



*Hi, everyone. What's up?*

Hoje o podcast Inglês Online tem a solução do [lateral thinking puzzle apresentado na semana passada](#). Algumas pessoas conseguiram encontrar a solução ([a Ira foi a primeira](#)) - *congratulations* a quem conseguiu, pois não era uma solução trivial, não! Hoje também falo e dou exemplos sobre linguagem politicamente correta no inglês.

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## Transcrição

Hey, everyone! How's it going? Today we have a new episode of the inglesonline podcast. To download or just listen to other episodes and download transcripts, go to [inglesonline.com.br](http://inglesonline.com.br) and click Podcast Inglesonline.

So if you caught our last podcast - [the episode was called Lateral Thinking](#) - you know that it involved a little story about a guy who left his building in the morning and then returned at night, got into the elevator and then, depending on whether or not it had rained that day, or whether or not there was someone else in the elevator, this guy would go straight to his floor or he would get out on the 10th and then take the stairs. If this sounds confusing, just go back to the last episode and take a listen.

So the question was Why does the guy behave the way that he does? Why does he do that? Why does he get out on the 10th floor when it's not raining, or when there's no one else in the elevator? Well, a few people actually got the answer right! Some people figured out the solution. [They figured it out](#), they solved the problem. Yep, Inglês Online readers are smart :) I have to admit I already knew the solution because I read it on a website. I didn't figure it out on my own. I didn't try too hard, to be honest... I got curious so after I read the problem I just went ahead and read the solution. So here goes the solution: the guy who gets in the elevator every evening... He's a dwarf.

The guy is actually a dwarf. Remember the tale of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs? This guy is like those seven guys in the fairy tale, which means that he's a short guy. So because he is short, he can't reach the button for the twelfth floor on the elevator panel on his own. When it's raining, he has an umbrella on him so he can use the umbrella to reach the button for the twelfth. And when there's someone else all he has to do is ask that person to press the button.



Therefore, when he's alone and doesn't have an umbrella on him, he goes up to the tenth floor (he's tall enough to reach that button) and then climbs the stairs to the twelfth. That's all!

By the way, take a look at the image right beside the text of this podcast. It's a fairy tale dwarf, right? The word "dwarf" isn't acceptable when you're referring to people... Neither is the word "midget". You can refer to a person who is very short as a little person - as far as I know, that's the acceptable, or non-offensive, or, some would say, the politically correct way to refer to a person who's very short in stature.



And in the United States you'll very often hear expressions like these: African-American, Asian-American, Italian-American, etc. "African-American" refers to people who are black or who have African ancestry. And we can usually just say "a black woman", "black people", that's fine. If you want to sound just a bit more formal, maybe a bit more educated... you can say "an African-American woman, blah blah blah".

And here's something else I learned back when I was going to grad school in the US: girls over a certain age - I'd say around 21 - aren't girls anymore; they're women. One day my friend was chatting with another student and he said, "You should have come to the bar.. all the girls were there" He was referring to female students in our class. The other student said "Not girls... women!". So when talking about females in your work environment, for example, you should probably use the word "women" rather than "girls".

Here's another one: many, many words in English that describe occupations are gender-neutral. What does that mean? If a word is gender-neutral, that means it is used for both men and women. It's the same word for both of them. So it used to be common for us to read on the newspaper, or on business articles, something like this: "When the company CEO makes a decision, he has to take full responsibility for it". In the past, everyone used "he" a lot when speaking in generic terms about executive positions and other jobs traditionally held by men. Nowadays, people are way more careful and they use "she" or even "they", in order to be neutral.

Do you want to see several examples of this? Go to [Seth Godin's blog](#) and look up the word "she" on the front page. You'll see that Seth very often writes 'she', and not 'he', to exemplify customers, executives and other gender-neutral positions.

Alright! Let us know in the comments what else you've noticed about politically correct language. Talk to you next time.

## Glossary

on my own, on his own = sozinho/por conta própria, sozinho/ele mesmo/por conta própria

he has an umbrella on him = ele tem um guarda chuva com ele

grad school = escola de pós-graduação