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# GENDER INCLUSIVITY STARTER KIT



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# CONTENTS

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Foundations
- 3 Representation Matters
- 4 Creating an Inclusive Workspace
- 5 Common Questions
- 6 Additional Resources
- 7 Next Steps



# INTRODUCTION

## WHY DOES GENDER INCLUSIVITY MATTER?

In today's diverse and globalized workplace, promoting LGBTQIA+ inclusivity is no longer a nicety, but a necessity. By fostering an inclusive environment, businesses can reap numerous benefits that positively impact their bottom line.

### Enhanced Employee Well-being and Productivity

When employees feel accepted and valued for who they are, their overall well-being and job satisfaction improve. This leads to:

- Increased productivity and engagement
- Reduced stress levels and absenteeism
- Improved mental and physical health

### Improved Team Dynamics and Collaboration

Gender inclusivity fosters a sense of belonging among team members, leading to:

- Better collaboration and communication
- Increased innovation and creativity
- Enhanced problem-solving and decision-making

### Attracting and Retaining Top Talent

An inclusive workplace is a major draw for top talent. By promoting gender inclusivity, businesses can:

- Attract a broader range of job seekers
- Increase diversity and reduce turnover
- Improve their reputation and brand

### Legal and Ethical Responsibility

Promoting gender inclusivity is not only the right thing to do, but also a legal and ethical responsibility. Businesses must ensure their workplace is free from discrimination and harassment to:

- Comply with labor laws and regulations
- Protect their reputation and brand
- Foster a positive and respectful work environment



# FOUNDATIONS

## Sexual Orientation



Who you are attracted to romantically, emotionally, and sexually

## Gender Identity



Who you ARE.  
Male, female, genderqueer, non-binary

**CISGENDER** A person whose gender identity aligns with the sex they were assigned at birth.

**TRANSGENDER** A person whose gender identity does not align with the sex they were assigned at birth.

**NON-BINARY** A person whose gender identity does not fit within the traditional male/female binary.

**GENDERQUEER** A person whose gender identity is a combination of male and female, or neither male nor female.

**TWO-SPIRIT** A term originating from Indigenous North American communities, describing individuals who possess a balance of masculine and feminine spirits, roles, or identities.

**AGENDER** A person who does not identify with any gender.

**DEAD NAME** The birth name of a transgender person, which they may no longer use or identify with.

**MISGENDER** To refer to someone using a gender that does not align with their actual gender identity.

**Outdated/Incorrect Terminology:** A Transgender (noun), Transgendered, Passing, Transsexual, Sex Change, Pre-Op / Post-Op



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# REPRESENTATION MATTERS

Creating a welcoming environment begins with a simple yet powerful act: **being an ally**. Open the door for others to share their identities by demonstrating that you are a safe space.



ENGLISH: singular they/them/their  
*"My friend is nonbinary. For them it is important to embrace their full human diversity beyond arbitrary gender roles."*



## Share Pronouns

- Encourage all employees, including cisgender individuals, to share their pronouns in email signatures, introductions, or name tags
- Create a culture where employees feel comfortable sharing their pronouns and where others respect and use them correctly

## Maintain Gender-Neutral Language

- Use gender-neutral language in company communications, policies, and documentation
- Avoid using language that assumes a person's gender identity or expression
- Use inclusive language that respects all gender identities, such as "they" instead of "he" or "she"

## Display Inclusive Symbols

- Display the Progress Pride flag or other inclusive symbols in your workplace, such as in a common area or on your company's website
- Use these symbols to demonstrate your company's commitment to inclusivity and support for LGBTQ+ individuals

## Celebrate LGBTQ+-related Events and Awareness Months

- Observe LGBTQ+-related awareness months, such as Pride Month (June) or Transgender Awareness Month (November)
- Celebrate LGBTQ+-related events, such as the International Transgender Day of Visibility (March) or National Coming Out Day (October)
- Use these opportunities to educate employees, promote inclusivity, and show support for LGBTQ+ individuals



# CREATING AN INCLUSIVE WORKSPACE

A welcoming and inclusive workspace is essential for fostering a sense of belonging among all employees, regardless of their gender identity or expression. Here are some simple ways to foster inclusivity in a professional environment.

## Inclusive Titles and Language

- Offer non-gendered title options, such as "Mx." or "They," on paperwork and forms, in addition to traditional titles like "Mr.," "Mrs.," or "Ms."
- Encourage employees to share their preferred titles and pronouns as part of their introductions, and include them on name badges, email signatures, and desk name plates. This helps promote a culture of respect and inclusivity.
- Address groups in gender-neutral terms, avoiding assumptions about someone's gender based on their appearance or name. Use inclusive language to create a welcoming environment for everyone.

