

Words to phase out (and add in)

"You keep using that word. I do not think it means what you think it means."

Inigo Montoya – *The Princess Bride*

Language is a powerful tool; one that should be used purposefully and with care. Often, we speak emphatically and forget the weight of our words, or we simply don't realize the context our language can create. The following is a list of words to consider using and not using. One need not **always** use (or not use) the following words, but should develop a greater awareness of words' power.

The progression of how we label countries:

Third world country -> Developing country -> Emerging market

Absolutes: Never and always

Absolutes can result in pigeonholing. If you claim that Donald Trump will **never** be President, you could be setting yourself up for failure, and you could end up looking silly.

Descriptors that create and take away power:

Something about calling yourself poor... there is power in naming your condition, and in claiming to be something, you are not that thing... I don't know how to say that, though.

Cultural words:

This is a difficult one, because there are many words we use to describe other cultures or to describe historic cultures. People used to (and some still do) use the words "savage" and "barbaric" to describe a person who was less modern than themselves (even the word modern has a context: it means that other people are "less modern"). That word is now considered pretty darn offensive, but what do we replace it with? The International Folk Art Alliance uses the words "traditional," "ancestral," and "indigenous," to describe people and the methods by which they create artwork. All of these words have their own connotation, and it is important to be aware of this when we use these words to describe others.

Return on Investment -> Return on Expectations

For a long time, we've used the term ROI to label what an investor can expect to get in return for their money. However, ROI is a very financially-based term, and Return on Expectations is more forgiving. ROE allows for a relationship wherein an investor can see more than just financial return, and can instead understand less tangible benefits.