

1.6.2: Introduction to Working across Genders

What you'll learn to do: Discuss the how gender impacts communication in the workplace



What's in a chromosome (or two)? The difference in the pair of sex chromosomes determines whether a child is assigned female (XX) or male (XY) at birth has a significant impact on the individual's personal and professional development. It is not biology that affects our experience and expectations in the workplace (as some who would justify gender inequality would propose), but socialization, an accumulation of cultural, historical, and legal precedent that has created the gender divide in our society.

According to the Brookings Institution “large gaps remain between men and women in employment rates, the jobs they hold, the wages they earn, and their overall economic security.” This is not just a women's issue. In a publication from the Hamilton Project at Brookings, the authors conclude that “barriers to workforce participation for women are stifling the growth of the U.S. economy, and that future economic success hinges on improving career prospects and working environments for all women.”^[1]

Over the years, gendered terms (for example, “men”) have come to be interpreted more broadly; that is, as referring to both men and women, but the language is hardly inclusive. Indeed, the concept of gender as binary—that is, either female or male—may itself be an anachronism. As the traditional ideas of gender and gender identity are evolving and in order to adapt to a changing reality, the language and operating framework must change accordingly.

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1. Burke, Alison. “10 facts about American women in the workforce.” *Brookings*, 05 Dec 2017. Web. 26 June 2018.

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