

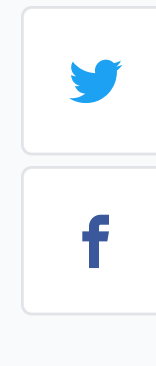
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Dec 5, 2018 Issue #25 - "Step-ball-change" via Code Switching

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According to the [Oxford English dictionary](#), the verb *code-switching* is a linguistic term to "alternate between two or more languages or varieties of language in conversation. To note: *As with any social behaviour, we pick up linguistic norms and learn to code-switch according to context.*"

Code-switching illustrated: "business jargon", "talking vanilla", "trolling", "hanging out", "nose bouquet", "inside voice", LBD, ***

In the past 10 years or so, *code-switching* has often been used to describe how a person adjusts their behaviours, looks, language, approaches etc. to accommodate to a broader norm of a different social group. *Why?* Usually to gain approval/acceptance *and/or* to avoid grief.

Code-switching is not *per se* either good or bad - rather it is a learned coping mechanism to deal with particular social interactions.

Why should we care about it?

In the [Armchair Expert podcast](#) interview with [Wendy Mogel](#), the author and child psychologist explains how the expectations of many parents are so high that many do not actualize how exhausting the constant *code-switching* for their kids really is. Wendy [states](#) that many parents are much more forgiving of their [pets](#) then they are of their own children. A friend of mine used to say "I have to remind myself that my kid is not a trained monkey. Just because I *want* him to - does not mean he *will*!"

As we look to the topics of inclusion, creating brave spaces and celebrating our own unique voice - how are we asking others to *code-switch* for us? Conversely, how are we self-editing? As leaders, how are we conscious of creating environments where different behaviours or approaches are not only tolerated but truly given space to develop? Like JP Sears says in his inspired [Goalcast](#): the most pervasive disease to hit humanity is the disease of "being normal".

In other words:



How does code-switching affect innovation, collaboration and engagement?

What is code-switching and why do we do it?



How Do We Code-Switch Every Day?

On an average day, you might get up, go to work or school, come home, spend time with family and friends, and then go to bed? You are most likely code-switching all day without even realizing it. This blog post sets up the language and understanding of code-switching in a diverse world of social

situations.
[unitedlanguagegroup.com](#)

Code-Switching at Work



Professionalism in the workplace is about code-switching | The Context Of Things

We talk often about professionalism in the workplace. But what does it mean? How are people using it? And then to ask the questions: Why do we need to? What are the benefits for allowing more

social and individual "lee-way" in our work teams and between different groups?
[thecontextofthings.com](#)

Learning How To Code-Switch: Humbling, But Necessary: NPR

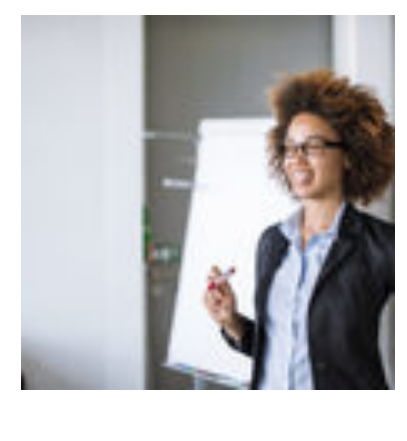
Eric Deggans, a media critic for the Tampa Bay Times, talks about a pivotal learning situation, when he used the word "guys" while asking a question. This experience highlights the topic of social mobility between different groups and norm expectations.
[www.npr.org](#)



Code Switching Solves Workplace Communication in 2020 | Psychology Today

While I am not 100% onboard with the various postulations that the author, Audrey Nelson Ph.D. brings to the table in her article, I do believe she makes some interesting and valid points around gender languages in the world of work. An interesting perspective around "what to say, how to say it, how to be taken seriously, and how to act while speaking with the opposite sex for maximum effectiveness in the workplace."
[www.psychologytoday.com](#)

Social Implications and Bias



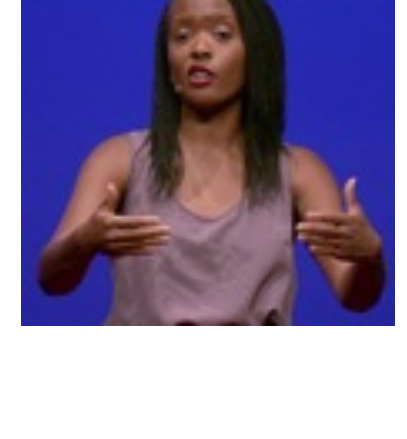
What It Means If You're Code-Switching in the Workplace - Essence

At a former workplace, I was told I needed to wear suits that would be appropriate funeral attire. When the new CEO heard about the directive, she came to work dressed in orange. Sometimes directives are explicit e.g. dress code, sometimes they are implicit (e.g. how you express a different opinion). This article highlights some look-fors in ones own behaviour.
[www.essence.com](#)



Young Women Spill On What Code-Switching At Work Is Really Like

Again, there's no simple answer on what it means to *code-switch*. Some see it as a survival tactic, others a door-opener to opportunity and many view it as a burden to be borne. This article is a perspective-builder type of read.
[www.girlboss.com](#)



The Cost of Code Switching | Chandra Arthur | TEDxOrlando

If you look on YouTube for *code-switch*, there are some great, personal accounts and social perspectives on what it means to be a person who crosses over social group divides. In her insightful TED talk, Chandra Arthur discusses how learning "default conformity" in different settings creates access and opportunities, but also has broad social implications.
[www.youtube.com](#)


Question: What are some of the codes at your work?

How does *code-switching* play a role in your organization? If the topics of collaboration, innovation and involvement are on your agenda, I would love to talk to you about ways to foster supportive environments. Just give me a call or drop me an [email](#).

Have a topic that is on your mind or have come across an item that is worth sharing? *Awesome!* Just let me know and we will share it in a future edition of [Transforming Talent Insights!](#)

Thanks everyone!
All my best regards,
Elizabeth

Did you enjoy this issue? [Yes](#) [No](#)

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