

# Mediation: How to soften expressions



Present criticism not as a general opinion but as something that only one person or group believes. Point out that you are giving the author's views → focus on one personal opinion

Examples:

- "The author comes to the conclusion that..."
- "To him/her it seems logical that..."
- "If we consider the political slant of the newspaper it does not really come as a surprise that the author sees...."

Avoid phrases or words that have negative connotations and try to use more neutral or weaker terms instead.

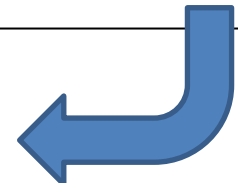
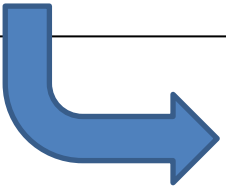
Examples:

- "a regime" → "an administration"
- "... acts criminally..." → "does not act in accordance with the law"
- "global bully" → "a feeling that ... is acting far too dominantly in the world"

Using opposites can help, too:

"this state acts in a totalitarian way" → "In this respect, the country is absolutely not acting the way a free and democratic state should"

Have you noticed? The present progressive further softens the original statement ( → not always, only at the moment). "In this respect" limits the generalizing first statement to one aspect only.



**Combine both ways if it makes sense!**

Example:

"The NSA violates human rights." → "The author claims that the NSA seems to have a problem with human rights."

**BUT** make sure that you don't lose the original meaning!