

LEADERS FOR EQUALITY



GENDER DIALOGUES WHEN DID YOU LAST TALK ABOUT GENDER EQUALITY?

Our short films and the accompanying material will help you
to start the conversation



Let's^{talk}

1 GENDER EQUALITY IS AN ISSUE FOR MEN

2 WHY DO MEN GET INVOLVED IN GENDER EQUALITY?

3 COOPERATION WITHIN OUR COMPANY IS GREAT, ISN'T IT?

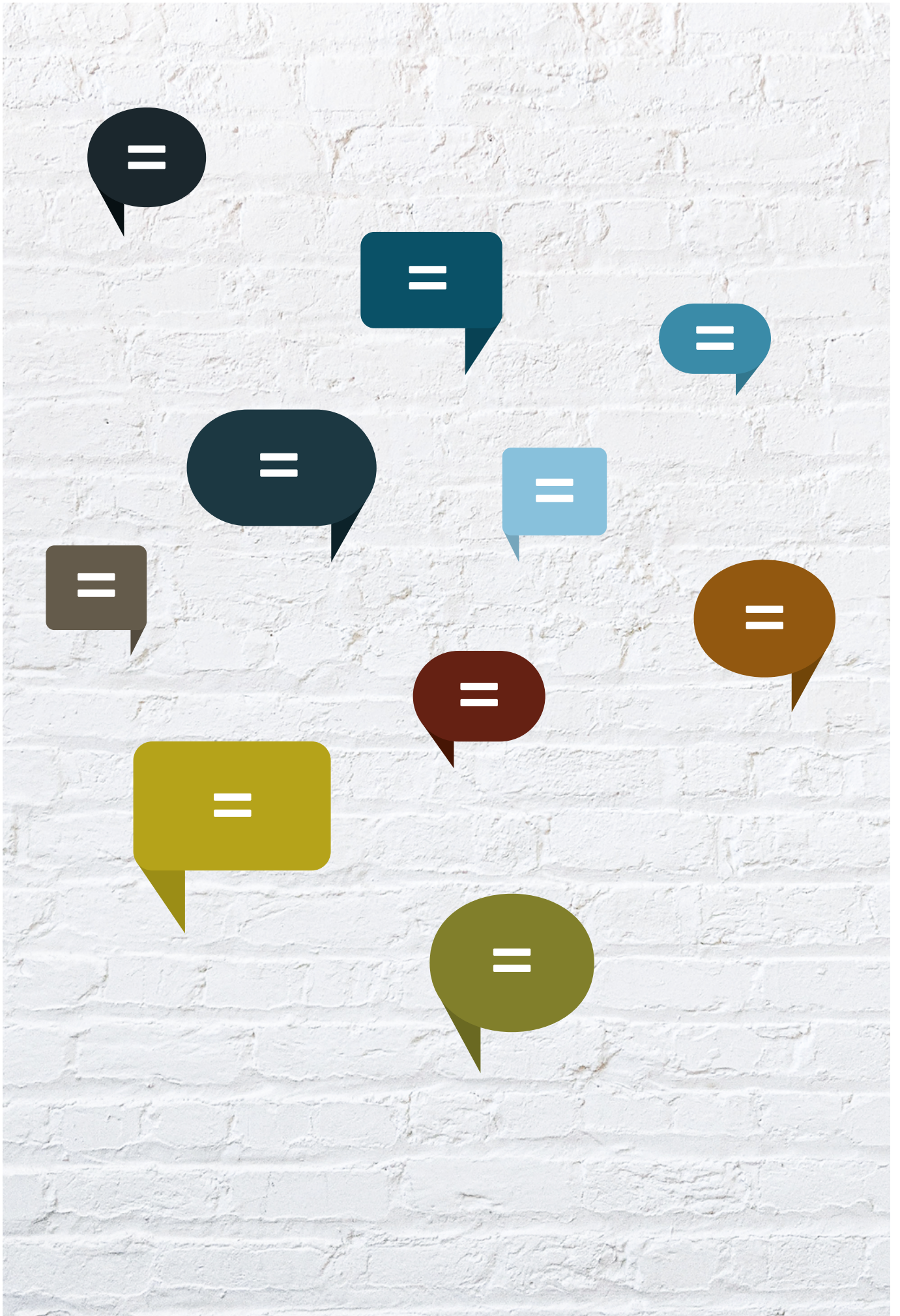
4 SUPPORTING WOMEN, SURE - BUT HOW?

