

BUSINESS LEXICON

Business language often includes aggressive or warlike phrases to convey a sense of competition, strategy and urgency. It's all focused on overcoming obstacles, defeating the competition and winning at all costs - a fairly intense way to run a business.

How often have you heard people say to you:

- **What's your battle plan?**
- **What's your target market?**
- **How will you capture market share?**
- **Do you have the killer instinct?**
- **What's your beachhead market?**
- **What's your cash-burn?**
- **How will you disrupt the industry?**
- **What are your battle scars from previous businesses?**
- **Will you attend this hackathon?**

And whilst these phrases can resonate well with many entrepreneurs and the entrepreneurial mindset of resilience, ambition and determination, many women don't positively identify with these terms. We are strong, ambitious, confident and want to grow...but we don't feel the need to kill others in the process!

Unfortunately, such warlike and aggressive terminology is pervasive in our business language - so much so we don't even notice it's there. Yet at a subconscious level this type of language doesn't resonate as strongly with women, and consequently can be less impactful in its aims of encouraging resilience and growth.

But there is another way. We can all use alternative words and phrases that retain the energy and ambition of the aggressive/warlike terms but are more inspiring, inclusive and empowering, with a strong sense of purpose and determination. Same results, just done a different way.

Here's a table that compares typical warlike business terminology with more women-friendly alternatives, showing how the same concepts can be expressed in different ways.

Aggressive/Warlike Terminology

Battle Plan
Target Market
Market Warfare
Winning the War
Capture Market Share
Aggressive Expansion
Take No Prisoners
Firefight
Execute
Killer Instinct
Battle-Tested
Winning at All Costs
Defend the Turf
Hackathon
Beachhead market
Defensive Strategy
Risk Aversion
Dominate the Market
Conquer New Territories
Claim Victory
Pushing the Envelope
Crush the Competition
Cash Burn
Bootstrapping
Disrupt the Industry
First-Mover Advantage
Market Invasion
Hustle Hard
Pivot
Bootcamp
Raising War Chest

Women-Friendly, Inclusive Alternatives

Crafting a Vision
Ideal Customer Group
Gaining Momentum
Growth Journey
Achieving Market Impact
Purposeful Growth
Move Forward Resourcefully
Navigating Obstacles
Implement
Success Orientated Focus
Reliably Experienced
Achieving Success With Integrity
Preserve Our Advantage
Collaboration Lab
Foundation Market
Position Preserving Strategy
Risk Aware
Become The Preferred Choice
Broaden Our Presence
Reach Our Goal
Explore New Possibilities
Lead The Industry
Operating Expenses
Independent Growth Strategy
Transform The Industry
Pioneer Advantage
Expanding Our Market Reach
Commit To Consistent Progress
Adjust Our Direction
Immersive Learning Lab
Establish A Financial Cushion

As you come across different aggressive phrases used in starting and growing a business, list them below and use your creativity to come up with alternative terminology that is more inclusive.

**Aggressive/Warlike
Terminology**

**Women-Friendly, Inclusive
Alternatives**

This document is free for you to use but if you reproduce in any way, please ensure you credit Women's Enterprise Scotland as the original authors.