

FULL TEXT LINKS



J Pers Soc Psychol. 2020 Jul;119(1):75-103. doi: 10.1037/pspi0000206. Epub 2019 Aug 15.

Tell it like it is: When politically incorrect language promotes authenticity

Michael Rosenblum ¹, Juliana Schroeder ¹, Francesca Gino ²

Affiliations

PMID: 31414870 DOI: [10.1037/pspi0000206](https://doi.org/10.1037/pspi0000206)

Erratum in

[Correction to "Tell it like it is: When politically incorrect language promotes authenticity" by Rosenblum et al. \(2020\).](#)

[No authors listed]

J Pers Soc Psychol. 2024 Feb;126(2):212. doi: 10.1037/pspi0000461.

PMID: 38466337

Abstract

When a person's language appears to be political—such as being politically correct or incorrect—it can influence fundamental impressions of him or her. Political correctness is “using language or behavior to seem sensitive to others' feelings, especially those others who seem socially disadvantaged.” One pilot study, 6 experiments, and 3 supplemental experiments ($N = 4,956$) demonstrate that being politically incorrect makes communicators appear more authentic—specifically, less susceptible to external influence—albeit also less warm. These effects, however, are moderated by perceivers' political ideology and how sympathetic perceivers feel toward the target group being labeled politically correctly. In Experiments 1, 2, and 3 using politically incorrect language (e.g., calling undocumented immigrants *illegals*) made a communicator appear particularly authentic among conservative perceivers but particularly cold among liberal perceivers. However, in Experiment 4 these effects reversed when conservatives felt sympathetic toward the group that was being labeled politically correctly or incorrectly (e.g., calling poor Whites *white trash*). Experiment 5 tests why political incorrectness can boost authenticity, demonstrating that it makes communicators seem less strategic. Finally, Experiment 6 examines the use of political language in a meaningful field context: perceived persuasion in real political debates. Debaters instructed to be politically correct (vs. politically incorrect) were judged by their uninstructed conversation partners to be easier to persuade during the conversation, although they actually reported being similarly persuaded. Together, these findings demonstrate when and how using politically incorrect language can enhance a person's authenticity. (PsycInfo Database Record (c) 2020 APA, all rights reserved).

[PubMed Disclaimer](#)

LinkOut – more resources

Full Text Sources

[American Psychological Association](#)

[Ovid Technologies, Inc.](#)