telling.

Strategy 1

Step aside so marginalized voices can be heard

When communicating equitably, the first and easiest step is to recognize when the message should not come from us. Messages are best received when they come from their source.

Give people from marginalized backgrounds the lead.

All too often, people from marginalized communities are learning about their experiences from people who do not share them. To avoid this, think about the message you are sharing. If the message came from the community, consider working with the community to find a speaker to carry the message forward. Choose messengers based on their proximity to the subject matter and take on a supportive role to their work.

Ask how people want to be recognized in your work.

In evaluation work, the usual practice is to keep everything anonymous. When we quote people, we often use fake names and remove any details that could identify them. This is important to protect the people whose stories we are telling, but sometimes it can further silence them and marginalize their experiences. When it is safe and ethical to do so, give people a choice about how they want their stories to be shared— with their own name, a pseudonym, by acknowledging their identity, or another

way. When it isn't possible to attribute their stories to them, explain why not and work together to come to a solution that allows them to feel heard and recognized for their contributions.

Be curious, listen, and observe.

When we find ourselves in a position where we are not from the communities whose stories we are telling, it is important that our communications accurately reflect their experiences. To do so, be curious! Listen to others as they talk about their experiences. By learning, listening, and paying attention, you will gain insight into the tone, language, and impact of their experiences to approach communications with sensitivity.

Maintain the emotional intensity of people's experiences.

Systemic oppression was and is harmful to communities of color and other marginalized groups. When people talk about their experiences, believe them. By recognizing the severity of the harms that they have experienced, we are better able to advocate with them.

Strategy 2

Compensate and share learnings with contributors

Much of what we know about different communities comes from people within those communities themselves. When we cannot step aside to foreground the voices of people who have been marginalized, we must give credit where it is due.

Compensate your contributors.

When working with people to share their stories, make sure that you get their permission to share, and pay them for their time. This includes those who are spending time sharing your findings. Compensation should include and extend beyond monetary contributions. When sharing your findings, you can provide non-monetary compensation in the form of food at events, child care during events, and transportation support to and from events. Make sure to demonstrate that contributors' time is valuable.

Direct your communications to audiences with lived experience.

When sharing findings, it is common to address decision-makers and other people with traditional power. However, the most affected communities, whose stories we are telling, can benefit as an audience, as well. In addition to benefiting from the learning from your evaluation, communities need stories of strength and resilience to free themselves from narratives of oppression that are common when speaking about communities that have been marginalized. We can also share anonymized datasets that communities can use to learn for themselves.



HOT TIP! Tokenization is real!

Create platforms to amplify those most affected by the work, not exploit them. Amplifying means providing genuine support and genuine care for their experiences. If you cannot communicate with true intentions, find another messenger. Revisit the self-reflection guidepost for some ideas on how to check yourself!

MORE RESOURCES

- Langness, M., et al (2023). [Equitable Compensation for Community Engagement Guidebook](#)
- Shiferaw, A. (2018). [How to Tell Compelling Stories while Avoiding Exploitation](#)

Guidepost 4

Use Anti-racist Narratives to Change Minds and Further Equity

We can use language and images to shift minds and behaviors towards more equitable practices. For decades, evaluations were used by those in power to perpetuate injustice. Evaluators contributed to the exploitation of communities and people of color and often gathered information without addressing the problems it revealed. Our communications can be a powerful tool to advocate for communities and disrupt a cycle of exploitation and injustice.

Strategy 1

Tell the whole, honest story

In a world where the silence surrounding race perpetuates systemic injustices, it is significant to address race head-on and connect it to systemic issues. By weaving stories within the broader context of systems and policies, we can navigate complexity without undermining democracy to inspire change.

Be explicit about race.

Silence can have the effect of ignoring the forms of racism in our society and results in Black, Brown, and Indigenous peoples' continued oppression. By speaking about race and connecting it to forms of systemic racism we can shine a light on the root cause of injustice we must face as a society. We suggest using specific language; instead of broadly using 'racism', try 'structural', 'cultural', and/or 'interpersonal racism'.

Talk about current and historical contexts and systems.

In our role as evaluators, we strive to address oppressive contexts and systems. Evaluation findings should not only inform programs and individuals, but also guide systemic change. To achieve this, contextualize your evaluation within broader political, economic, and social environments. This includes explaining impacts on different racial and ethnic groups and systemic

factors contributing to outcomes.

When forming recommendations, prioritize systemic interventions that promote opportunities and equitable outcomes for all, regardless of identity, ability, or language.

Tell stories that inspire.

Our brains are hard-wired to remember oppression, especially when it is experienced consistently. However, hope is connected to healing. This can be especially important for communities that have been marginalized, who are often subjected to oppressive narratives about them that ignore their strengths. For example, oppressive narratives about gun violence in Black communities often **ignore anti-violence efforts** by the Black people who live in those communities. Emphasizing solutions and modeling collective action can remind people of their power and be motivating for people to take part themselves.

