



# EXECUTIONAL GUIDELINES

## C. LEXICON

*“As I’ve said any number of times over the years, once you lose the language battle, the substantive policy defeat is sure to follow.”  
Andrew C. McCarthy, Contributing Editor, National Review*

Words reflect meaning and can improperly or properly communicate ideas and facts. Thus, the following language guidelines are to be used in Alliance Defending Freedom communications. In all instances, do not use highly pejorative adjectives regarding those who oppose us, do not single out individuals as the opposition—instead refer to the organization or the administration. The only exceptions are for direct, documented quotes from third parties, which then should not be altered unless noted or when deviation from the norm is determined to be in the best interest of a legal client (for major exceptions, consult with the CEO/General Counsel).

Guidelines are listed by topic (*Organization, Religious Liberty, the Sanctity of Life, Marriage and Family*) in alphabetical order.

### Organization

**USE:**            **ACLU and its allies**

**DON’T USE:**    ACLU (unless they are acting alone)

**USE:**            **Alliance Defending Freedom**

**DON’T USE:**    ADF (do not use the acronym at this time)

.....  
Note: When introducing our new name, it is important to use the full name so that our target audiences intuitively and consistently recall Alliance Defending Freedom as the name of our organization.

**USE:**            **Alliance Defending Freedom**

**DON’T USE:**    The Alliance Defending Freedom

.....  
Note: In order to strengthen the impact of the brand name, articles generally do not precede the name of a brand; for example, Apple is “Apple” not “the Apple,” Barnes & Noble is “Barnes & Noble” not “the Barnes & Noble.”

**USE:**            **Alliance Defending Freedom**

**DON’T USE:**    Alliance Defending Freedom’s (no use of possessive)

**USE:**            **Alliance Defending Freedom and its allies**

**DON’T USE:**    Alliance Defending Freedom (unless we are acting alone)

**USE:**            **Alliance Defending Freedom-backed (for organizational funded cases)**

**DON’T USE:**    Alliance Defending Freedom-funded

.....  
Note: Alliance Defending Freedom funding takes on many different aspects. For example, Alliance Defending Freedom may not directly fund a case, but does fund a moot court training session for an attorney who is going to argue the case. So it is a misnomer to say that Alliance Defending Freedom funded a case, because we did not fund all aspects of it.



## EXECUTIONAL GUIDELINES

**USE:** Alliance Defending Freedom was launched in 1994  
Alliance Defending Freedom was founded in 1993

**DON'T USE:** Alliance Defending Freedom was founded in 1994

Note: January 31, 1994, was the first day Alliance Defending Freedom opened its doors publicly for business. The conference call that led to the founding of Alliance Defending Freedom occurred in 1993. But January 31, 1994, is really the "birthday" of Alliance Defending Freedom.

**USE:** Attorneys General (for multiple persons in that office)

**DON'T USE:** Attorney Generals

**USE:** Blackstone interns or Blackstone graduates (as a blanket term)

**DON'T USE:** Blackstone Fellows or Blackstoners

Note: Not all Blackstone interns eventually become fellows. "Fellows" can be used if someone has been awarded that status, but it cannot be used as a blanket term to describe all who participate in the summer program. Additionally, there is no such thing as a "Former" Blackstone Fellow.

**USE:** Blackstone leadership development program

**DON'T USE:** Blackstone program

**USE:** faith promise, faith commitment

**DON'T USE:** pledge

Note: Alliance Defending Freedom Co-founder Larry Burkett mandated that Alliance Defending Freedom never use the term "pledge" in any allied Ministry Friend communications. Larry saw "pledge" as making a vow that you may not be able to keep, but a "faith promise" as relying on the Lord to be able to provide the funds to give.

**USE:** keep the door open for the spread of the Gospel

**DON'T USE:** keep the legal door open for the spread of the Gospel

Note: Important to remain true to Alliance Defending Freedom history by keeping this phrase as originally spoken by Bill Bright. While we will not add the word "legal" to the phrase, we continue to reinforce that we are working in the legal arena in the context of the rest of the communication.

