

## GUIDELINES FOR DELIVERING GENDER- AND CULTURALLY INCLUSIVE SESSIONS

ASTD is especially fortunate to have such a rich and diverse audience attend the TechKnowledge® / International Conference. This information will help you be more cognizant of potential gender and cultural sensitivities in your audience. Please consider these when planning and delivering your session.

- **Concentrate on speaking slowly and clearly.** The American accent can be difficult to understand for individuals who speak English as a second language.
- **Acronyms create confusion.** What is easily pronounced or understood in English may not make any sense in another language. Please avoid the excessive use of acronyms and other abbreviations whenever possible.
- **Introduce panel members and other speakers equitably.** When John Doe and Towanda Noguchi are on the panel, use titles such as Ms., Doctor, Professor, and Mr. for both or neither unless you have asked their personal preferences beforehand and they are contrary to this rule. Do not refer to him as *Doe* and her as *Towanda*.
- **Use visuals as often as possible.** Slides, transparencies, graphics, and pictures will make it easier for those from other countries to understand your material. Avoid pictures or scenarios that may be inappropriate. Avoid gender and racial stereotyping in handouts and visual aids.
- **Eliminate Genderspeak™ from handouts, titles, and topics.** Genderspeak is defined as *language that is gender-specific and thereby exclusionary*. Terms include *Chairman of the Board, Salesmen, Mailman*. Replace with *Board Chair* (or the plural *chairpeople*), *Sales Representatives, Mail Carrier*. This should be done even if the group about whom you're speaking is composed solely of men.
- **Use appropriate gender-identifiers.** Refer to adults as men and women to show respect. The terms *lady* and *gentleman* are subjective and effectively used in a traditional greeting/opening. Refer thereafter to *men* and *women*. The terms *male* and *female* should be used as adjectives only, as in *female pilot* and *male engineer*. It is inappropriate to use these terms as nouns (as in "*we have two females in the sales department*"). Such usage is perceived as dehumanizing.
- **Eliminate "sex" from your vocabulary when referring to gender.** Substitute the term *gender* for *sex*, *gender bias* for *sexism*, *other gender* for *opposite sex*.
- **Give parity in feedback to men and women who comment during the session.** Studies show that feedback given to men and boys in American culture is 2-1/2 to 3 times lengthier than that given to women and girls.
- **Use men and women equally as assistants.** When help is needed distributing materials or otherwise assisting your presentation, include all groups.
- **Humor is potentially dangerous.** Humor can leave the attendee confused or insulted. Avoid jokes that are gender-biased.

Tips provided by ASTD's Women's Network. Developed by Kate Butler at [ahaNation.com](http://ahaNation.com).