



# Guideline for gender equality and Inclusive language in the workplace

#ÖzdeEşitSözdeEşit

## Language is the expression of what we think



We believe that diversity in the workplace can contribute to a creative and productive working environment. For this reason, we endeavour to help spread awareness on increasing the visibility of women, who represent half of the population, in business, as well as support their equal participation in decision-making mechanisms, the economy and society.

Oyak Renault's inclusive corporate culture provides a heterogeneous workforce and working environment that values diversity and creativity.

For us, the process of enabling all Oyak Renault employees to express themselves freely in an equal, fair and respectful environment and placing a culture of inclusion at the core of our business begins with the language we use.

Language is an indicator of how one thinks. This guidebook, a joint effort by the **Oyak Renault HR Department and Women@Renault** working group, will drive our efforts to continue growing free from discriminative language and prejudice.

## Our goals



Spread awareness about gender and promote attentive use of language

Reduce the impact of gender stereotypes on language



Support a unifying, egalitarian and diverse workplace

Reinforce the OYAK-RENAULT culture by raising awareness in our communications and actions



Make OYAK-RENAULT a more attractive employer for women

## Change starts with language we use



## We are equal and distinct



**Biological sex** is assigned at birth and is the same for everyone across the globe; it is generally used to describe physical characteristics associated with a sex. Biological sex is represented by physiological and hormonal differences that distinguish males and females. Biological/physiological characteristics are the same for every member of a sex.

**Gender** is the term used to describe learned beliefs and convictions about women and men that are not based on biological characteristics. These beliefs and convictions vary by culture.

While society's characterization of women and men is prone to yield different definitions, the commonly held gender beliefs are that women are more sensitive and delicate, while men are stronger, more active and protective.

### WHAT IS BIOLOGICAL SEX?

Sex is the biological and physiological characteristics that female and male individuals exhibit from birth.

Sex is universal, and does not vary by society.



### WHAT IS GENDER?

Gender is a collection of the expectations, beliefs and convictions in a society pertaining to a particular sex.

Gender has no biological basis; it is learned as part of culture.

The definition of gender varies by society.

As such, it cannot be proven right or wrong.

Most importantly, it is subject to change.

## How does gender develop?



Beginning from early childhood, we are raised in line with the gender norms assigned by the society and culture we live in. We are born with slight differences, yet our upbringing differs greatly. We even name our new-borns in accordance with gender expectations. Boys are given masculine names like “Sarp” (Tough), “Yavuz” (Strong), while girls are given such names as «Nazlı” (Delicate) and “Melek” (Angel). Even innocent-looking toys for infants or children serve to reinforce the gender characteristics. Girls are given dolls and cooking appliances as toys, while boys are given cars or guns.

Furthermore, guided by cultural codes, we react differently to children’s feelings as we raise them. Our reaction to children who are upset changes based on their gender: girls are allowed to be “sensitive” while boys are told that “men don’t cry”.

This distinction, that begins in early childhood, persists well into adolescence and beyond. And it continues in adulthood as they are pushed by society into the moulds of mother-father. This only serves to perpetuate the gender roles assigned by society. Yet, it is possible to break this cycle. But how?

## HOW DO WE BREAK THIS CYCLE?

- By questioning our own beliefs and attitudes towards gender equality, and serving as role models as parents by equally sharing childcare responsibility.
- By paying attention to the things we watch and the products we buy to ensure that they perpetuate gender beliefs and convictions. Toys have no gender: Boys can play with dolls, and girls can play with cars.
- By assigning responsibility to children based not on their sex, but their age. For instance, helping with household chores is not the exclusive responsibility of girls.
- By voicing our concern when we encounter a situation that creates inequality. In such cases, we can politely warn the person responsible for the situation.
- By allowing children to select their own topics at school, as well as their career, based on their interests and skills.





Today we spend most of our time at work and our workplace stands out as one of the key areas for consolidating gender roles.

## Gender of Professions

Society regards certain professions as more suitable for women and men respectively, and even considers these a “woman’s job” or a “man’s job”. In instances such professions are practiced by a member of the opposite gender, this is given special emphasis in communication, for instance, “male nurse», «female CEO”. These statements create the perception that certain career roles are expected from a specific gender. On the contrary, each individual has the potential to succeed in the career of their choosing, based on their talents and aspirations.

## Discrimination at Work

Discrimination in the workplace may be readily apparent at certain times or hidden behind seemingly innocent or unintentional behaviour or words to others. For instance, cutting and serving the cake at a birthday event or taking meeting minutes are but some of the tasks usually expected of women.

Another aspect of gender discrimination at work relates to work-life balance. As household chores or child-rearing duties are generally considered the woman’s responsibility in Turkish society, female employees find themselves with demands from both home and work. As a result, they experience difficulty attending work-related activities outside business hours and feel marginalized. For this reason, responsibilities at home must be shared equally by the partners.

## Positive Discrimination

Positive discrimination, or affirmative action, refers to a range of **temporary** measures designed to favour individuals belonging to groups known to have been discriminated against previously. It is implemented to protect the rights of such groups until equality is established. Female quotas in politics are an example of positive discrimination.

Positive discrimination in business involves favouring women when selecting between women and men candidates of equal knowledge, skills and experience.

## How do female professionals perceive the automotive industry?



Women constitute roughly half of the population in Turkey, yet their participation in the labour force is significantly lower than that of men. According to 2019 TurkStat data, the labour force participation rate of women in Turkey is 29%, compared to 65% for men. 14% of female professionals work in the industry. The percentage of white-collar workers in the automotive industry is 25%.

A study “Women in Turkish Automotive Industry” by Deloitte and the Automotive Industry Association (OSD) has revealed that female professionals do not pursue a career in the automotive industry because it is perceived as **male-dominated** and **lacking work-life balance** or **adequate career opportunities**.