HOT TIP!

Disaggregating is only the tip of the iceberg!

Collecting demographic data and disaggregating results is an important step towards equity in your evaluation. But it is only the tip of the iceberg! If your evaluation reveals outcome disparities, like lower test scores among English language learners than native English speakers, don't just report the data.

Analyze the reasons and include a systems lens! Some underlying causes might include language barriers or testing logistics. Examining even deeper systemic factors may even mean critiquing the test's relevance in measuring aptitude. In your recommendations, be sure to offer solutions that shift the system, rather than trying to fit the individual into an oppressive system.

Surface-level

There is a statistically significant difference in test scores between English learners and native English speakers.

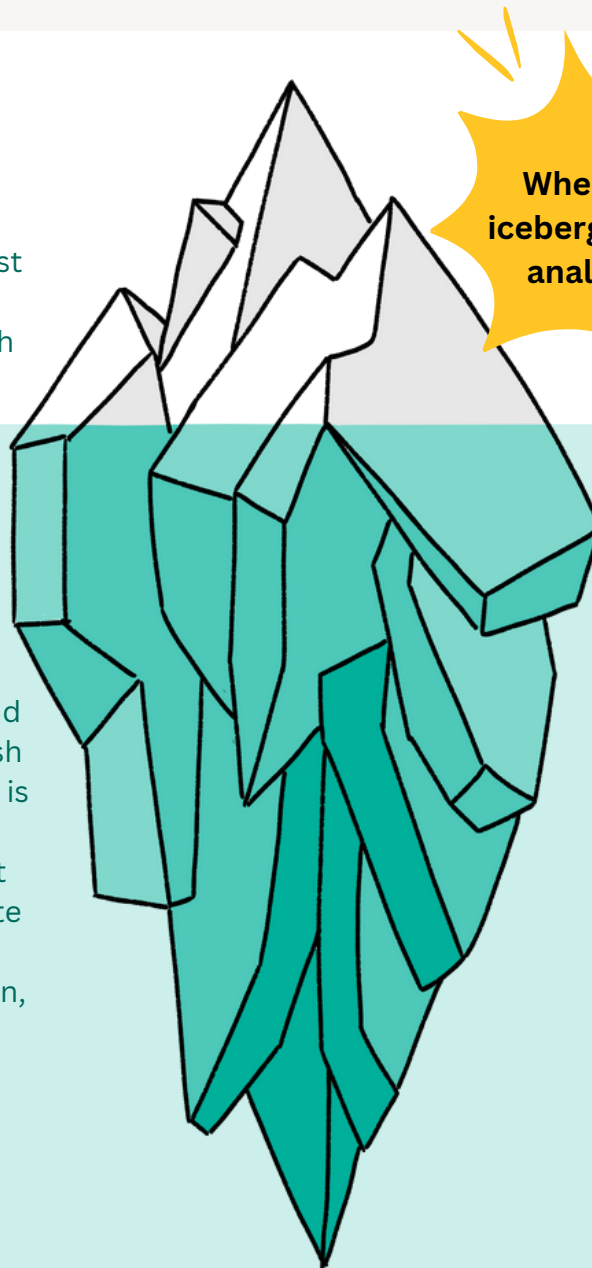
Deep Dive

Standardized tests don't capture student learning and growth, especially for English learners. The testing system is rooted in colonial, White supremacist, and capitalist structures. These perpetuate individualist ideas about meritocracy and competition, rather than fostering cooperation and an 'every child can learn' mindset.

Where on the iceberg does your analysis fall?

Below the Surface

Three factors contributed to this difference: lower parent English proficiency, fewer hours available for studying because of the need to work after school, and more school absence due to illness. These are connected to race, socioeconomic status, immigration status, and amount of time in the U.S.



Strategy 2

Create solidarity by finding common threads

Our communications can build momentum for a better world. We can do this by connecting stories to a collective vision and shared values, using our words to bring us together rather than divide us.

Lead with values and the vision of a better world.

People are more receptive to messages that are grounded in common values. We can give old values new context by showing how personal stories connect to them. This allows for multiple solutions while uniting everyone. Place the humanity and leadership of people who have been marginalized at the center of your work. That can look like images that position people of color as leaders or stories of agency of people with disabilities. Communicate the vision that the people whose stories you are telling want to see for themselves.

Be relatable without discounting our differences.

Showing how every person is affected by an issue can open more hopeful conversations and bring people together. Sometimes it can be hard to make this connection! For example, White people often do not see their Whiteness as an identity. They may fail to understand how race has

influenced their life outcomes. In our communications, we may be able to help people see the effects of systemic racism as more legitimate by comparing it to experiences they can more easily relate to, such as age or disability. Use your communications to share the variety of experiences of people in our country, allowing for multiple realities and disrupting the idea of the White experience as the norm.

