



LANGUAGE & COMMUNICATION POLICY

Montego
—Pet Nutrition—

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1. PURPOSE

Montego Pet Nutrition recognises the constitutional right of all South Africans to use and be addressed in the language of their choice where it is reasonably practicable to do so (Section 6(3) of the Constitution). This Language Policy ensures:

- Clear, consistent, and legally compliant communication.
- Respect for South Africa's multilingual society.
- Workplace inclusivity and sensitivity to language diversity.
- Operational efficiency and mutual understanding across all departments and locations.

This policy sets out the official language for business and guidelines for multilingual engagement to foster a respectful, inclusive, and effective communication environment.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Montego Pet Nutrition employees, independent contractors, interns, consultants, suppliers, and stakeholders engaging with or representing the company in any form of communication, whether internal or external.

It applies across all business platforms, including meetings, documentation, presentations, customer correspondence, emails, social media, Teams, the Montego intranet, and external communications.

3. ENGLISH AS THE PRIMARY BUSINESS LANGUAGE

3.1 Operational Language

English is the official business language for:

- Internal communication across all levels and departments.
- External communication with partners, stakeholders, and regulatory bodies.
- Corporate policies, legal documents, contracts, and reports.
- IT systems, software platforms, training manuals, and technical documentation.

3.2 Meetings and Presentations

Business meetings must be conducted in English unless:

- All attendees agree on an alternative language, and
- No operational or legal compliance is compromised.

3.3 Translation and Interpretation

Where practical and necessary (e.g., training sessions, safety briefings), key documents or instructions may be translated into Afrikaans, isiXhosa, or other regional languages. HR or the department head must authorise this.

4. PROMOTING LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY

4.1 Montego promotes a culture that respects the right of employees to speak their preferred language during breaks and informal conversations, provided:

- It does not exclude, mock, or alienate others.
- It does not hinder business operations or communication flow.
- It is used respectfully and not for gossip, conflict, or exclusionary behaviour.

4.2 Managers must be alert to language-related complaints and take corrective action if exclusion, division, or conflict arises from language use.

4.3 Training material for general workers may be supplemented with visual aids and translations, especially for safety-critical roles.

5. LANGUAGE ON DIGITAL AND ELECTRONIC PLATFORMS

5.1 All official emails, intranet postings, MS Teams chats, project documentation, HR notices, and finance reports must be in English.

5.2 Exceptions may be made for:

- Departmental team-building messages.
- Internal celebratory or cultural messages (e.g., birthdays, Women's Day posts);
- Customer communication upon their language preference request.

6. LANGUAGE USE IN CUSTOMER COMMUNICATION

Where a customer or supplier prefers communication in Afrikaans, isiXhosa, or another local language, employees may accommodate them, subject to the following:

- Communication must be clear, courteous, and professional.
- Important agreements must still be recorded in English for audit and legal reasons.
- Translation or clarification must be requested from HR or Legal if unsure.

7. COMMUNICATION AND DIGITAL ETIQUETTE

7.1 Email Etiquette

- Use subject lines that reflect the core message.
- Greet professionally ("Dear Mr X", not "Hey").
- Avoid slang, emojis, or all caps.
- Attach relevant documents with a mention in the body text.
- Respond within eight business hours.

7.2 Teams Etiquette

- Join meetings on time with your mic muted.
- Use a professional profile photo and display name.
- Avoid informal abbreviations (e.g., “u” for “you”) in chat.
- Use a respectful tone and limit emoji use to appropriate contexts.

7.3 Document Etiquette

- Follow Montego’s branding and formatting guide.
- Avoid jargon and ensure the message is accessible.
- Apply spell check and grammar review before circulation.
- Use version control protocols for shared documents.

7.4 Phone Call Etiquette

- Greet clearly and introduce yourself with your name and department.
- Speak at a moderate pace and volume.
- Take notes and confirm next steps before ending.
- Do not engage in private calls during working hours unless urgent.

8. LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND POLICY ALIGNMENT

This policy is aligned with the following South African legislation and Montego's internal policies:

- The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Section 6
- Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998 – prohibiting unfair discrimination, including language-based exclusion.
- Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act (PEPUDA);
- Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA) – to ensure workers understand the terms of employment.
- Occupational Health and Safety Act – clear language in safety communication.
- Montego Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy.
- Montego Inclusion, Diversity & Equity Policy.
- Montego Disciplinary Code and Procedure.

9. NON-COMPLIANCE

This policy forms part of the official policies and procedures of Montego Pet Nutrition. Non-compliance – including the use of language to intimidate, exclude, or discriminate – will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the company’s Disciplinary Code and Procedure and relevant provisions of South African labour law.

10. QUERIES

All queries regarding this policy should be directed to the Human Resources Department or the employee’s immediate supervisor. Where employees encounter difficulty understanding communications due to language barriers, they are encouraged to raise this for support and clarification