

Faculti Summary

<https://faculti.net/revolutionizing-food-assistance-lessons-from-the-pandemic/>

This video discusses the effectiveness of "person-first language"—a style intended to reduce stigma by emphasizing the person over their criminal record. Contrary to its intended purpose, research shows that using this language can actually hurt the chances of individuals with criminal records when applying for jobs. The study found that neutral terms like "candidate" or "applicant," combined with strong credentials, received more positive responses from employers than person-first constructions.

The researchers emphasized that highlighting criminal records, even unintentionally through careful language, refocuses attention on a person's past instead of their qualifications. The findings underscored the importance of providing individuals with opportunities to build new identities through achievements rather than simply changing language. To improve reintegration and hiring practices, organizations are encouraged to create authentic opportunities for credentials and training while being strategic about language—acknowledging criminal records when necessary, but quickly transitioning to neutral terms.

The conversation should shift from linguistic changes to actionable measures that enable individuals to demonstrate their capabilities and build better lives. The underlying message is that meaningful change comes from actions, not just words, pushing for the need for deeper consideration of how society approaches second chances.