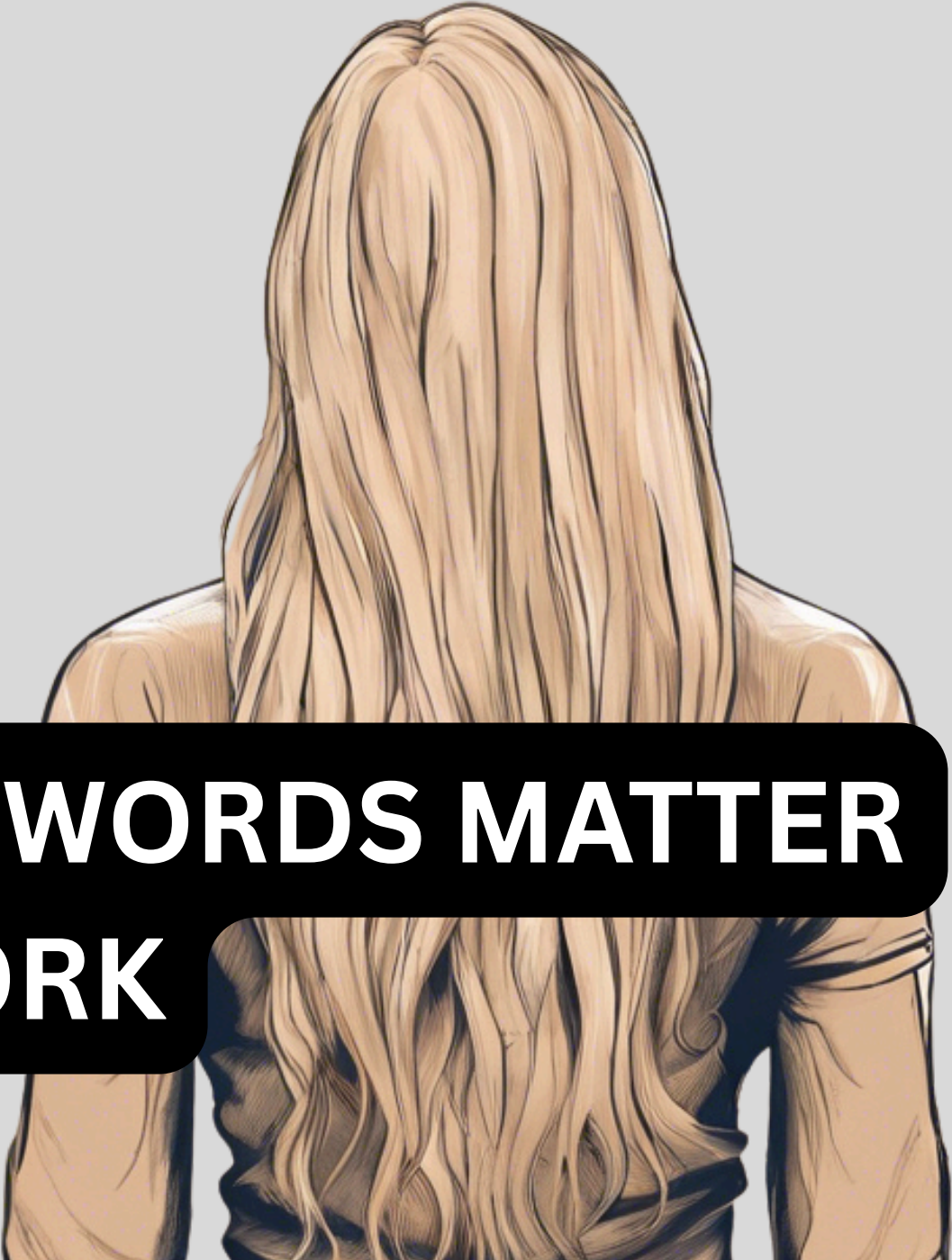


# WHICH ONES GIVE YOU THE ICK?

WHAT SHOULD WE REPLACE NEXT?



**YOUR WORDS MATTER  
AT WORK**

The language leaders use shapes culture, drives behaviour and signals what's truly valued.

Outdated phrases don't just create "the ick."

The words and phrases we choose actively undermine the workplaces and communities we're trying to build.

Self-awareness starts with pausing before these automatic expressions escape our lips.

Can we ask:

- What assumption is embedded in this phrase?
- What value am I unintentionally undermining?
- What would better language sound like?

The most forward-thinking leaders recognise that refreshing our language isn't about political correctness.

This is about effective leadership.

By consciously choosing words that reflect sustainable work practices, psychological safety and genuine collaboration, we don't just sound more contemporary, we actively create the future-ready workplace our people deserve.