5 SHOULDN'T PERFORMANCE AND COMPETENCE COUNT INSTEAD OF GENDER?



To the videos:





GENDER DIALOGUES

Do you know the key issues in gender equality that affect men in your company? How your female employees see their development opportunities in the company? What fathers would like to see? What could be helpful for the increasing inclusion of women?

Our study on the gender equality engagement of male managers has shown that women and men in management positions have quite different perceptions of everyday work. Women feel less included in the workplace and describe multiple challenges. While some men are aware of this imbalance of the feeling of belonging, others are somewhat perplexed and do not know precisely what to do.

One thing has become especially clear: we need to talk to each other! More conversations about gender equality are needed – between men, between women and men, among leaders and in the teams. Although it sounds banal and straightforward, constructive conversations about gender equality in the workplace are not common enough for positive change to occur. A structured exchange and dialogue between colleagues and staff is urgently needed. This will help us all to become more aware of the diverse and different perspectives of women and men in assessing situations better and aligning actions accordingly.

Start the conversation and initiate “gender dialogues”! With our animated “Gender Dialogues”, we want to initiate conversations between women and men on important gender equality topics. Each of the films gives a short thematic summary based on our research findings - and then encourages an exchange with colleagues and employees. With the following informations and questions, we provide further suggestions for discussion. By facilitating regular exchange opportunities of between one and two hours, virtually or analog – positive change in corporate culture, in the direction of equality, can take place.



1 GENDER EQUALITY IS AN ISSUE FOR MEN



Gender equality is still predominantly seen as a women's issue, one which men can and must also get involved in, but which does not affect them directly. At the same time, it seems that men talk relatively little about gender equality issues. But that is only half the truth. We know from our survey that men feel concerned about the gender equality issue, primarily as leaders and less as private men. In our group discussions with male managers, men discussed various social issues that preoccupy them. For example, men experience working together in a mixed team as more productive, communicative, and generally more pleasant. Furthermore, as fathers, they also have a strong interest in better work-life integration and often criticise the outdated image of the "heroic leader" who sacrifices everything for his work.

Start the conversation with your colleagues and employees about why gender equality is also a men's issue! The following questions can be discussed in the gender dialogue:

- **How comfortable do men in your team feel with communication and cooperation?**
- **What expectations of competencies, skills, and communication are placed on managers?**
- **How are men in your company doing with work-life integration, i.e., the interplay between work and private life?**
- **Can different, non-sacrificial, ways of "being a man" be found in your company?**
- **How can you, your colleagues, or your employees become more visible as "role models" for other men?**
- **To which gender equality events will you invite men in your team to come along to in the future?**

To the video:



2 WHY DO MEN GET INVOLVED IN GENDER EQUALITY?



Male leaders are committed to gender equality. They want to be proactive and are often making progress - but at the same time, there is still great potential to do more. Another important research finding was that women and men assess the motivation for gender equality commitment differently. Men feel more strongly affected by gender equality as managers, as professionals, yet the female executives emphasized more the private man, the father, the spouse, the person. The conversation about the different perspectives men and women might have with regards to equality helps to understand the diverse perceptions and assessments better. Start the dialogue in your company. In particular, find out where they disagree or have not seen something before. Go on a journey of discovery - you will probably find very different reasons and concerns and learn a lot about the commitment that already exists! The following questions can be discussed in the gender dialogue:

- **Why are you, your colleagues, employees, and co-workers committed to gender equality?**
- **What motivates you in particular?**
- **What advantages do you see for yourself through more equality in your company? What benefits do your colleagues and employees see?**
- **What concrete steps or targets for managers would you welcome in your company?**
- **How do you think your company can benefit from a more significant commitment to gender equality?**

