



What are gender pronouns and why do they matter?

All individuals should be treated with dignity and respect in the workplace. To that end, it is important to use the name, pronouns, and title with which a person self-identifies.

This guide is intended to provide a better understanding of gender pronouns.

How do we know what pronouns to use with our coworkers?

By respectfully and politely asking someone what pronouns should be used! It's as simple as that.

What are some examples of how to ask?

- "Hi, what are your preferred pronouns?"
- "What pronouns do you use?"

You can also lead by example! Share your pronouns and give the opportunity for others to share too.

What is gender neutral language?

Using gender-neutral language can be an extremely helpful way to make people feel comfortable and respected!

Examples include:

Avoiding the use of terms ending in "man" to describe an all-encompassing idea (examples of this include Policeman, Fireman, Congressman, Salesman, man hours, manmade)

Using terms such as "Folks" or "All" instead of "Guys" or "Ladies and gentleman." For example, "Hello Folks! Thanks for joining the meeting."

Saying they/their instead of his/hers. For example, "If an employee wishes to go on vacation, they must clear it with their manager."

What if I make a mistake?

It's ok! We're all learning and mistakes happen. You don't have to linger on using someone's pronouns incorrectly. Just apologize and continue to be aware of each individual's preferred pronouns.

What are the pronouns and what do they mean?

- **He/Him/His**

Considered gender specific; may be called "male/masculine" pronouns.

- **She/Her/Hers**

Considered gender specific; may be called "female/feminine" pronouns.

- **They/Them/Their**

The pronoun "they" is generally considered to be gender neutral and the most inclusive pronoun.

Example: "***They*** are a writer and wrote that book ***themselves***. Those ideas are ***theirs***. I like both ***them*** and ***their*** ideas."

- **Ey/Em/Eir**

As deviations of "they, them, their," these gender neutral pronouns became popular when the singular pronoun ability of "they, them, their" was no longer commonly used.

- **Zie/Zim/Zirs**

This is the most popular form of a gender-free pronoun.

- **Per/Pers/Perself**

Another form of gender free pronouns which derives from the word "person."

- **Ve/Ver/Vis**

This gender neutral pronoun is most commonly used with people who identify as asexual i.e. a person who has no sexual feelings or desires.

- / / 's

The blanks represent a person's desire to not use any prescribed pronoun. Instead they would prefer exclusive use of their given name.

Example: Jenny would like you to attend Jenny's party.