

Actions Men Can Take to Create an Inclusive Workplace

Catalyst believes that men have a pivotal role to play in creating workplaces where both women and men can thrive. Our research suggests that a critical aspect of this role is to be an example to other men. The following are some actions that men can take to enhance their understanding of the barriers to gender inclusion in the workplace and to learn ways to be influential role models to male peers.

Acting on **just 10 of these behaviors**—the ones that you feel most able to take action on—**can make a difference** in your workplace.

1. **Accept that it is your responsibility** to help end sexism in the workplace—even though it is not your fault that sexism exists.
2. **Tell other men about your commitment** to creating a workplace that is gender inclusive.
3. **Listen to women colleagues** when they attribute certain work experiences to sexism without being defensive, offering alternative explanations, or otherwise invalidating what they say.
4. **Be attentive** to the subtle ways that some men may unconsciously cause women colleagues to feel diminished (e.g., interrupting women colleagues in meetings, validating/giving more weight to views expressed by men relative to those expressed by women). Avoid these behaviors and encourage male peers to do so as well.
5. **Do not laugh** at or tell sexist jokes.
6. **Do not implicitly condone sexist jokes** by ignoring them.
7. **Do not shame or humiliate men** who do not fit your notion of what a man should be. Allow every man the chance to define manhood for himself without your judgment.
8. **Eliminate words** like “sissy,” “fag,” “whipped,” or any other terms intended to question other men’s masculinity from your vocabulary. Demonstrate to other men that you disapprove of these words.
9. **Do not use references** such as “chick,” “bitch,” “girl,” or other terms that demean or otherwise diminish women colleagues. Confront others who do.
10. **Do not make or ignore comments** that objectify women colleagues. Let other men know that you disapprove of such comments.
11. **Do not shame or humiliate women** who do not fit your notion of what a woman should be. Allow every woman the chance to define womanhood on her own terms without your judgment.
12. **Use work-life flexibility benefits**, if you have them (e.g., paternity leaves, family leaves, and telecommuting), to manage your work and personal responsibilities.



