

STRIVING TO END HURTFUL LANGUAGE

CP STYLE REVISIONS A STEP TOWARD POSITIVE CHANGE, WRITES STEVE LEBLANC



STEVE LEBLANC
Column

It's about trust. Our relationship with our readers is built on transparency, honesty and integrity. As such, we have launched a trust initiative to tell you who we are and how and why we do what we do. This column is part of that project.

Anyone who makes a living with words and language should not only value that privilege, but continually learn from it.

Thankfully, my company takes this to heart.

A reminder of that recently crossed my email inbox in the form of a revised CP (Canadian Press) style book — a blueprint for this country's journalists.

The updated guide includes numerous examples of what can be considered offensive in terms of words and phrases, along with more sensitive — and thus more suitable — alternatives.

One suggestion that caught my attention probably wouldn't have struck me as necessary at one time, but definitely holds some significance these days.

Now in my early 50s, I'm fast approaching a time when the label of senior or elderly will no doubt be thrust my way.

I'm not wild about either descriptor, nor should

anyone else be. With that in mind, the consensus is that "older adult" be used instead.

Some may see this as nitpicky or an overreaction in the name of political correctness. I reject that theory. Who are any of us to tell another person that they're being overly sensitive?

With no doubt extensive collaboration and discussion going into the CP style revisions, suggested changes cover seemingly every way we describe people — be it by race, gender, illness or a personal struggle they may live with.

And as far as I can tell, accuracy has not been sacrificed for sensitivity. In fact, in many cases the former has been strengthened in pursuit of the latter.

The CP style evolution is the result of painstaking examination, and those entrusted with that should be commended.

They've provided added ammunition in the battle to eliminate hurtful language. Now it's our job — reporters and editors — to take those tools and put them into practice.

None of us are naïve enough to think this CP style upgrade marks an ultimate solution. We must continually examine the ways we describe others.

That should be a never-ending obligation, and we're in it for the long haul.

Steve LeBlanc is the news editor for Metro-land's Halton newspapers.

We welcome your questions and value your comments. Email our trust committee at trust@metroland.com.

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SNAPSHOT



Terry Keenie photo

A blue jay finds a peanut in a backyard on Parkview Boulevard. Do you have a great local photo you'd like to share? Send it to sleblanc@metroland.com, along with a brief description.

ASSET ALLOCATION KEY TO INVESTING

Asset allocation is the most important decision for investors.

Stocks have a higher expected rate of return than bonds. They also have a higher amount of uncertainty and volatility.

Bonds have a lower expected rate of return. They are less volatile and the risk of losing money is far less than owning stocks.

The trade-off between stocks and bonds is dependent on your financial objectives, and particularly on your time horizon. For example, if you plan to buy a house in the near future, bonds might be more attractive because they are less likely to lose value than a stock.

If you are planning for the long term, for example retirement, then owning stocks will have a higher expected return and al-



PETER WATSON
Column

though you can expect more volatility, a longer-term time frame reduces that risk.

Someone with a long-term focus who has the ability and the temperament to accept risk, will likely own mostly stocks.

A shorter-term focus and somebody who is more risk adverse will likely own more bonds.

Most investors take a balanced approach. For example, their portfolio could include 60 per cent stocks and 40 per cent bonds.

We suggest articulating your financial objectives. Understand your time frame. Be aware of the potential return and volatility between stocks and bonds.

The result is a portfolio allocated in a manner that fits your circumstances.

Peter Watson is registered with Aligned Capital Partners Inc. (ACPI) to provide investment advice. Investment products are provided by ACPI. ACPI is a member of the Investment Industry Regulatory Organization of Canada. The opinions expressed are those of the author and not necessarily those of ACPI. Watson provides wealth management services through Watson Investments. He can be reached at www.watsoninvestments.com.

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