**USE:** "legal ministry" or "alliance-building legal ministry" to describe Alliance Defending Freedom

**DON'T USE:** "legal alliance" to describe Alliance Defending Freedom

Note: "legal alliance" or "the alliance" can be used when referring to Alliance Defending Freedom working with its allies (allied Ministry Friends, allied attorneys, allied partners, etc.).



## EXECUTIONAL GUIDELINES

**USE:** Allied Ministry Friend Education Letter  
**DON'T USE:** acquisition letter

Note: The major purpose of all Alliance Defending Freedom communications is to educate the Body of Christ on the battle and call them to act—what's working, what's not, what needs to be done, and what needs prayer.

**USE:** Allied Ministry Friends  
**DON'T USE:** Donors

**USE:** opposition  
**DON'T USE:** enemy

**USE:** the name of the organization or the administration (when referring to the opposition)  
**DON'T USE:** do not refer to a personal name or the last name of a person as profanity or obscenity

**USE:** Prayer and Information Letter  
**DON'T USE:** Appeal Letter OR Fundraising Letter

Note: The major purpose of all Alliance Defending Freedom communications is to educate the Body of Christ on the battle and call them to pray and to act—what's working, what's not, what needs to be done, and what needs prayer.

**USE:** team members (for those on the payroll)  
**DON'T USE:** employees

Note: We are part of a team.

**USE:** "This is...", "That is...", "They are...", etc. (see Note below)  
**DON'T USE:** Do not use "I believe...", "I think...", "It's my opinion...", etc. However, depending on the context of the communication, these phrases may be appropriately but very sparingly used.

Note: Per Alan, something is either correct or incorrect, but usually we "think" is nothing more than an "opinion." In this battle we are fighting, we do not want to reduce the stakes/situation/issue down to whose "opinion" wins. We are not relativists, but Christians.

**USE:** Title, Team Leader (or similar)  
**DON'T USE:** Boss

Note: Alan says we are co-laborers in the vineyard, and brothers and sisters in Christ; "ladies and gentlemen serving ladies and gentlemen."



# EXECUTIONAL GUIDELINES

**USE:** U.S. Court of Appeals for the \_\_\_\_ Circuit  
**DON'T USE:** \_\_\_\_ U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, \_\_\_\_ Circuit Court

## Religious Liberty

**USE:** Christmas  
**DON'T USE:** X-mas, holiday season, winter holiday/break

**USE:** defending biblical, religious principles, convictions  
**DON'T USE:** bigotry, anti-tolerance

**USE:** equality of opportunity  
**DON'T USE:** equality

Note: "Where equality is enthroned, freedom is extinguished. The rise of the egalitarian society means the death of the free society." Patrick Buchanan [Suicide of a Superpower: Will America Survive to 2025?]

**USE:** "hate" crimes, so-called "hate" crimes  
**DON'T USE:** hate crimes

Note: We put quotes around "hate" because all crimes are motivated by hate of some kind; there are no "love" crimes.

**USE:** Rights protected by the Constitution, Rights guaranteed by the Constitution, First Amendment protected rights, constitutionally protected rights.  
**DON'T USE:** First amendment rights, constitutional rights

**USE:** science  
**DON'T USE:** antievolution, antiscience, creationism

Note: In Alliance Defending Freedom communications, we do not want to add a qualifier to "science" such as "Creation science." Adding a qualifier suggests that there are many types of science about the foundations of our existence.

**USE:** sexual indoctrination programs  
**DON'T USE:** sexual education programs, health education

**USE:** troubled/religious theory of evolution  
**DON'T USE:** fact of evolution, scientific theory of evolution

## The Sanctity of Life

**USE:** abortion advocates, proponents of the culture of death, etc.  
**DON'T USE:** pro-choice

**USE:** abortion, killing of the innocent, committing abortions



# EXECUTIONAL GUIDELINES

DON'T USE: termination of pregnancy, abortion procedure, performing abortions

Note: "Procedure" is a medical euphemism.

