

Workshop: International Pronouns Day presented by Workplace Pride



On Thursday 16th November 2023 Workplace Pride explained the importance of using Pronouns to promote an inclusive culture.

Let us start with data:

46% of employees in USA & UK, and 50% of European LGBTQ+ workers do not reveal their sexual orientation or gender identity in their private or professional lives.

34% of Generation Z are not exclusively heterosexual, compared to 39% of Millennials, 15% of Generation X, and 12% of Baby Boomers, who identify as not exclusively heterosexual.

LGBTQ+ community members who feel comfortable to be their authentic selves in the workplace, feel 2x greater psychological safety, feel 1.5x more empowered, and 1.5x more able to take creative risks within the workplace.



What are pronouns?

He/Him
She/Her
They / Them

Benefits for all:

Hiring the best talent
Promoting inclusion among employees
Inclusive culture = competitive advantage

What is psychological safety?

Psychological safety is the belief that you won't be punished or humiliated for speaking up with ideas, questions, concerns, or mistakes. At work, it's a shared expectation held by members of a team that teammates will not embarrass, reject, or punish them for sharing ideas, taking risks, or soliciting feedback.

Psychological safety at work *doesn't* mean that everybody is nice to each other all the time. It means that people feel free to "brainstorm out loud," voice half-finished thoughts, openly challenge the status quo, share feedback, and work through disagreements together – knowing that leaders value honesty, candor, and truth-telling, and that team members will have one another's backs.

And contributes towards Group Health & Safety's [Wellbeing Framework](#).



But why bother?

Using gender pronouns indicates to people that you respect LGBTQ+ inclusion, whether they are friends, family, colleagues, or customers.

It lets those who may not feel comfortable talking about their personal life know that you are aware of challenges around LGBTQ+ inclusion.

It helps promote an inclusive environment and culture by increasing psychological safety.

It will identify you as an ally.

So what?

All leaders must focus on culture change in order to improve employee' interactions with colleagues, direct managers, and leadership (often referred to as touch points).

Negative touch points are costly - employees who experience more negative touch points are 40% less productive and 13 times more likely to quit a job.

Actions to consider for the future

Add pronouns to your email signature, and social media profiles.

Consider starting meetings with new people, introducing your name as well as pronouns (especially consider this during interviews with new candidates).

Refer to theoretical people using them/they, instead of gendered pronouns.

European non-binary pronouns available on page 3



**We believe in EVERY employee's
right to be SEEN & respected
See Everyone Equally Now**

So how do we tackle non-binary pronouns throughout Europe?

As some European languages are gender specific, it can be difficult to identify the right terminology or words to use. Duolingo have done some research and propose:

LANGUAGE	GENDER-NEUTRAL PRONOUNS
English	they/them/themself ze/hir/hirself xe/xyr/xyrself ve/ves/veself ey/em/emself <i>and many more! English has near-infinite neopronoun options</i>
Spanish	elle
French	iel øl al
German	xier/xies/dier sier/sies/dier
Portuguese	elu
Italian	There is a movement to use the schwa letter, ə, in place of the vowel that signals gender in most words, as in "ləi"; or you can cut the end of the word so that it is genderless
Galician	eli elu
Catalan	elli

Find out more here on Duolingo: [Gender Neutral Pronouns In Other Languages \(duolingo.com\)](https://www.duolingo.com/learn/gender-neutral-pronouns)