MORE RESOURCES

- Building Movement Project, The Opportunity Agenda, Media Justice, & Public Works (2015). [Telling a New Story: A Collaborative Checklist for Social Justice Leaders Using Narrative Strategies for Change](#)
- Topos (2020). [Two Narrative Strategies: Engaging on Race](#)
- FrameWorks. [Toolkits on Reframing Social Issues](#)

Strategy 2: Create Solidarity by Finding Common Threads

Use messages to build alliances.

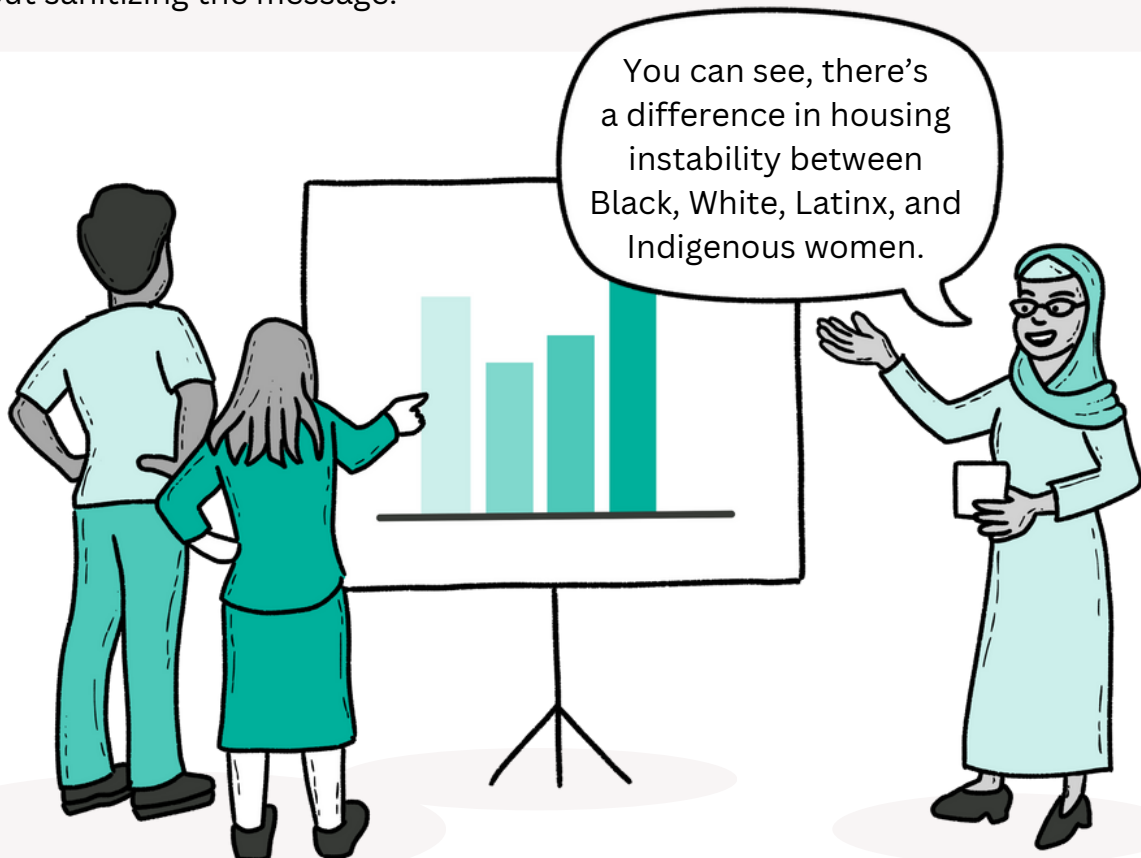
Consciously or unconsciously, people often use narratives that divide us and make it harder to work together for change. When used intentionally, this is called a ‘wedge strategy’. Often, communities that have been oppressed are pitted against each other, which ultimately benefits dominant groups. One example is the false narrative of Black and Asian communities competing for seats in

college admissions. This narrative drives a wedge between Black and Asian communities, rather than addressing the real problem of the unfair legacy advantages disproportionately available to White students. As an evaluator, consider how your message can be co-opted by your opposition. Be sure not to undermine the work of your partners, allies, and fellow community members, even when you must manage competing interests.

HOT TIP!

Equity is a politically charged word

Although this guide uses the word ‘equity’, this is a word more common among the social sector and progressives. As recently as 2020, [more people associated ‘equity’ with finances](#) than justice. Some conservative activists have mis-characterized the word as being anti-White. When communicating with the public, it may be best to choose language that describes the word ‘equity’ so it can be placed in context without sanitizing the message.