FROM THE 1960s - 1970s

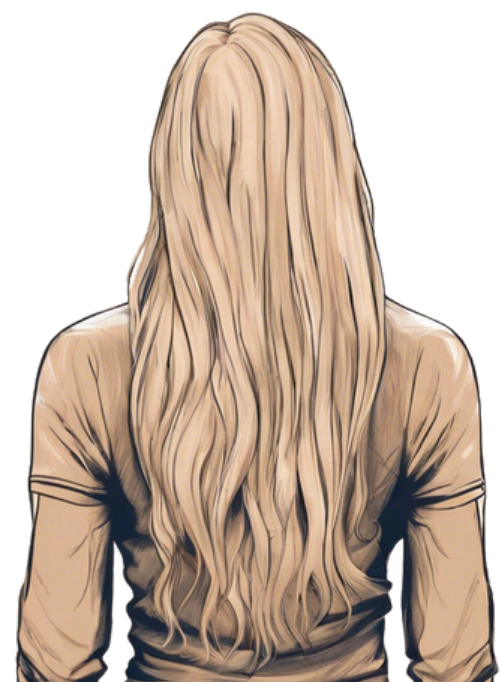
# ICK: That's not how we do things here.

Why? Because it blocks innovation and fails to recognise that organisational survival requires adaptation, curiosity and flexibility.



Let's explore how this approach might work or what can we learn from this different perspective?

J O N E S   &   S O N S





FROM THE 1990s

## ICK: Let's take this offline

Why? Often used to avoid addressing difficult topics publicly when transparency might better serve the team.



This deserves a deeper conversation. Let's schedule time to discuss and share the insights with the team afterward.

J O N E S   &   S O N S





CIRCA 1980s to 1990s

# ICK: We need to do more with less.

Why? Pushes unsustainable workloads rather than prioritising what truly matters. Busy for busy sake.



## Let's identify our highest-value activities and focus our resources there.

J O N E S   &   S O N S





NASA 1960s

## ICK: Failure is not an option

Why? Creates fear of experimentation when a degree of risk-taking is essential for innovation



Let's create safe-to-fail  
experiments to learn quickly or  
what's our learning objective for  
this initiative?

J O N E S   &   S O N S





1980s

## ICK: We're one big family.

Why? Blurs professional boundaries and can create unhealthy expectations about sacrifice and loyalty.



We're building a supportive community of professionals who respect work-life boundaries.

J O N E S   &   S O N S





# ICK: The customer is always right.

Why? Blurs boundaries and can create unhealthy expectations about sacrifice and loyalty.



We will not overlook toxic customer relationships and employee wellbeing.

J O N E S   &   S O N S





ICK: I need everyone to give 110%.

Why? Normalises burnout rather than addressing capacity constraints.



Let's ensure we have sustainable workloads and the resources needed for success.

J O N E S   &   S O N S





# ICK: Let's circle back.

Why? Often delays important decisions indefinitely.



Let's set a specific time to  
resolve this by [date] or what  
information do we need to make  
this decision now.

J O N E S   &   S O N S





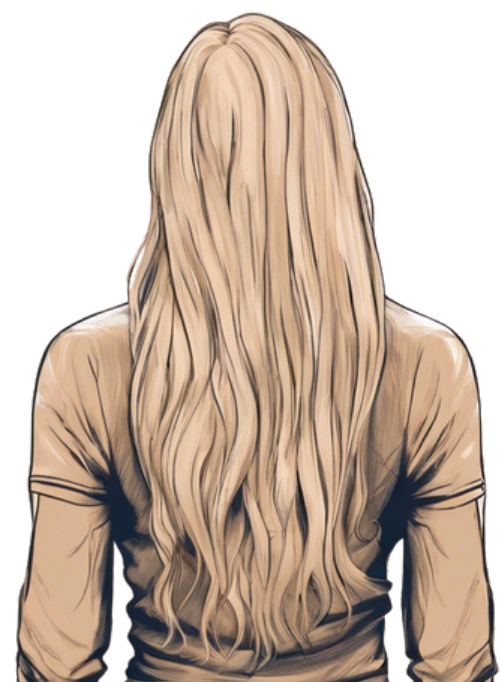
# ICK: That's just business.

Why? Used to justify ethically questionable decisions while ignoring broader impacts on humans, the planet or purpose.



Let's consider how this decision affects all our stakeholders and aligns with our values.

J O N E S   &   S O N S





1980s to 1990s

## ICK: This is urgent

Why? When everything is urgent, nothing is. This creates a culture of constant crisis mentality.



This is priority #1 because  
[specific reason], and we'll  
protect our time to address it  
properly.

J O N E S   &   S O N S



# WHAT IS CURRENTLY GIVING YOU THE ICK?



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Open mind, open to feedback



Follow **Amanda Jones** if you are a dreamer, a doer and a curious soul.

J O N E S   &   S O N S