To the video:



3 COOPERATION WITHIN OUR COMPANY IS GREAT, ISN'T IT?



Men and women experience the corporate culture of an organization very differently. Our survey showed, as we saw above, that women feel less included than men: they assess the opportunities for advancement as less fair and feel less encouraged to contribute. They perceive the exchange between colleagues and learning from each other as less common and are much more skeptical about the company's investment in employee development. This shows that there is a clear need for action! Men are often aware that women still experience many hurdles in the workplace yet are surprised to hear that women do not feel as comfortable as them.

Understanding what precisely this is due to, is an essential step towards seeing one's own company from a different perspective. This will develop understanding, and thus contribute to cultural changes necessary for a more equitable and sustainable workplace. In the gender dialogue, the following questions can be discussed:

- **In which situations do women feel uncomfortable in their team or company?**
- **In which situations are women clearly in the minority, perhaps even the only woman?**
- **What tone of voice in the team and dealings with each other do you perceive as derogatory?**
- **In which situations have women and men in your team felt particularly valued?**
- **As a manager or colleague, what can you concretely do to not make women feel isolated or excluded – on the contrary, how can you create an environment of belonging in your company?**

To the video:



4 SUPPORTING WOMEN, SURE - BUT HOW?



It is clear to many managers that women still experience many obstacles in their professional development and therefore need support. However, they often do not know how to do this in actual terms. Sometimes, for example, there is a fear that supportive behaviour could have a patronising effect. However, the women we interviewed did not confirm this. On the contrary, they mentioned male bosses who encouraged, supported, and occasionally pushed them in their careers.

Promoting women means reaching out to them from time to time and, at the same time, meeting them at eye level. How exactly can this be done? We suggest you find out for yourself in your team or company. Give it a go! The following questions can be discussed in the gender dialogue:

- **What challenges do women experience in your team or company?**
- **What support would women like to have?**
- **What support have successful women in your company personally received and appreciated?**
- **Which activities do the women in your company tend to advise you against?**
- **What experiences have other managers had with the promotion of women?**

To the video:



5 SHOULDN'T PERFORMANCE AND COMPETENCE COUNT INSTEAD OF GENDER?



More than 80% of the managers interviewed see a conflict between gender equality efforts and the performance principle: If performance and competencies are to count, a person's gender cannot enter into the equation. After all, numbers are numbers! But are they? The performance principle is one of the central principles of modern societies. What a person achieves should be evaluated independently of gender and other group affiliations such as age, origin, sexual orientation, or religion. To implement this vital claim, however, it must be ensured that we actually perceive, treat, and judge all persons equally. And precisely, this is very difficult in practice, so it is hardly possible to assess a person's performance without taking gender into account. In reality, there is more to numbers than numbers. To evaluate performance fairly, we must also recognise the different starting points, skills, and competencies of employees and include them in the assessment.

Start with the gender dialogue and determine which differences in skills and competencies exist in the team and to what extent these are already adequately considered in performance appraisal! The following questions can be discussed in the gender dialogue:

- **What qualities do you associate with an “ideal leader”, what expectations do you have of their behaviour?**
- **For whom is it easy to correspond to this ideal, for whom is it more difficult? What are the reasons for this?**
- **Which characteristics and skills would you have to add to the “ideal of the good leader”? What is necessary for team success but is still not reflected enough in the evaluations?**
- **What exactly do you understand by “performance”, and how can this be shown particularly well in your team?**
- **What different starting points, skills, and competencies can be found in your team? Are these considered in the assessment of each person's performance?**

To the video:



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FOR
EQUALITY



University of St.Gallen

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

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Contact

Prof. Dr. Julia Nentwich
Dr. Gabriele Schambach
Dr. Nilima Chowdhury
University of St.Gallen
Research Institute for Organizational Psychology
Girtannerstr. 6, CH-9010 St.Gallen
T: +41 (0)71 224 26 38
E: leaders4equality@unisg.ch
www.leaders4equality.ch