

Laying the Foundation: Important Statistics about Women

1. Women control 70-80% of consumer spending in the U.S.¹
2. Women are earning the majority of bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees.²
 1. 57% of college degrees
 2. 63% of graduate degrees
 3. 53% of doctoral degrees
3. A record 40% of all U.S. households with children under the age of 18 include mothers who are either the sole or primary breadwinner.³
4. 70% of women with children under 18 are in the labor force.⁴
5. Women account for 19.3% of all golfers, yet account for the majority of all fitness equipment purchased.⁵

Verbal Communication Guidelines

When Referring to Women:

Avoid using the word “females,” which can feel impersonal.

Use the word “women” when possible.

- **Instead of:** “These golf tips are designed for females who want to learn more about the game.”
- **Consider:** “These golf tips are designed for women who want to learn more about the game.”

Avoid using the word “girls” unless you are referring to people under the age of 18.

- **Instead of:** “We are spearheading more Girls’ Night Out mixers at our clubs.”
- **Consider:** “We are spearheading more women’s social events at our clubs.”

Start using the word “women” instead of “ladies” as you create new programming. Just as the word “stewardess” has evolved to “flight attendant” and “secretary” has evolved to “administrative assistant”, using the word “women” instead of “ladies” is more modern from a business standpoint.

- **Instead of:** “We want to make the ladies feel welcome on the course.”
- **Consider:** “We are working to make golf a sport that is inclusive to all men and women.”

Replace the term “ladies’ tees” with “forward tees”. The former implies that her skill level is not good enough to play on one of the other sets of tees. Never assume all women play from the forward tees.

- **Instead of:** “Try hitting from the ladies’ tees for a closer start.”
- **Consider:** “From which set of tees would you like to play?”

Avoid inconsistencies in how men's and women's names are used or announced.

- **Instead of:** "We are pleased to have Mr. Brown and his colleague, Sally, join us today."
- **Consider:** "We are pleased to have Mr. Brown and Ms. Jones join us today." OR "We are pleased to have Joe Brown and Sally Jones join us today."

Avoid stereotyping a universal type of woman, i.e. a busy mom.

- **Instead of:** "The PGA knows that women are busy taking care of their families."
- **Consider:** "The PGA recognizes that women represent a diverse customer base, whether single, married, with kids, etc."

When Addressing Women:

Avoid using language that refers to the PGA in specifically male terms.

- **Instead of:** "Brotherhood" / "Fraternity"
- **Consider:** "Kinship" or "Community"

- **Instead of:** "Hang with your buddies on the course."
- **Consider:** "Spend time with your friends on the course."

- **Instead of:** "We're full of good guys."
- **Consider:** "We're full of good men and women" or "good people."

- **Instead of:** Addressing audiences solely as "gentlemen."
- **Consider:** Being gender neutral when addressing a crowd.

Avoid comments or compliments based solely on a woman's appearance. Instead, focus on things that are not directly related to her looks.

- **Instead of:** "You look great in that dress."
- **Consider:** "That was a great question," or, "You have a great swing."

Avoid defaulting to stereotypes about women and golf.

- **Instead of:** “Women are not as interested in the game of golf because many lack the skills needed to play, and their time is spent taking care of family life.”
- **Consider:** “There are so many excellent women golfers and we want to create an environment for all the women who are interested in learning how to play the game.”

Avoid curse words and aggressive language.

- **Instead of:** “The PGA is a hell of an organization with great guys leading the way.”
- **Consider:** “The PGA is a world-class organization with talented people who are dedicated to the future of golf.”

Avoid excluding women leaders from conversations, and when appropriate allow them to share the spotlight.

- **Instead of:** An all-male presence at speaking engagements or an exclusively male voice on women’s issues.
- **Consider:** Sharing the stage with other women leaders and including them in the conversation when discussing the long-term mission of the PGA, i.e. “As my colleagues [WOMAN’S FULL NAME] and [WOMAN’S FULL NAME] can attest, the PGA is dedicated to embracing diversity...”

Incorporate personal anecdotes and storytelling to connect to your women audience members.

- **Instead of:** “Golf is accessible to people of all skill levels.”
- **Consider:** “I remember the first time I picked up a club. I had never played before, but after a few lessons I felt a lot more confident. If I can play, anyone can!”

Sources:

1) Bridget Brennan, “Why She Buys,” 2011; 2) U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2012; 3) Pew Center of Research, 2013; 4) Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013; 5) National Golf Foundation, 2011; Women’s Sports Foundation, 2009