



## Power-With Workplace Glossary

Try updating some of the terminology you use at work to help people update how they think. Let go of ‘power-over’ terms, based in control, hierarchy, and depersonalization, and adopt ‘power-with’ terms that signal mutual respect – while also articulating concepts more clearly.

Power-Over	Power-With
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workers / personnel</li> <li>Boss / superior</li> <li>Rank and file</li> <li>Chain of command</li> <li>Write someone up</li> <li>Manage performance</li> <li>Perform your duties</li> <li>Rewards / incentives</li> <li>Human resources</li> <li>Talent management</li> <li>Human capital</li> <li>Headcount</li> <li>Work under / report to</li> <li>Loyalty</li> <li>Employee retention</li> <li>Mandate</li> <li>Insubordination</li> <li>Manage out</li> <li>Catch them doing something right</li> <li>Make people do</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coworkers / team members / colleagues</li> <li>Leader / coordinator / sponsor</li> <li>Individual contributors</li> <li>Decision makers</li> <li>Address / document a problem</li> <li>Enable / support results</li> <li>Fulfill your commitments / expectations</li> <li>Compensation</li> <li>People</li> <li>Hiring</li> <li>Skills and knowledge</li> <li>Number of employees</li> <li>Work with / on the same team as</li> <li>Engagement / commitment</li> <li>Stay / voluntary leave / tenure rate</li> <li>Policy change</li> <li>Violated commitments / agreements</li> <li>End employment</li> <li>Give positive feedback</li> <li>Ask / invite / offer / request / support</li> </ul>

**Please note:** We do not advise adopting power-with terms to mask power-over beliefs or systems. Veiled hierarchies and unnamed power can be more damaging than calling things what they are.

We are also not advocating for shaming people’s word choices or assuming they represent a power-over perspective. (We’re not even sure yet if the alternatives we’ve proposed here will create more clarity and less cringe!) What we do recommend is having an open, curious conversation with your team about the words you choose to use at your organization.

Are there other terms you love or hate? Let us know at [hello@scarletspark.org](mailto:hello@scarletspark.org)!

Want leadership support for an organization that helps animals? Visit [ScarletSpark.org](http://ScarletSpark.org).

Want to build a power-with workplace? Read [Lead Together: Stop Squirreling Away Power and Build a Better Team](#) 