

# COMMON WORDS TO CONSIDER AVOIDING

WORD	COMMENTS	SUGGESTIONS	EXAMPLES
ATTITUDE	Usually too vague or subjective	Describe the underlying behavior	<p><b>Not Good:</b> "Maintained a poor attitude in the general workplace"</p> <p><b>Good:</b></p> <p>"Arrived at work on May 1 and stated, "I hate working at this place!" in front of several co-workers.</p>
EXCESSIVE	Vague if not compared to a standard	Describe the standard by which the behavior is compared. Consider that if explained enough the word may not be necessary.	<p><b>Not Good:</b></p> <p>"...took an excessive amount of time responding to radio calls for service."</p> <p><b>Good:</b></p> <p>"...took 20 minutes to travel 1 mile from the station to 1<sup>st</sup> Street and Main Street to handle a call for service."</p>
INAPPROPRIATE	Must include what is appropriate	Explain what would have been appropriate and how the person displayed behavior that was unlike the appropriate behavior.	<p><b>Not Good:</b></p> <p>"Inappropriately used Department equipment to gain entry into a building."</p> <p><b>Good:</b></p> <p>"Used Department issued radio to pry open a building door causing damage to the radio. Other tools are available in the station kit room or from fire department personnel."</p>
POSITIVE NEGATIVE IMPACT POSITIVE IMPACT	Vague-says nothing about facts	Problematic when used to label a person's manner of conduct. Were the standards exceeded or merely met? Describe the standards and if they were met. Describe facts.	<p><b>Not Good:</b> "Conducted him/herself in a positive manner while listening to the victim"</p> <p><b>Good:</b> "The employee conducted himself/herself properly by patiently listening to the victim.</p>

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ISSUE	Lacks description of facts	Use descriptive language to reflect facts. Describe the "issues" instead of referring to them or labeling them as an "issue"	<p><b>Not Good:</b> "You are being sent to training to training to resolve sexual harassment issues..."</p> <p><b>Good:</b> "You are being sent to training to teach you what sexual harassment is and how and why you should not commit it."</p>
NUMEROUS	Vague. How many is this?	Just state the real number. If unsure state a range of numbers or conduct further investigation to determine the number.	<p><b>Not Good:</b> "On numerous occasions you failed to...."</p> <p><b>Good:</b> "On three occasions you failed to..." "On at least two occasions..."</p>
POOR JUDGEMENT	Vague does not define behavior	Write what they should have decided and why they should have decided that. Explain why the alternate decision would have been a superior one. Documented cases of the employee making comparatively inferior decisions will lead the reader to conclude that the employee has poor judgement.	<p><b>Not Good:</b> "You used poor judgement when you took the suspect into custody."</p> <p><b>Good:</b> "Prior to taking the suspect into custody you did not communicate your actions with your partner."</p>
INADEQUATE INSUFFICIENT UNSATISFACTORY	A common label lacking a factual basis	Instead of labeling, capture facts relating to the employee's actions	<p><b>Not Good:</b> "You wrote a report that did not contain all the elements of the crime."</p> <p><b>Good:</b> "The crime report titled 'burglary from motor vehicle' but did not have the element of locked vehicle"</p>