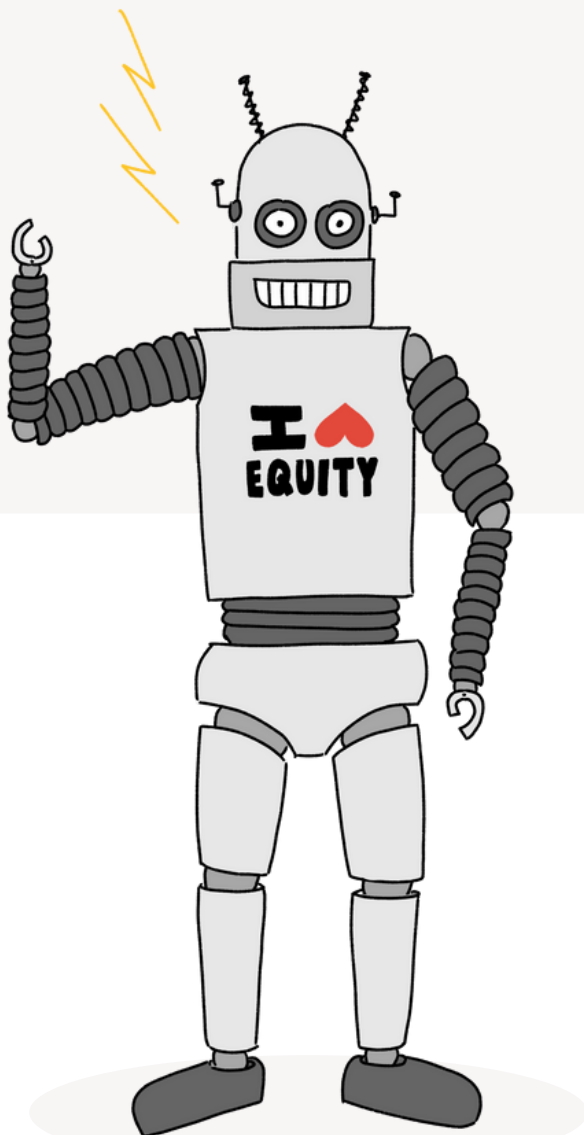
What's Next?



What's Next?

Communicating with AI and New Technologies

Recently, there has been exponential growth in new artificial intelligence tools. These can be useful for evaluators when preparing, designing, and distributing our communications! However, new technologies often have ethical 'bugs' that must be worked out. Be a conscious communicator by keeping an eye out for some of these common ones, and know how to mitigate them.



[Canva](#) is a web-based design platform that, recently, has integrated AI capabilities. We used it to design this guide! But, when we started to integrate principles of equitable communication, we found that Canva made the job harder. Like many new technologies, Canva is designed for an English-speaking, able-bodied audience. We had to take extra steps to insert alt text for images and other strategies necessary so people with limited eyesight can read the guide with a screen reader.

MORE RESOURCES

- Nicoletti, L. and Bass, D. (2023). [Humans are Biased. Generative AI is Even Worse](#)
- Lysy, C.. [Canva Accessibility is Bad, Here is How to Fix Your Design](#)
- Kantayya, S. (2020). [Coded Bias](#)

Communicating with AI and New Technologies

ETHICAL RISKS

Bias Amplification: AI tools like image generators don't just retain our biases, they can even make them worse. For instance, although women make up 39% of doctors, a study on [AI-generated images represented them as only 7%](#).

Exclusion: New technologies can make communications hard for some people to access. This can happen due to how tech is designed, or if we're using platforms that those with limited digital access can't use.

Fake content: Advanced AI can create convincing content that just isn't real. Just the existence of real-looking AI images can make it harder to communicate truth and be believed.

Lacking empathy and vision: Algorithm-based technologies like AI lack cultural humility and are stuck in the moment because of the historical data they are trained on. This can lead to outdated and incorrect information, offensive content, and less creativity and vision.

HOW TO ADDRESS THEM

Advocate for diverse and representative data: We know how biased data can affect our work. We can help by promoting better data to train algorithms and checking the bias of our tools the same way we check ourselves.

Try different ways to communicate: Sometimes we can do the work to make new technologies work for us so they are more accessible. Other times, we may need to find additional or alternative approaches to reach all people.

Verify information sources: Always validate your data, especially if you are using AI! You can educate people about how to recognize and verify reliable information.

Assert your humanity: While new technology is exciting, it cannot replace you. Have a caring human check all messages, and cheer for each other's fresh ideas as we create a world only we can dream of.

We're not just using tech, we're improving it! Despite challenges, we can shape an equitable digital communication world. As case in point: we were able to overcome the limitations of AI to improve accessibility of this guide. We even tapped into the great communication power of the [Hemingway App](#) and [ChatGPT](#) to help make the language in this guide more direct. We can navigate the complexities of AI and new technologies while keeping communications a strong force for positive change.

What's Next?

