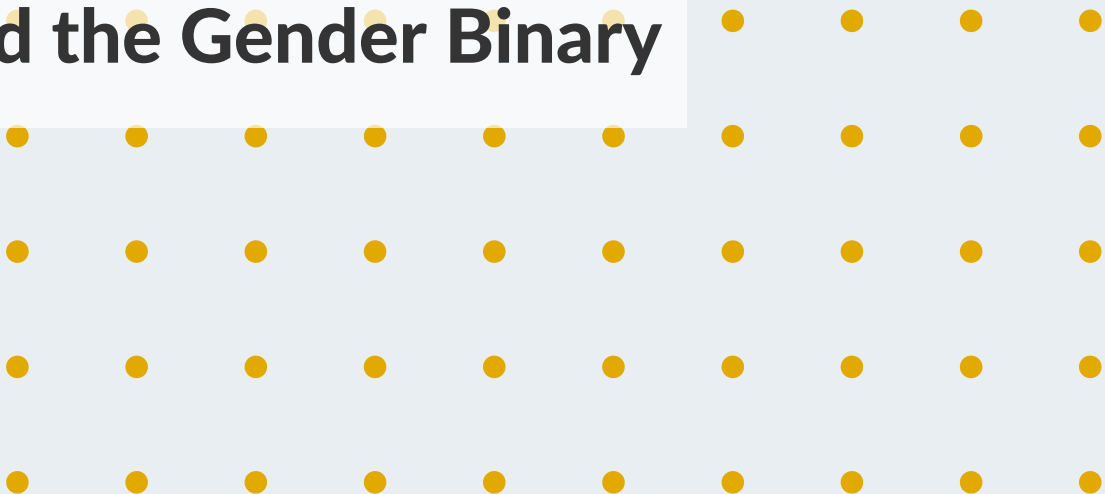


Pronouns & Gender Diversity



Inclusion
Beyond the Gender Binary



What is *Non-Binary* Gender?

In many cultures around the world, there exists a long history of a strongly ingrained, traditional gender identification that includes two distinct genders: men and women.



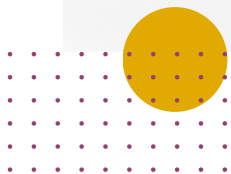
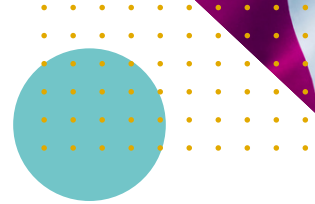
However, some people do not identify their gender as fitting into the traditional binary categories of male or female, which is often referred to as “non-binary” gender identification. It covers a range of ways people identify their gender.



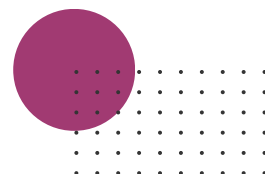
Some individuals also express their identity as more fluid, meaning that it can change over time. Respecting everyone’s gender identification is crucial, whether or not it falls into traditional gender categories.

Respecting Diverse Pronouns in the Workplace

In modern society, there is a growing number of people who gender-identify in ways that do not conform to the gender binary, even in cultures where this binary has long been accepted as the norm.



This means that inclusive, DEI-focused workplaces need to be aware of the correct use of pronouns as a way to appropriately address and identify all people in the way that they choose.



Since the English language is currently acknowledging nonconforming genders, people choose pronouns based on what they feel best represents who they are. It is pivotal that this choice is seen and respected by all team members and leaders.

Examples of pronouns



- He/him/his
- She/her/hers
- They/them/theirs (as singular)
- Ze/hir/hir (pron. "zee/here")
- Xe/xem/xyr (pron. "zee/zem/zeer")
- Ey/em/eir (pron. "ay/em/air")
- And others

Pronouns can also be used in various combinations such as "He/them/theirs", "Ze/her/hers", etc.

It's important to note that you can't assume someone's pronouns based on their appearances.

How people choose to identify, and the pronouns they use, has to do with how they feel, not how they look.

Why Pronoun Inclusion is Important



Using correct pronouns builds interpersonal trust, while using incorrect pronouns can negatively impact relationships if coworkers don't feel respected and seen.

But it's a learning process, and making mistakes is ok as long as you acknowledge and correct them.



Tips for Pronoun Usage

Here are some tips about pronoun usage to ensure that everyone feels included and accepted at work, regardless of gender identity:

- **Educate and train colleagues about pronouns.**

Since the use of varying pronouns is a relatively new topic in many workplaces, it's helpful to offer some team training about why inclusive pronoun usage matters. It's important that everyone feels comfortable with this, and is on the same page to help build an inclusive work environment.

- **Respect when people share pronouns in email signatures, online profiles, or directly in conversation.**

When individuals share gender-identifying pronouns, whether online or verbally, be respectful of their choice. This allows everyone to know how coworkers choose to identify. Also, sharing pronouns isn't only for non-binary people—to show support, foster a sense of belonging, and create clarity about gender identification, everyone who feels comfortable doing so can directly share pronouns in this way.

- **Correct mistakes with pronoun usage.**

If you accidentally use the wrong pronouns for someone, acknowledge and briefly correct the error. Also, if you notice colleagues misgendering someone, simply and gently correct them as well.

- **Avoid microaggressions.**

Whether you relate according to traditional gender binary or non-binary identification, you can try to avoid microaggressions and other misunderstandings by using non-binary language. Common phrases such as "ladies and gentlemen", for example, are not inclusive of nonbinary genders. It's important to use gender-inclusive language instead, such as "everyone", "folks", "colleagues", etc.

Using people's chosen pronouns doesn't have to be a complicated issue. It's simply part of being a diverse and inclusive workplace where everyone feels seen for who they are, validated, and accepted.

This contributes to interpersonal relationship-building, increased productivity and engagement, and employee longevity.



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