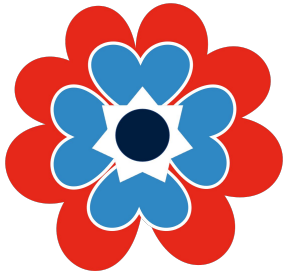

ROSIE

UNDERMINING LANGUAGE DETECTOR

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Team Rosie

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The Problem

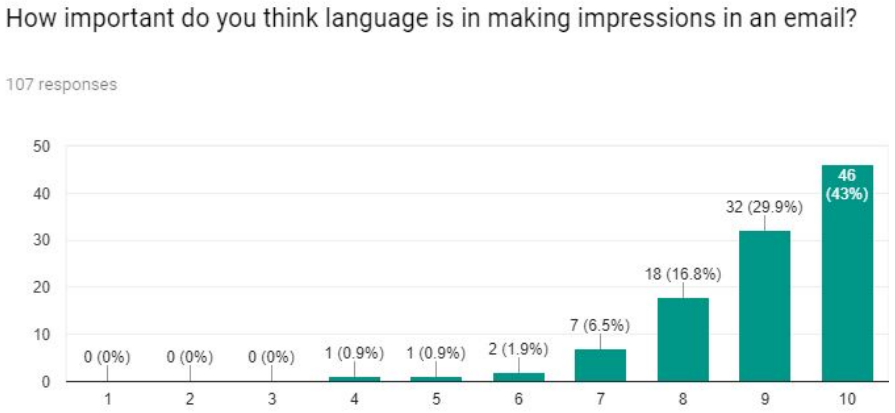
The gender/opportunity gap in the workplace is not just a result of blatant sexism. Studies show that women may be denying themselves opportunities to be viewed as credible in the workplace by using unconfident or hedging language. Forbes asserts that using words like **"just"** or **"maybe"**, apologizing when unneeded, or using phrases like **"I'm no expert"** or **"I don't know"** all demean confidence.

This happens because girls are taught to take responsibility for how their behaviors affect others. Girls who are more assertive are typically viewed as abrasive or bossy by their peers. **To overcompensate, girls learn to alter their language to include unnecessary apologetic or hedging qualifiers.**

A pattern of hedging language in the workplace causes women to take less credit for their achievements, or damages their credibility when they have ideas or opinions on projects.

Our Research

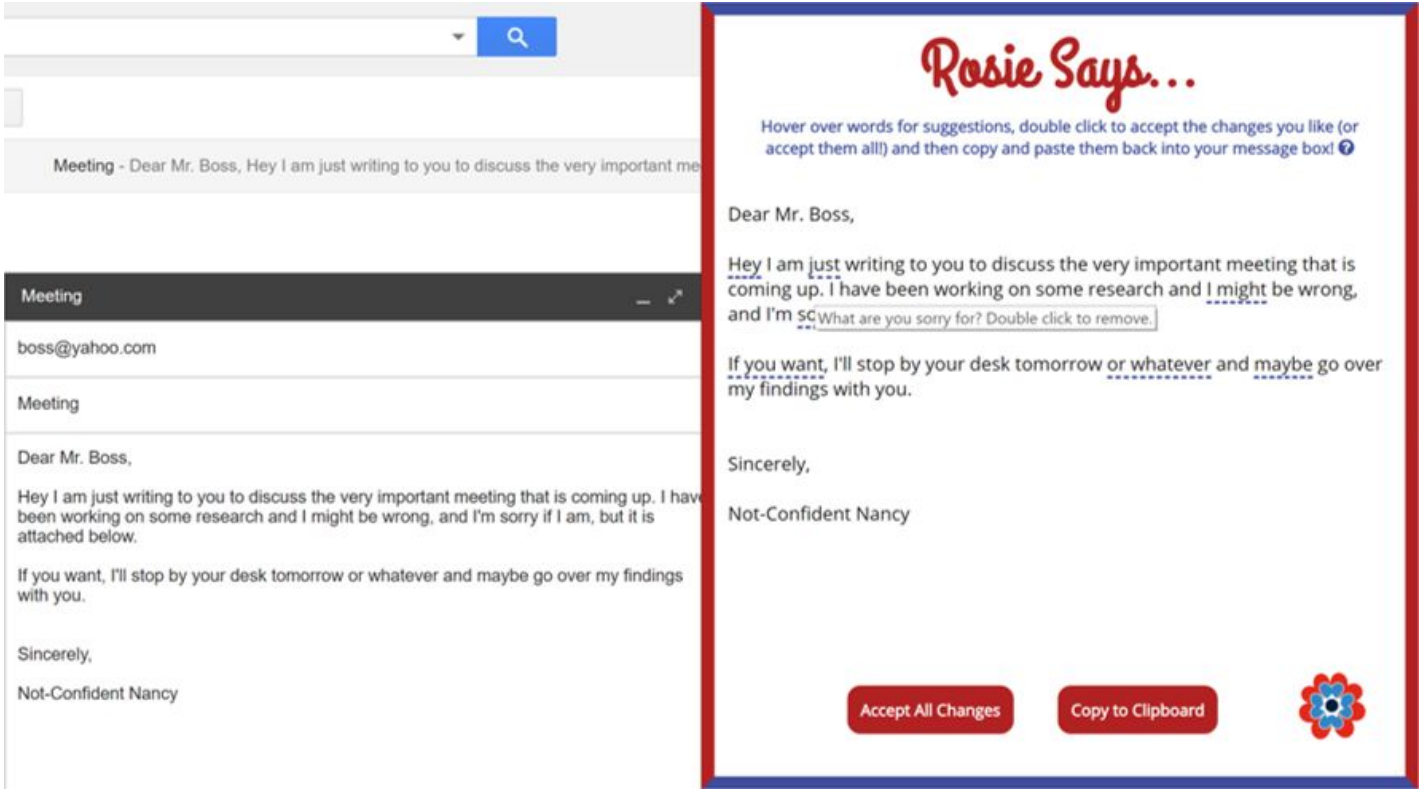
We polled over 100 women about their personal experiences with undermining language, and how important they think language is. We also used this poll to gather data on the words and phrases that they believe show low confidence. As shown in graph below, **72.9%** of women rated language as a 9 or a 10 (incredibly important) in making impressions.



Our Solution

Our solution is Rosie, named for Rosie the Riveter, who is a symbol for female empowerment in the workplace. Rosie is a Chrome extension that detects undermining language and suggests more confident phrasing to help women represent themselves as the professionals they are. Competing extensions have existed for one email platform or another - Rosie can be used with several common business communication tools, including Gmail, Outlook, Yahoo, LinkedIn, and Slack.

Rosie In Action



Contributions

We programmed as a trio to develop this project because we equally wanted to gain experience in text analysis, Chrome Extension development, and web design.

The major steps to building this project were:

1. Interacting with the web page to get the message to our extension
2. Having the extension recognize undermining language
3. Display warnings, explanations, and suggestions to make language stronger
4. Ability to copy new message back into the input box

Going forward

We will keep improving Rosie's ability to detect undermining language.

1. Using Google Analytics, we plan to analyze how people are using our extension and focus our efforts on teaching users to write confidently.
2. We will explore more complex natural language processing methods.
3. We will promote this extension in our school, in our community, and through social media. It is available for download on the Chrome Web Store.
4. To increase usability, we will have a website that can perform text analysis on any text from any platform, including papers.