Call to Action

We hope this guide has helped you think about how to communicate your evaluation findings more equitably! As you begin (or continue) your journey, you have some strong tools to get started, and we hope that you are ready and eager to do so. You are well-positioned as an evaluator to lead this charge. Here are a few final tips for taking this work forward and shifting evaluation communications beyond your own work.

1 Educate yourself and others on equitable communications.

If you're reading this guide, you're off to a great start! New resources, like this guide and Urban Institute's [Do No Harm series](#) are becoming available. Continue to learn about what it means to communicate findings equitably and share these resources with fellow evaluators.

2 Advocate for equitable communications.

As an evaluator, you can help project leads and funders understand that communications beyond reports are essential. Ask to allocate money and time for communications efforts from the beginning. Encourage them to adopt a learning mindset and create space for experimentation, accepting the risk that evaluators take on when communicating their findings in new ways that challenge traditional approaches and mindsets.

3 Be brave in advocating for the people who contributed to your evaluation.

Our findings often surface important challenges, and feedback on reports can be a proxy for harder conversations about values. In our practice, we've received feedback about topics and words we can and cannot use in our reports—things like race and racism, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and more. However, what may seem like innocuous copyedits can reveal deep debates about the program's true purpose. As evaluators, we may need to work with people who are not ready for conversations about inequity and differences that we identify in our data. Being the bearer of new information can be risky. We

encourage you to take those risks and be an advocate for the people whose stories are embedded in your report.

4 Adopt a learning mindset and start where you can.

Be kind to yourself! We are all learning how to incorporate equity into every phase of our evaluations. Incorporating equity into communications is also new. We are all learning and growing, and we recognize that each person starts with different knowledge and resources. If you are new to thinking about equity or if you work in a less friendly setting, start small. If you can experiment and push equity in communications, share what you learn so we all improve!

This is important and valuable work! In embracing equitable communications, we educate ourselves and advocate for better practices, taking risks to amplify the voices of those who lend them through our evaluations. As we adopt a learning mindset and share our experiences, together we can improve our communications so that everyone can contribute to and access shared knowledge. **We invite you to join us in trying out equitable communications practices and continuing to learn with us how to do it well.**

Looking back at my presentation about the advocacy group's policy wins, I realized the graph wasn't enough to tell the story. I wanted others to understand the important relationship-building work that drove their advocacy efforts this year. I found a direct quote that seemed to capture the excitement I felt from the advocates, and I placed it more prominently than the graph.

I planned to share the new design with advocates before we presented it together to their funder. If they saw themselves in the presentation, I would feel confident I did their story justice.

EnACT! Stories of Success

"This was the best year yet: community leaders joined our efforts and are pointing to new policy solutions we hadn't thought of before."

EnACT! Community Advocate

3 Pillars of Advocacy

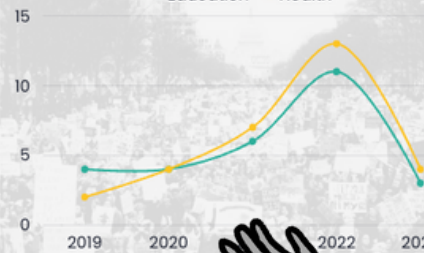
Strengthen Relationships

Knowledge

Amplifying Voice

EnACT! Policy Wins

Education Health



Bibliography

Check out our rad resources!

Introduction

- **Okun, T. (2021).** Worship of the Written Word. White Supremacy Culture. <https://www.whitesupremacyculture.info/worship-of-written-word.html>

What is Equitable Communications?

- **Dean-Coffee, J., and Cone, M. (2023).** The Equitable Evaluation Framework May 2023 Expansion. Equitable Evaluation Initiative. https://www.equitableeval.org/_files/ugd/21786c_aab47695b0d2476d8de5d32f19bd6df9.pdf
- **Krause, H. (n.d.).** The Data Equity Framework. We All Count. <https://weallcount.com/the-data-process/>
- **Mack, K. & Palfrey, J. (2020, August 26).** Capitalizing Black and White: Grammatical Justice and Equity. MacArthur Foundation. <https://www.macfound.org/press/perspectives/capitalizing-black-and-white-grammatical-justice-and-equity>
- **Rosga, A., Stanton, C., Chomsky, I., and Shin, D. (2022).** Data Ethics Guidebook Cultivating an ethical mindset in research & evaluation. Informing Change. <https://informingchange.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/FINAL-data-ethics-guidebook.pdf>
- **Schwabish, J. & Feng, A. (2021).** Do No Harm Guide: Applying Equity Awareness in Data Visualization. Urban Institute. <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/do-no-harm-guide-applying-equity-awareness-data-visualization>

Communications 101

- **Asibey, E., Parras, T., and van Fleet, J. (2017).** Are We There Yet? A Communications Evaluation Guide. Asibey Consulting. <https://www.luminafoundation.org/files/resources/arewethereyet.pdf>

