



Tips for Effectively Communicating with LeadingAge Members

Why Use This Tip Sheet?

Whether you are an expert, consultant, business partner or aging services provider, we all want to communicate as best we can when addressing groups of LeadingAge members. This tip sheet will help you use language that is familiar, respectful, and demonstrates your understanding of the aging services field. Follow these tips to deliver messages that resonate!

TIP Avoid Ageist Traps

1

Using phrases that convey ageism or that belittle older adults—even inadvertently—will be off-putting to your audience and diminish your message. Dodge pitfalls and gain appreciation from the audience for understanding the field.

- Avoid language and images that equate young positively and old negatively (e.g., “she’s 70 years young”).
- Avoid stereotypes and generalizations, in the negative and positive extremes, in language and images (e.g., image of a 100-year-old marathoner).
- Don’t convey surprise that a person of a certain age can accomplish something (e.g., “that 59-year-old woman can [use an iPad]...”)

For additional information, please see the LeadingAge Anti-Ageism Quick Guide.

TIP Align with Your Audience’s Priorities

2

Frame your presentation and materials in sync with providers’ core efforts.

- Show how your program, product or work directly contributes to older adults’ well-being.
- Demonstrate how your work helps deliver quality care and services that keep older adults safe, independent and healthy.
- Acknowledge the indispensable professional caregivers and share how your work supports them and/or eases workforce strains.

LeadingAge[®]

[leadingage.org](https://www.leadingage.org)

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TIP Adjust Your Language for the Audience

3 LeadingAge promotes the use of accurate, unbiased and inclusive language about our sector. Your use of familiar, respectful terminology will generate a positive reception among aging services professionals.

DESCRIBING THE FIELD

Preferred	Avoid
Aging services	Aged care or elder care
(Aging services) Field	Business
(Aging services) Sector	Industry

DESCRIBING THE PROVIDERS

Preferred	Avoid
Mission-driven organization	Business Company
Nonprofit	Industry
Nonprofit organization	

DESCRIBING THE PLACES

Preferred	Avoid
Communities	Buildings
Residences	Facilities
	Institutions

DESCRIBING THE PROFESSIONALS

Preferred	Avoid
Caregiving professionals	Care workers
Professional caregivers	Unskilled workers
	Workers

DESCRIBING THE OLDER PEOPLE

Preferred	Avoid
Older adults	The aged
Community members	The elderly
Adopt the terms of your client or audience	Patients
	Senior citizens

OTHER LANGUAGE TO AVOID (terms that frame the field in business terms)

Beds	Market
Census	Market Share
Financial terms (liquidity, capital)	

For more details, refer to and share the [LeadingAge Language Guide](#).