

A Few Things You Can Do

- ◆ Don't mistake this brief talk for actual training
- ◆ Allow employees to go by a preferred name that differs from their legal name in all communication with them and name tags
- ◆ Enable employees to change their gender marker with their employer with a formalized (not ad-hoc) process
- ◆ Employees should be able to use the change room or washroom that corresponds to their gender identity
- ◆ Don't disclose that an employee is trans without their consent (and consent once isn't consent always)
- ◆ Ask the employee how they want you to handle times they are misgendered (eg. correct the pronoun for them)
- ◆ Monitor diversity - eg. percentage of women in executive positions and in technical roles - as improving those metrics will invariably make workplaces more accessible
- ◆ Managers hire people like them - mitigate that bias by anonymizing CV's, pre-commit to a set of interview questions, vary where you do outreach
- ◆ Get creative - look for ways to evaluate candidates that de-emphasize the need for references (see tech sector)
- ◆ Be careful when trying to be relatable to a trans employee - don't say you studied trans people in psychology, or ask them about their genitals ("the surgery") or identify a trans family member only to misgender them

Online Resources

Trans people and the workplace:

<https://goo.gl/QfSFYk>

Avoiding bias in recruitment and hiring:

<https://goo.gl/FXeX5o>

Ontario Human Rights Commission guidelines:

<https://goo.gl/TyP6js>

Study identifying barriers trans people in

Ontario face in the workplace:

<https://goo.gl/BQJQ4>

Guidelines oriented to employers of trans youth, but applicable to all:

<https://goo.gl/8dw5Rx>

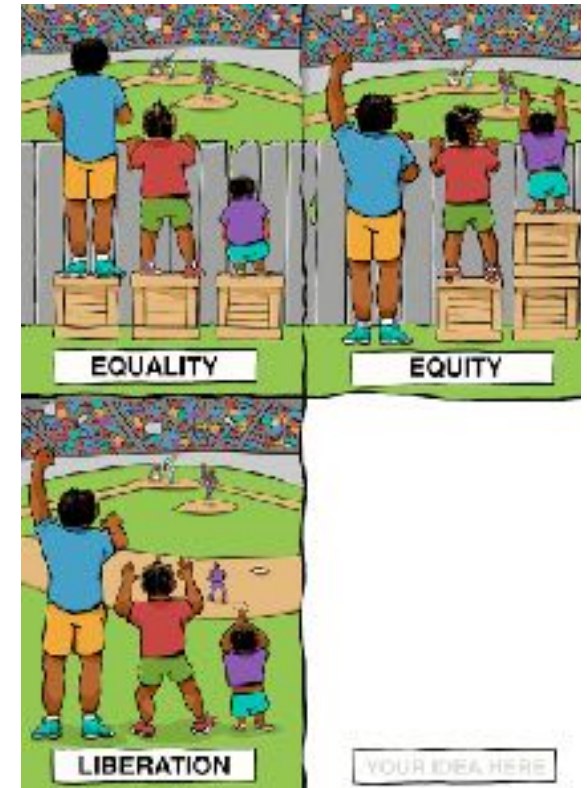
16 minute funny video primer on trans issues:

<https://goo.gl/1XSmNL>

Gender identity primer as a comic:

<http://goo.gl/06t3mC>

Trans People & Workplaces



Graphic on Front Cover

Interaction Institute for Social Change

Artist: Angus Maguire

Statistics

97%

Of trans people in Ontario have experienced transphobia - including 73% who have been mocked for being trans

71%

Of trans people in Ontario have some post-secondary education, but half make under \$15,000 a year

58%

Of trans people in Ontario can't get academic transcripts with current name and gender

28%

Of trans people in Ontario can't get references with current name and gender

18%

Of trans people in Ontario were turned down for a job because they were trans while an additional 32% were unsure

57%

Of trans people in Ontario have avoided public washrooms

Terminology

transgender

Someone who is not actually the gender that was assigned to them at birth

cisgender

Someone who is the gender that was assigned to them at birth - that's most people

two spirit

In indigenous communities, Two Spirit individuals cross social gender roles, gender expression, and sexual orientation

The word transgender is an adjective, not a noun or verb. Using them as a noun ("a transgender") or a verb ("transgendered") is diminutive. Instead say "a transgender person".

Challenges: Implicit Bias

The obstacles that trans people face in the workplace are not a result of malice. Sometimes all it takes is doing nothing - such as keeping gendered dress codes or not accounting for the lack of work references that are an issue for 28% of trans individuals.

Yet there's another factor - a bias we carry without even knowing it. When polled, 77% of Canadians said that Canada should work to accommodate and protect transgender people in society and 85% agree that transgender people face a lot of discrimination in their lives.

Yet in the same poll, 59% of Canadians would restrict trans people's use of washrooms and 24% of Canadian men are uncomfortable with a trans person moving next door. A lot of these people probably think of themselves as supportive of trans people, but in fact carry these notions that undermine the decisions and policies they might make that impact trans people.

Alternatively, individuals might mistake their own experiences for normal rather than just another manifestation of diversity. They didn't need to be called by a preferred name, or have their employer amend their gender marker, therefore any such demands are mistakenly considered special treatment.

We call this kind of involuntary bias "implicit bias".