- **Fisher-Rowe, J. (2019).** Vision, Values, and Voice: A Communications Toolkit. The Opportunity Agenda. <https://opportunityagenda.org/our-tools/communications-toolkit/>
- **O’Neil, G. (n.d.)** A Guide: Integrating Communication in Evaluation. Wise Research & Evaluation. https://www.owlre.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/A_guide_integrating_communication_in_evaluation_FINAL.pdf
- **Pell Institute and Pathways to College Network (2017).** Develop a Communications Plan. <http://toolkit.pellinstitute.org/evaluation-guide/communicate-improve/develop-a-communications-plan/>

Guidepost 1: Develop a Practice of Self-Reflection

- **A. J. Bahns, L. S. Springer, C.** The. Fostering diverse friendships: The role of beliefs about the value of diversity. Group Processes & Intergroup Relations, 2015; DOI: 10.1177/1368430214566893
- **Acton, C. (2022, February 4).** Are you aware of your biases? Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2022/02/are-you-aware-of-your-biases>
- **Aronson, J., Burgess, D., Phelan, S. M., & Juarez, L. (2013).** Unhealthy interactions: the role of stereotype threat in health disparities. American journal of public health, 103(1), 50–56. <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2012.300828>
- **Dibinga, O. and Dyson, M.E. (2023).** Lies About Black People: How to Combat Racist Stereotypes and Why It Matters. Prometheus.
- **Moon, T.R. (2011).** Implicit Association Test. Project Implicit. <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>
- **Myers, V. (2013).** What if I say the wrong thing? 25 Habits for Culturally Effective People. American Bar Association.
- **Myers, V. (2014).** How to Overcome Our Biases? Walk Boldly Toward Them. https://www.ted.com/talks/verna_myers_how_to_overcome_our_biases_walk_boldly_toward_them?language=en

- **The National Museum of African American History and Culture (2023).** Talking about Race. <https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/topics/social-identities-and-systems-oppression>
- **Oluo, I. (2018).** So You Want to Talk About Race.
- **Tatum, B. (2003).** Why are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? And Other Conversations About Race. Basic Books.
- **University of Arizona Global Campus. (2021, December 8).** Tips & Advice: How to Experience Other Cultures When You Can't Travel. <https://www.uagc.edu/blog/how-to-experience-other-cultures-when-you-cant-travel>
- **University Communications. (n.d.)** Inclusive Communications Guide. University of Wisconsin-Madison. <https://uc.wisc.edu/inclusive-communications-guide/>

Guidepost 2: Treat Others How They Want to be Treated

- **Accessibility Conformance Checklists. (2022, September 15).** U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Retrieved September 21, 2023, from <https://www.hhs.gov/web/section-508/accessibility-checklists/index.html>
- **Arguelles, P., Williams, S., and Hemley-Bronstei, A. (2012).** Language Justice Toolkit Multilingual Strategies for Community Organizing. Communities Creating Healthy Environments. https://nesfp.org/sites/default/files/resources/language_justice_toolkit.pdf
- **Colorblindness Simulator. (n.d.).** Colblindor. Retrieved September 21, 2023, from <https://www.color-blindness.com/coblis-color-blindness-simulator/>
- **Disability Language Style Guide (2021).** National Center on Disability and Journalism. Retrieved August 22, 2023, from <https://ncdj.org/style-guide/>
- **First Nations and Indigenous Studies Program (2021).** Indigenous Peoples: Language Guidelines. The University of British Columbia. http://assets.brand.ubc.ca/downloads/ubc_indigenous_peoples_language_guide.pdf

- **Gender Queeries (n.d.).** Tumblr. Retrieved September 22, 2023, from <https://genderqueeries.tumblr.com/titles>
- **GLAAD Media Reference Guide – 11th Edition (n.d.)** GLAAD. Retrieved September 22, 2023, from <https://glaad.org/reference>
- **Grim, E. (2021).** Words Matter: Adopting Inclusive and Non-Violent Language in Our Work. Elizabeth Grim Consulting. <https://elizabethgrim.com/resources/words-matter/>
- **Humphreys, K. (2023).** The Burden of Proof Is on the Language Police. The Atlantic. <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2023/08/addiction-drug-policy-language-harm-evidence/674907/>
- **International Organization for Adolescents. (2018).** Trauma-Informed Language to Use When Working With Survivors of Youth Sex Trafficking. <https://iofa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/IOFA-Trauma-Informed-Language.pdf>
- **Lundebjerg, N.E., Trucil, D.E., Hammond, E.C., and Applegate, W.B. (2017).** When it comes to older adults, language matters. Journal of the American Geriatrics Society. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jgs.14941>
- **Park, A. (2020).** Is it “folx” (now) instead of “folks”? Blink Consulting. Retrieved on August 22, 2023, from <https://rethinkingdiversity.wordpress.com/2020/10/23/is-it-folx-now-instead-of-folks/>
- **Research and Training Center on Independent Living (2020).** Guidelines: How To Write About People with Disabilities (9th edition). University of Kansas. <https://rtcil.org/guidelines>
- **Rivenburg, K. (2019, June 17).** The PDF Accessibility Guide: How to Make Your Portable Documents Accessible. Medium. <https://krisrivenburgh.medium.com/the-pdf-accessibility-guide-how-to-make-your-portable-documents-accessible-6e77a21a098f>
- **Thomas, H. & Hirsch, A. (2016.)** A Progressive’s Style Guide. Sum of Us. https://s3.amazonaws.com/s3.sumofus.org/images/SUMOFUS_PROGRESSIVE-STYLEGUIDE.pdf

