

Lesson 17: Sexism

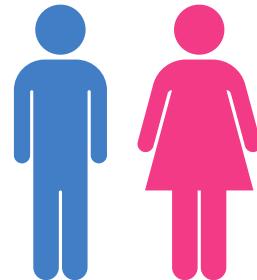
 **Opening Thought:** Sexism isn't always loud or obvious — sometimes it hides in the everyday comments, assumptions, and assignments that limit opportunity.

 **Reflection:** Think about the gender expectations you grew up hearing. (e.g., "boys will be boys")

- What messages did you hear most often?
- How might they still influence behavior at work today?

 **Activity: Role Reversal** Read the scenarios below. Flip the genders and ask yourself: Does the assumption still make sense, or does it reveal bias?

1. A woman engineer is always asked to plan the company picnic.
 - *What if it were a man?*
2. A man is discouraged from taking parental leave because "his wife can handle it."
 - *What if it were a woman being told not to take leave?*
3. A female foreman is called "bossy" when giving direction.
 - *What if it were a male foreman giving the same instruction?*
4. A male teacher is praised for being "so nurturing with kids."
 - *What if it were a woman teacher?*



 **Reflection:** What do these role reversals reveal about how sexism limits both men and women?

 **Case Example:** A qualified woman applies for a supervisor role, but the manager says, "The guys won't respect a woman leading them."

- What stereotype or assumption is influencing this decision?
- What impact does this have on both the applicant and the workplace culture?
- What would an inclusive approach look like?

 **Discussion Questions**

- Why is sexism sometimes dismissed as "just the way things are"?
- How does sexism affect men as well as women in the workplace?
- What steps can leaders and peers take to challenge sexist behavior in real time?

 **Action Step**

One way I will challenge gender stereotypes at work is: