



CLAIMING FAIRNESS

FAIRNESS IS THE PRIMARY MOTIVATOR FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Being committed to fairness is an essential motivator for leaders to become engaged in gender equality. The following practices offer you concrete opportunities to counter discrimination and create inclusion and belonging. They require courage!



“I am careful not to make any remarks (perhaps even unintentionally) that devalue women or do not take them seriously”

- Remarks about women's appearance are inappropriate in a professional context, even if they are meant as compliments – instead, highlight professional and technical achievements as well as competences.
- Do not use “girl”, “miss”, “little one” as supposedly caring terms (of younger women) because they belittle and devalue them as competent employees and leaders.
- If you are unsure of what vocabulary to use, ask your female colleagues to listen and accept their point of view. Even if you cannot understand them or have never been addressed in these terms yourself. As a man, you have a more natural position in the professional world as a woman. Having another pair of ears at hand will reduce patronising and condescending vocabulary, however unintentional the comment may have been.
- Ask your female colleagues which comments they consider derogatory and avoid them accordingly.
- Do not consider women who complain about inappropriate remarks as hysterical or oversensitive but take them seriously and create an atmosphere of trust.

“I address my male colleagues, staff and/or supervisors when they make remarks that (perhaps unintentionally) devalue women, are sexist or misogynistic”

- In all-male meetings, there is sometimes a rough tone and crude humour that women and increasingly men find inappropriate – do not wait until someone expresses his or her discomfort about it, but bring it to the attention of the men present and ask for a change of tone and/or vocabulary.
- So-called (old) men's jokes with a jovial, usually sexualised humour, as well as sexualised remarks in both male and gender-mixed rounds, are not “trivial offences” but forms of sexual harassment that should be taken very seriously.
- Together with your colleagues and staff, create an appreciative and welcoming culture of discussion and cooperation so that women and men feel equally included.
- Initiate gender dialogues with colleagues and staff to share different perceptions and agree on appropriate ways of dealing with them.



“I stand behind my female staff and colleagues when their competence is ignored, disregarded, or questioned”

- Intervene if women’s competencies are ignored or disregarded in conversations or meetings – even if the women concerned are not present.
- Address and stop men repeating or passing off as their thoughts or ideas what women have previously said.
- Present your female employee or colleague as a responsible, competent person to customers, suppliers, or colleagues or, if necessary, point this out in a corrective manner.

“I make sure that women’s speeches are heard and taken up equally in meetings”

- Keep a speaking list and give women an equal share of contributions.
- If necessary, limit speaking times so that everyone has the same (maximum) speaking time.
- Make sure that women’s speeches are not interrupted and are allowed to finish.
- Introduce women as experts and responsible persons to all meeting participants.
- If there are any questions to you, refer them to the respective (female) expert.

“I make sure that women are integrated into the conversation in all-male meetings”

- Introduce your female colleagues or co-workers.
- Choose a topic that makes it easy for women to enter and connect to the conversation.
- Use words, gestures, and behaviour to show that women are welcome.



**“I address my male
colleagues when they
make sexist remarks”**



LEADERS
FOR
EQUALITY

With "Leaders for Equality" our focus is on male leaders as relevant actors for gender equality.

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