Best Practices for Gender Inclusion for Businesses and Organizations

Awareness rarely keeps up with the rapid changes in the transgender, nonbinary, and gender-diverse communities. Revisit and revise any policies for gender inclusion every year with the help of local gender diverse individuals who approach the material from an intersectional viewpoint.

This document is an incomplete list. For reasons why each of the points below are necessary, or to learn about more best practices beyond this list, talk with your local transgender advocacy group(s) or book a workshop from Lavender Pi.

Facilities

1. The spirit of building code attempts to ensure that everyone who will enter any given building will have access to restrooms regardless of gender or disability. **Install gender neutral restrooms in all locations where they are missing** to bring your building(s) up to the spirit of the code.

2. If your place of business/gathering has locker rooms, showers, saunas, or any other traditionally gender-segregated space: **ensure that gender neutral facilities with all the same amenities are available**.

3. **Install wayfinding signage for new and existing gender neutral restroom, locker room, etc facilities.** Replace any signage for gender neutral facilities that has an image of masculine and feminine figures side by side. This denotes a pair of men's and women's facilities, which makes wayfinding confusing for those seeking gender neutral facilities.

Best Practices

1. **Host all meetings and events at locations with gender-neutral restrooms close by** to avoid infrastructural discrimination and support the participation of gender-diverse stakeholders. Ensure that these restrooms are disability-accessible.

2. **Make pronouns an explicit and explicitly optional part of introductions at meetings and events.** ("Say your name, your pronouns if you feel like it, and…")

3. **Make pronouns an explicit and explicitly optional part of e-mail signature blocks.** Encourage leadership in particular to use this feature.

4. **Do not "default to they/them for everyone."** This is a form of misgendering. **DO use they/them when referring to people who use they/them personal pronouns.**

5. **Use personal pronoun-free language in documentation and when speaking aloud about individuals who have not shared their pronouns.** Lavender Pi offers a workshop on how to do this.

6. **Correct yourself and your coworkers immediately when you or your coworkers misgender someone, even if it is behind that person's back**. This promotes a culture of inclusion. Use the social scripts provided on the "Free Resources" page of Lavender Pi's website: LavenderPi.com.

7. **Disentangle "sex" and "gender" in your mind and in the workplace.** Conflating sex with gender, whether on purpose or by accident, is the root of most transphobic and/or cissexist thought, speech, and action.

8. **Do not use "mothers" or "fathers" as blanket terms for people whose bodies are involved in specific reproductive roles.** This is an extension from the point above. **DO use "mother" or "father" for individual people who have self-described as using these terms**. Extend this concept to other gendered relationship and title words.

9. **Use "menstrual products" rather than "feminine hygiene products."** This acknowledges that some people who menstruate aren't women. Extend this concept to remove gendering from other inanimate objects.

10. **Update forms to remove unnecessary gender questions, and update any necessary gender questions to be inclusive.** Gender likes to hide in forms, so make sure the entire form is evaluated, and not just the gender question itself.

11. **Ensure that your digital systems allow employees and other stakeholders who must share sex and gender to do so accurately.** At a minimum, this means that "intersex" needs to be a sex option, and "X" and "Indigenous 2-Spirit" need to be gender options. However, write-in options are best for both of these questions.

12. **Update old documentation that still uses "he/she" language.** Instead, rewrite sentences so that the pronouns are not necessary. Lavender Pi offers a workshop that covers how to do this, and is often available for hire for document review.

13. **Ensure that your DEI leader(s)/team(s) have been trained in gender awareness through an intersectional lens.**