These findings parallel results from surveys conducted on university students and young professionals. According to the results of the “Ideal Employer Survey”, which was conducted by Universum in 2019 with around 65,000 participants, Oyak Renault is ranked 43rd by men compared to 67th by women, despite having moved up 35 spots in the ranking compared to 2018.

## Why is female employment essential?

Women are an important enabler for the future of the automotive industry. Attracting female talent is a must for solving the issue of “talent crisis” in the industry. As such, increasing female employment is a formidable, yet crucial challenge for the automotive industry.

Beyond the acquisition of new talent, the employment of women is an important contributor to business performance, as proven by various studies and indicators.

Fortune 500 companies with higher ratio of female employees and directors report 34% higher total revenues.

Similarly, the “Women in the Automotive Industry” study by Deloitte and OSD has revealed that women in the labour force correlate to better decision-making, corporate governance and financial performance.

According to a YASED report titled “Practices and Suggestions to Increase Representation of Women in Senior Management”, financial performance of companies with a better gender balance outperforms the sector average by 15%.



## Equality in language



Language plays the most important role in establishing and reinforcing gender roles. Careful choice of words is a significant step towards ensuring gender equality in society. In this section, we will address some common examples of discriminatory words.

### Why “Woman” rather than “Lady”?

The word “lady” represents one of the most common examples of sexism in language. The common explanation for the use of “lady” in lieu of “woman” is that it is a polite alternative and there is no ulterior motive behind this choice of word. Yet, it begs the question why the word “woman” is considered inappropriate or rude in the first place. In the Turkish language, the word “bayan”, which translates to “lady”, was proposed due to the perceived negative connotations of “woman”. You can support gender-fair language by using “woman” instead of “lady” in situations where “man” is the appropriate choice for the opposite sex.

### Girl/Woman - Boy/Man

The words woman and man refer to sexes. Girl and boy denote female and male children, respectively. These should not be used to indicate a person’s marital status.

Expressions such as “I don’t know if she’s a girl or a woman”, “the boy’s become a man now” are unacceptable.

### Human ≠ Man

Expressions that use the word man to refer to all human beings, are to be avoided.

- Use businessperson instead of businessman
- Use labour force instead of manpower
- Use toughen up instead of man up
- Use humanity instead of mankind
- Use fair play instead of sportsmanship

### Abi and Abla

“Abi”, the Turkish word for one’s older brother, is a common way for men to address their male colleagues in the workplace. This enables men to form a more cordial connection, despite any difference in position in the company’s hierarchy. As women do not have the benefit of a similar word for addressing their female peers, this creates a gender inequality in the workplace, and marginalizes women.

### Discriminatory language based on biological and physiological characteristics

Questions such as «Don’t you think it is time for you to have children?» or “Are you pregnant, or did you put on some weight?” that make assumptions about a person’s physical features should be avoided.

Hormonal changes of your colleagues should not be associated with their behaviour or performance via questions such as “Are you having your period?”

### Sexist sayings and idioms

There are many common sayings and idioms ingrained in our language that reinforce gender inequality, even when used unintentionally. The Turkish language has a plethora of idioms, and it is recommended to select non-discriminatory and non-sexist alternatives instead of discriminatory and sexist idioms such as the ones below:

- Do not attempt to do a man’s job with dough on your hands
- Spare the rod, spoil the daughter
- Giggle / prance like a girl
- Behind every successful man is a woman
- Like mother like daughter
- Females
- Mommy’s boy
- Plucky girl
- Women are like flowers
- Manly woman



## Equality in behaviour



- It is not exclusively the women's job in the office to serve coffee.
- Your male colleagues can be just as competent in the kitchen as your female colleagues, so do not underestimate their skills.
- Avoid preconceived notions that it is always the man's, and never the woman's responsibility to pay for the bill at a dinner party.
- Do not assume that a speeding car is being driven by a man, or a slow-moving car is driven by a woman.
- Ask your female colleagues' opinion as well while planning a social event to form a consensus.
- Do not ask a female colleague who is back from maternity leave "How was the vacation?"
- Do not assume that a group of women only gossip, or a group of men only talk about football.



Behaviour and expectations are another important factor in forming and reinforcing gender characteristics. Gender equality can only be achieved by being mindful of the gender roles attributed to women and men and preventing these from shaping our expectations. For instance:





## Awareness and attention

- I allow my children to select their own topics at school, as well as their career, based on their interests and skills.
- I use either “madam” and/or “woman” where appropriate, instead of “lady”.
- I use gender-neutral expressions, such as “labour force” instead of “manpower”, or “humanity” instead of “mankind».
- I warn my colleagues against the use of sexist and discriminatory language.
- I do not assume certain professions to be specific to men or women and believe that everyone can succeed in their career of choice.
- I prefer gender-neutral alternatives instead of discriminatory or sexist idioms.
- I believe that household chores should be shared equally by both genders.
- I do not use the term “abi” when addressing male colleagues, as it might marginalize female colleagues.
- I do not ask female colleagues alone when it comes to cutting and serving the cake at a birthday event or taking meeting minutes.
- I do not assume a fast driver is a man or a slow driver is a woman.
- I do not assume that a group of women only gossip, or a group of men only talk about football.
- I do not ask a female colleague who is back from maternity leave “How was the vacation?”
- I do not associate changes in my female colleagues’ performance or mood to biological or hormonal factors.



## Self-assessment points

0-15 Point	16-35 Point	36-48 Point
Continue to follow the #ÖzdeEşitSözdeEşit hashtag to raise your awareness about gender equality.	You are aware of gender equality. How about having a little chat with your friends to increase your awareness and become a gender equality ambassador?	You are already a gender equality ambassador, congratulations. Keep inspiring



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