**USE:** abortion-inducing drug, morning-after abortion pill

DON'T USE: emergency contraception, birth control, morning-after pill

**USE:** abortionist, abortion facility, commit an abortion

DON'T USE: health clinic, family-planning center, women's center, do an abortion

**USE:** killing the defenseless, premeditated murder of the helpless

DON'T USE: mercy killing, euthanasia, right to die, pulling the plug, compassion

**USE:** preborn child

DON'T USE: unborn child, fetus, unwanted pregnancy

**USE:** pro-abstinence, pro-purity/responsibility

DON'T USE: anti-contraception, unrealistic expectations

**USE:** pro-life, pro-family, pro-children

DON'T USE: antiabortion, anti-reproductive rights

**USE:** pro-life advocates, defenders of life

DON'T USE: pro-life protesters, antiabortion protesters, pro-lifers

Note: Describe those wanting to save lives in a positive way.

**USE:** protect human life

DON'T USE: restrict abortion

**USE:** women considering abortion, women struggling with abortion

DON'T USE: women exercising their reproductive rights

**USE:** women who've experienced abortion, women struggling with abortion

DON'T USE: women who've exercised their freedom of choice

## Marriage and Family

**USE:** adultery, infidelity, fornication

DON'T USE: extramarital relationship, affair, liaison

**USE:** advocating/promoting promiscuity/immorality

DON'T USE: sex education, safe sex, responsible sex

**USE:** anti-marriage, opponents of marriage

DON'T USE: pro-marriage rights, gay marriage advocates



## EXECUTIONAL GUIDELINES

**USE:** advocates of homosexual behavior, homosexual behavior advocates  
**DON'T USE:** homosexual or gay activists

**USE:** biological sex in reference to he/she  
**DON'T USE:** "changed" sex in reference to he/she

**USE:** convictions against homosexual behavior  
**DON'T USE:** homophobia, antigay bias, intolerance

**USE:** cross-dressing, sexually confused  
**DON'T USE:** transgender

**USE:** demands of/by the homosexual legal agenda, demands of/by advocates of homosexual behavior, special privileges  
**DON'T USE:** homosexual/gay rights, hate-crimes legislation, antidiscrimination laws

Note: According to Alan, "The goals and the agenda of advocates of homosexual behavior are not 'rights,' but 'demands.'"

**USE:** homosexual agenda  
**DON'T USE:** lesbian and gay civil rights movement

**USE:** homosexual behavior  
**DON'T USE:** homosexuality or gay

Note: Homosexuality is a personal struggle; however, homosexual behavior is sinful. Alan adds, "It isn't a condition."

**USE:** homosexual behavior  
**DON'T USE:** gay

Note: The word "gay" was conceived by advocates of homosexual behavior to de-stigmatize their behavior and advance their agenda.

**USE:** homosexual behavior  
**DON'T USE:** homosexual lifestyle

Note: Alan notes that it's not a "lifestyle"—tragically, it's a way that often leads to death (Proverbs 14:12).

**USE:** marriage and family  
**DON'T USE:** traditional marriage OR traditional marriage and the family

Note: Using the word "traditional" reinforces the notion—by some—that there are many types of marriage and lends credibility that marriage could be something besides "one man / one woman."



## EXECUTIONAL GUIDELINES

- USE:** panderers of pornography  
**DON'T USE:** pornography industry
- USE:** pedophile, child predator, child molester  
**DON'T USE:** adult attracted to children
- USE:** pornography  
**DON'T USE:** adult literature, literature for mature audiences
- USE:** protect families, protect communities  
**DON'T USE:** restrict pornography, censor pornography

---

Note: Protecting children, families, and communities against the scourge of pornography is not censorship.

- USE:** same-sex "marriage," marriage imitation  
**DON'T USE:** gay marriage or homosexual marriage

---

Note: According to Alan, "It isn't marriage."

- USE:** sexual-identity confusion / sexual confusion  
**DON'T USE:** gender / gender identity confusion
- USE:** sexual preference/choice  
**DON'T USE:** sexual orientation, genetic predisposition, gay gene
- USE:** sexually mutilated male/female, self-proclaimed male/female, biological male/female  
**DON'T USE:** intersex person/male/female
- USE:** sexually oriented businesses (SOBs)  
**DON'T USE:** adult businesses

---

Note: "Adult" was a term that pornographers fabricated to try to de-stigmatize hard-core pornography. We do not want to adapt to their lexicon. For media interviews, generally do not use the acronym "SOBs." Simply say, "sexually oriented businesses," or you may get more media coverage than you want!