- **Victoria State Government. (n.d.)** Communicating with people with Trauma Related Disorders. <https://www.judicialcollege.vic.edu.au/resources/communicating-people-trauma-related-disorders>

Guidepost 3: Center marginalized people, voices, and experiences

- **Flaxman AD, Wittenborn JS, Robalik T, et al. (2021).** Prevalence of Visual Acuity Loss or Blindness in the US: A Bayesian Meta-analysis. JAMA Ophthalmol. <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamaophthalmology/fullarticle/2779910>
- **Langness, M., Morgan, J.W., Cedano, S., Falkenburger, E. (2023, August 23).** Equitable Compensation for Community Engagement Guidebook. Urban Institute. <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/equitable-compensation-community-engagement-guidebook>
- **Mennonite Mission Network (2010).** Shared Voices: Mennonite Mission Network guidelines for anti-racism and anti-sexism communication https://www.franconiaconference.org/media-uploads/pdf/SharedVoices10-239_Download.pdf
- **Nwangwu, N.C. (2023, April 24).** Why We Should Stop Saying “Underrepresented”. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2023/04/why-we-should-stop-saying-underrepresented>
- **Shiferaw, A. (2018, August 4).** How to tell compelling stories while avoiding exploitation. Rainier Valley Corps. <https://rvcseattle.org/2018/04/04/tell-compelling-stories-avoiding-savior-complex-exploitation/>
- **U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), U.S. PIAAC 2017, U.S. PIAAC 2012/2014.** https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/piaac/national_results.asp

Guidepost 4 : Use Anti-Racist Narratives to Change Minds and Further Equity

- **Archer, N. (2021)** What is equity-based communications, and why does it matter? Dh. <https://wearedh.com/what-is-equity-based-communications-and-why-does-it-matter/>

- **On Message: Using Strategic Communications to Advance Social Change in Black and Latino Communities (2020).** Association of Black Foundation Executives & Hispanics in Philanthropy. https://mediajustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/On_Message_Full_Report.pdf
- **Quiroz, J., Soriano, J., Schmieder, K., and Bazant, M. (2020).** Echoing Justice: Communications strategies for community organizing in the 21st century (2020). <https://mediajustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Echoing-Justice-7.pdf>
- **Racial Equity in Public Policy Message Guide. (2021).** Voices for Healthy Kids. Retrieved on October 03, 2023 from https://voicesforhealthykids.org/assets/resources/vhk_raceequitymessageguide_feb252021-1614277588.pdf
- **Telling a New Story: A Collaborative Checklist for Social Justice Leaders Using Narrative Strategies for Change (2015).** <https://mediajustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/2015-08-Narrative-Checklist-FINAL.pdf>
- **Two Narrative Strategies: Engaging on Race. (2020).** Topos. <https://www.topospartnership.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Two-Narrative-Strategies-for-Engaging-on-Race-May-2020.pdf>

Communicating with AI and New Technologies

- **ChatGPT. (2023, August 18).** Please help me understand the risks of new technologies to communicating equitably. Please list the top five ways that communicators can mitigate these risks. <https://chat.openai.com/>
- **Kantayya, S. (Director). (2021).** Coded Bias [Motion Picture]. United States: 7th Empire Media.
- **Lysy, C. (n.d.).** Canva Accessibility is bad, here is how you fix your design. Fresh Spectrum. <https://freshspectrum.com/canva-accessibility/>
- **Nicoletti, L. and Bass, D. (2023).** Humans are Biased. Generative AI Is Even Worse. Bloomberg. <https://www.bloomberg.com/graphics/2023-generative-ai-bias/>

