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Guidelines for
Women & Girls in Sport

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Concepts:

Inclusive, Relatable, Empowering, Inspiration, Proud, Grit,
Determination, Strength, Tough, Action, Competition, Wellbeing,
Positive, Purpose, Coaching, Confidence, Power, Skill, Success,
Individuality, Collaboration, Courage, Support, Authentic, Grace,
Diversity, Speed, Passion, Dedication, Teamwork, Togetherness,
Friendship, Concentration, Perseverance. Optimism. Compassion.

Key moments:

Motion, interaction, collaboration,
competition, celebration/consolation, coaching/mentoring, practising

- Data consistently shows that women are not participating in sport in the same numbers as men

- One of the issues identified is the lack of media coverage of women's sport (beyond the Olympics)

- Visually, we need to ensure that professional sport is inspiring and iconic , whilst also showing relatable moments that corporate brands can use commercially to promote sport

- More importantly, we need to evolve the visual language of female sport that is seen in education, the media and mainstream advertising

Show diverse visuals of women and girls in sport that:

- Defy gender stereotypes by showing what female athletes are capable of rather than what they look like

- Reflect the energy and power of editorial visuals from professional sporting events

Points to consider:

Authenticity & Attractiveness

‣ Is active becoming more attractive or do you need to look even more attractive when active nowadays?

‣ How attractive should an image be if it is authentic?

‣ We know there is a pressure to be camera-ready. How do we move the visual language forward without focusing on good looks?

‣ Are you showing female athletes and women in sport more holistically, showing all sides of their character and ability?

‣ Are you showing various sides to the female athletes, or women in sport? Showing a range of emotions, on their own, in a group, at various moments throughout the sport being played?

‣ Are you conscious of the focal point of your shot? Are you often showing tight shots of body parts that can be read sexually? Close-ups on chest area or backside? How does this fit into the context of what you're trying to reflect?

▸ How often do you show your female athlete in different expressions of emotion? Is she determined? Is she fierce? Is she angry? Have you allowed her to express the full range of emotion that can be experienced when playing sports?

▸ Are you showing women of different ethnicities, playing sport, equally and authentically?

▸ Do you avoid showing grime, dirt, sweat and blood or anger or frustration because it appears "indecent" or "unladylike"?

▸ Do you only focus on the interpersonal dynamics between female athletes in team or individual sports?

▸ Are you frequently seeking out reflecting concepts such as teamwork, collaboration or emotional support to the exclusion of other concepts?

▸ How are you fully representing the skill and athleticism of female athletes in their particular sport? Do you show their full physicality in your active/movement shots? Do you show them in the moment of action rather than before or after the action?

▸ Are you selecting your primary subjects based on the appeal of their physical appearance? Are you after a specific body type that is lean and strong, yet still soft and womanly? Are you showing real bodies of all shapes, sizes, muscularity, etc.?

🔗 **View board for examples**

Points to consider:

Female Participation in Competitive Sport

▸ What does competitiveness look like for females in sport?

▸ Are you showing female athletes as athletes and not fitness models?

▸ Do you tend to avoid showing female subjects in direct competition with one another? Do you tend to frame a competitive-looking subject by herself, or with other players?

▸ Are you showing female staff supporting or orbiting competitive athletic teams? Female coaches? Female trainers? Female medical staff? Female journalists? Female organisational staff? Etc.

▸ In terms of fans observing competitive sport, are you showing female fans as engaged or enthusiastic observers? Are you being representative in showing female fans?

View board for examples

Points to consider:

Body Language

‣ What poses should we avoid in a non-sport setting?

‣ How intimate should the intimate moments be?

‣ Are you using images of women and girls in the same way as you use images of men and boys playing sport? Are you providing an equitable range of options of different moments for female participants in sport?

‣ How are you showing achievement or success in the sport the women and girls are participating in?

Points to consider:
Inclusive Sports

▸ What sports are we showing females participating in and who is shooting this sport?

▸ Are we focusing on demographics where we know there is a lack of inspirational imagery? 50+ females (drop off rate), teenage females (drop off rate)

▸ If an athlete has a disability, does your focal point end up being the disability rather than the whole experience of playing their sport?

▸ Do you only show your disabled athlete in isolation or are you fully representing how they fit within a larger team?

▸ Are you checking whether or not you're "othering" your trans or non-binary athlete by focusing on certain aspects of their physical appearance? (e.g. musculature, body hair, etc.)

- ‣ Are you representing a varied range in physical appearances for senior athletes? (Different body types, skin tones, hair colours, etc.)

- ‣ Are you accounting for regional and/or religious differences in styling and dress?

- ‣ What about female and non-binary coaches?

- ‣ Are you showing female support staff?

- ‣ How are you representing parenthood in female sport? Are you showing pregnant athletes? Are you showing parents of young female athletes?

View board for examples

Recommendations

‣ Focus on diversity in age, ethnicity, ability and realistic body shapes for the sport being visualised

‣ Females should look action-oriented, not passive

‣ Males should be collaborative and supportive

‣ Action must be believable

‣ Show technical aspects to demonstrate the skill of the sport

‣ Show emotions—and include the whole range of emotions in addition to joy: anger, disappointment, determination, frustration, love, pain, happiness

‣ Sweat, grit and blood are all okay, where appropriate
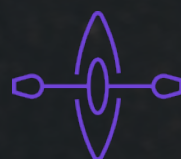
‣ Remember to show female support staff

Sports

Extreme sports:

Car racing, motorcycle racing, skydivers, paragliders, downhill and off-road cycling, road bike racing, BMX, powerboating

Team sports:

Soccer, basketball, rugby, field hockey, cricket, baseball, softball, roller derby, American football, dodgeball, netball, competitive cheerleading

Water sports:

Swimming, diving, surfing, canoeing, sailing, rowing, water polo, windsurfing, water skiing

Winter sports:

Skiing, snowboarding, cross country skiing, ice hockey, skating, bobsleigh, curling, luge, speed skating

Racquet sports:

Tennis, lacrosse, badminton, squash, table tennis, pickleball

Precision sports:

Golf, archery, bowling, darts, shooting, snooker or pool

Combat sports:

Fencing, wrestling, boxing, martial arts, UFC/MMA

Track and field sports:

Sprinters, shot put, javelin, high jump, long jump, pole vault, hurdles, steeplechase, middle distance, long distance, relay, hammer throw, discus, marathon runners, extreme runners, obstacle courses, heptathlon, triathlon, speed walking

Strength and agility sports:

Gymnastics, trampolining, weightlifting, Crossfit-style competition, horse racing, show jumping, climbing and mountaineering, parkour, slacklining

Top ten most popular youth/teen female sports:

Track and field (outdoor), volleyball, basketball, soccer, softball, cross-country, tennis, swimming & diving, competitive spirit (cheer, etc.), lacrosse.