<input type="checkbox"/> Mr.	Legal Name	<input type="checkbox"/> They/Them
<input type="checkbox"/> Mrs.	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> She/Her
<input type="checkbox"/> Ms.	Preferred Name	<input type="checkbox"/> He/Him
<input type="checkbox"/> Mx.	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____		

Links to [www.pronouns.org](http://www.pronouns.org)



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### ~~Gendered Language~~

~~Ladies and Gentleman  
Boyfriend/Girlfriend  
Guys/Girls  
Husband/Wife  
Mother/Father  
Brother/Sister~~

### Neutral Language

Everyone/Folks/Team  
Partner/Date  
Friends/Buddies  
Spouse  
Parent  
Sibling



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# CREATING AN INCLUSIVE WORKSPACE

## Inclusive Facilities

- Provide gender-neutral restrooms and facilities, and ensure that these are clearly labeled and accessible
- Display directions to gender-neutral bathrooms so people do not need to ask

## Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)

- Encourage and support ERGs for LGBTQ+ employees, which can provide a safe space for networking, support, and community-building.
- Ensure that ERGs are inclusive and welcoming to all employees, regardless of their background or identity.

## Inclusive Policies and Practices

- Ensure that employee records and forms are inclusive of all gender identities, and that employees can update their records to reflect their chosen name and gender markers.
- Develop and implement a workplace gender transition plan or policy, which outlines the steps that the company will take to support employees who are transitioning.
- Provide training for employees on using respectful language and pronouns, and ensure that this training is ongoing and regularly updated
- Ensure all internal policies such as dress codes and parental leave are written in gender-neutral language.



# COMMON QUESTIONS

## What if I can't figure out what gender someone is?

Directly asking for someone's pronouns is not rude, it is a sign of respect. You can also ask without asking by stating your own pronouns: "Hello. My name is Greg. My pronouns are He/Him. It's nice to meet you." By default, you can use the person's name in lieu of a pronoun and stick to they/them until their preferred pronouns are known.

## What if I Accidentally Use the Wrong Pronouns?

Apologize, correct yourself, and move forward. It's not about being perfect; it's about showing respect and making an effort. An apology and correction will be seen as a sincere effort to respect one's identity.

## Isn't Cisgender a Slur?

Some people may claim that "cisgender" is a slur against gender-normative people, but it is not. "Cisgender" is simply a term used to describe individuals whose gender identity aligns with the sex they were assigned at birth. Using this term helps to create a more inclusive environment by acknowledging and respecting the diversity of gender identities.

## Won't People Be Offended if I Question Their Gender?

Asking for someone's pronouns or gender identity is a sign of respect, not offense. It's better to ask politely than to assume someone's gender identity. If you use the wrong pronouns or gender identity, apologize and correct yourself.

## If I Share My Pronouns, Won't People Think I'm Transgender?

No, sharing your pronouns doesn't imply that you're transgender. Normalizing the practice of sharing pronouns is a terrific way to open the door for others to share their pronouns comfortably.

## Wouldn't allowing transgender individuals to use bathrooms that align with their gender identity compromise the safety of cisgender people?

No. There have been zero confirmed cases of a transgender person attacking or harassing a cisgender person in public restrooms while, according to a 2023 study by the Washington Post, 1 in 4 transgender adults say they have been physically attacked.





# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

## Online Resources:

- **GLAAD Media Reference Guide:** A comprehensive guide to LGBTQ+ terminology and best practices for media professionals.
- **Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Workplace Resources:** A collection of resources and guides for creating an inclusive workplace.
- **The Trevor Project:** A national organization providing crisis intervention and suicide prevention services for LGBTQ+ youth.
- **PFLAG:** A national organization providing support, education, and advocacy for LGBTQ+ individuals and their families.

## Books:

- **"The Transgender Studies Reader"** edited by Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle
- **"Gender Outlaws: The Next Generation"** edited by Kate Bornstein and S. Bear Bergman
- **"Queer: A Graphic History"** by Meg-John Barker and Julia Scheele
- **"Unconditional: A Guide to Loving and Accepting Your LGBTQ+ Child"** by Telaina Eriksen

## Hotlines and Support Services:

- **The Trevor Project Hotline:** 1-866-488-7386
- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:** 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- **GLAAD LGBTQ+ Media Hotline:** 1-646-871-8012



# NEXT STEPS

Congratulations on taking the first step towards creating a more inclusive workplace! To further support your organization's journey towards gender inclusivity, consider the following next steps:

## Customized Materials for Your Workplace

Queer Edge Consulting offers customized materials tailored to your industry and workplace needs. Whether you're in healthcare, law, education, or another field, we can provide:

- Industry-specific guidance on creating inclusive policies and practices
- Tailored resources and support for your employees
- Expert advice on navigating complex issues related to gender inclusivity

## Gender Inclusivity Training for Your Staff

Take your workplace inclusivity to the next level with Queer Edge Consulting's expert-led training sessions. Our training programs are designed to:

- Educate staff on the importance of gender inclusivity
- Provide practical strategies for creating a welcoming environment
- Foster a culture of respect and empathy

## Arrange a Consultation

Ready to explore how Queer Edge Consulting can support your organization's inclusivity goals? Arrange a consultation with us to discuss:

- Customized materials and resources for your workplace
- Gender inclusivity training programs tailored to your staff's needs
- Expert guidance on creating a more inclusive workplace culture

Contact us today to take the next step towards creating a more inclusive and welcoming workplace for all employees.

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