**Guidelines for Talking About Scams and Scam Awareness**

When creating content about scams, it's important to be mindful of the language you use. Certain phrases or sayings can unintentionally blame or **stigmatise** individuals who have been scammed or **come across as judgmental**. This guide will help you avoid problematic language and focus on empowering, supportive, and **empathetic messaging**.

**Phrases to Avoid**

**Phrases That Imply Blame or Lack of Intelligence**

* "Don’t fall for it."
* "Only gullible people get scammed."
* "Be smarter than this."
* "Don’t be fooled."
* "It’s common sense."
* "How could you not see this coming?"
* "Don’t let them trick you."
* "Wise up."
* "Think twice before you act."

**Phrases That Label or Stigmatise**

* "Don’t be a victim."
* "Victim of your own mistakes."
* "Only naive people get scammed."
* "You must be too trusting."
* "Only careless people get scammed."
* "Suckers fall for scams."
* "You walked right into it."

**Overly Simplistic or Dismissive Advice**

* "Just don’t click the link."
* "If it’s too good to be true, it is."
* "It’s your fault if you get scammed."
* "Why didn’t you just Google it?"
* "You should’ve known better."
* "That was an obvious scam."
* "Ignore it and it’ll go away."

**Phrases That Can Sound Condescending**

* "Stay smart."
* "Don’t let your guard down."
* "Use your head."
* "You can’t trust anyone."
* "It’s your job to be careful."
* "How did you let this happen?"

**Positive Alternatives**

Instead of focusing on blame or stigma, use language that is empowering, educational, and supportive. Here are some examples:

* "Stay informed, stay safe."
* "Recognise the warning signs of scams."
* "Scams can happen to anyone."
* "Protect yourself and your loved ones."
* "Here’s how to stay a step ahead of scammers."
* "Let’s outsmart scammers together."
* "Be prepared, not scared."
* "Learn how to spot a scam and take action."

**Why This Matters**

The way we talk about scams impacts how people feel about reporting them and seeking help. Avoiding judgmental or condescending language ensures that individuals feel supported and encouraged to learn without fear of being blamed.

By using empathetic and empowering messaging, you can create content that resonates with a wide audience and fosters a sense of community in addressing scams.