Additional References

- **American Medical Association and Association of American Medical Colleges. (2021).** Advancing Health Equity: Guide on Language, Narrative and Concepts. ama-assn.org/equity-guide
- **Armenta, B.E. (2010).** Stereotype Boost and Stereotype Threat Effects: The Moderating Role of Ethnic Identification. University of Nebraska–Lincoln. 500. <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=http://scholar.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1499&context=psychfacpub>
- **Crenshaw, K. (2016, December 7).** The urgency of intersectionality [Video file]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=akOe5-UsQ2o&t=22s>
- **Ennis, J., Sherratt, E., Barbour, C., et al. (2015).** The Equitable Access Implementation Playbook Communication Guidebook. American Institutes for Research. https://gtlcenter.org/sites/default/files/Communication_Guidebook.pdf
- **Gross, E. (2020, March 11).** Equitable Research Communication Guidelines. Child Trends. <https://www.childtrends.org/publications/equitable-research-communication-guidelines>
- **Health Equity Guiding Principles for Inclusive Communication. (2023, August 11).** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved on October 3, 2023 from https://www.cdc.gov/healthcommunication/Health_Equity.html.
- **Houghton, Frank & Houghton, Sharon. (2018).** “Blacklists” and “whitelists”: a salutary warning concerning the prevalence of racist language in discussions of predatory publishing. Journal of the Medical Library Association : JMLA. 106. 527-530. 10.5195/jmla.2018.490.
- **How You Write Is as Important as What You Say: A Guide to Trauma-informed Writing. (2014).** National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma & Mental Health. <https://ncdvtmh.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/NCDVTMH-TI-Writing-Guide-FINAL-Aug27.pdf>

- **Identifying Inclusive Communication Methods to Share Health Equity Work. (n.d.)** Rural Health Information Hub. Retrieved on October 03, 2023 from <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/toolkits/health-equity/7/inclusive-communication-methods>
- **Kazer, L., Carter, Z., Shipton, C., and Dickson, E. (2021, October 13).** How to Build an Equitable Communications Practice. Medium. <https://medium.com/rallybrain/how-to-build-an-equitable-communications-practice-4b87a398389f>
- **Magee, J., Gurule, S., Echo-Hawk, A., and Pepion, J.I. (2023).** Decolonizing Data. Urban Indian Health Institute. https://www.uihi.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/UIHI-TextOnly_Pocketbook-final_screen.pdf
- **McGuire, R. (2021).** Equitable Language and Reframing: How We Think About Writing and Editing to Support Equity. Every Learner Everywhere. <https://www.everylearnereverywhere.org/blog/equitable-language-and-reframing-how-we-think-about-writing-and-editing-to-support-equity/>
- **Parekh, J., Andrews, K., Lloyd, C.M., and Gross, E. (2021, October 28).** Advancing Racial Equity Through Research & Community Engaged Methods. [Conference presentation]. OPRE Innovative Methods Meeting, Virtual. https://opremethodsmeeting.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Tools-and-Supports_Pt2_ChildTrends_Parekh-Lloyd-Gross_Andrews.pdf
- **Race Reporting Guide. (2015).** Race Forward. https://www.raceforward.org/sites/default/files/Race%20Reporting%20Guide%20by%20Race%20Forward_V1.1.pdf
- **Racial Equity in Public Policy Message Guide. (2021).** Voices for Healthy Kids. https://voicesforhealthykids.org/assets/resources/vhk_raceequitymessageguide_feb252021-1614277588.pdf
- **Stamoulis, E. (n.d.)** The Power of Equitable Design (And 3 Tips to Become a More Inclusive Communicator. Mission Partners. <https://mission.partners/theintersection/power-of-equitable-design/>

- **Sweetland, J. (2023, January 31).** Talking About Racism in Child and Family Advocacy. Frameworks. <https://www.frameworksinstitute.org/publication/talking-about-racism-in-child-and-family-advocacy/>
- **Taylor, S.L, and Lurie, N. (2004).** The Role of Culturally Competent Communication in Reducing Ethnic and Racial Healthcare Disparities. AJMC. 10(SP1-SP4). https://cdn.sanity.io/files/Ovv8moc6/ajmc/28a2d163be140948a7be8b322619b55971048b9f.pdf/A100_04sepSPCL_TaylorSP1_4.pdf
- **Tips on Equitable Communication. (2023, January 11).** Office of the Assistance Secretary for Planning and Evaluation. <https://aspe.hhs.gov/reports/tips-equitable-communication>
- **Tools for Equitable Communication. (n.d.)** National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster. <https://www.nvoad.org/wp-content/uploads/Tools-for-Equitable-Communication-1.pdf>
- **Torres, A., Guerra, L., Caal, S., and Weilin, L. (2016).** Reaching and Engaging with Hispanic Communities. Child Trends. <https://cms.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/2016-51LatinoCommunicationsGuide.pdf>
- **Vu, L. (2019, August 19).** Content creators, here's an Equity Screen to use as you work on your next blog post, book, podcast, or video. Nonprofit AF. <https://nonprofitaf.com/2019/08/content-creators-heres-an-equity-screen-to-use-as-you-work-on-your-next-blog-post-book-podcast-or-video/>