

Wednesday WeBelong Monthly:



How to Support Employees Through Transition



Gender Identity vs Gender Expression

Gender expression:

How we express ourselves through clothes, hairstyles, body language, etc.

Gender identity:

The gender(s) we identify with.

Transitioning:

The act of taking legal, medical, and/or social steps to affirm someone's gender identity.

Understanding the Process of Transitioning

Consider putting a plan in place, even before you need it, to support employees who want to transition.

Plans should include:

- Policy review
- Ongoing education for all employees
- Lots of communication and planning with the transitioning employee
- Exploration of reasonable accommodations
- Support!

Handling the Conversation

Lead with Compassion

The best responses are human-first, something like, “Thank you for sharing that with me! I’m glad I’m a safe space for you. How can I support you?”

Involve People & Culture

Make sure to let your employee know that you’re there to support them (and ask them how you can), and help guide the conversation with People & Culture.

Avoid

Listing out all the barriers, questioning if they really want to do this, or any other potentially well-meaning but ill-advised advice.

Relational Authenticity is Key

Be Inclusive Proactively

Create universal policies like gender neutral bathrooms, implement gender neutral dress codes, and use pronouns regularly before anyone needs to ask.

Be Authentic

Continually educate on the importance of respect and acceptance for all. Dialogue about transition before transition happens – this is especially important as a leader.

Learn + Listen

Create an open space for feedback and growth. Talk with the transgender individual and others to make a more supportive workspace.

Keep it Private

Always respect their privacy.
Say Sorry Quickly
If you make a mistake, admit it and apologize sincerely without making it a bigger deal.

47%

of transgender individuals reported being discriminated against in hiring, firing, and promotion



of transgender individuals reported they had lost a job due to discrimination for their gender identity

As Humans, We Can Make Mistakes

+ We Can Apologize For Them

Use Incorrect Pronouns

"I'm really sorry I used the wrong pronouns for you earlier. That was completely my mistake, and I will be more thoughtful about properly referring to you as [correct pronouns] moving forward."

Use Old "Dead" Name

"My apologies for calling you by the wrong name earlier. I should have addressed you as [correct name] and I will be more attentive about using your current name correctly."

As Humans, We Can Make Mistakes

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Disclose Private Information

"It was wrong of me to share details about your transition without your permission. I understand that is your personal information to share, and I will be sure to keep those details private."

Misgender in Front of Others

"I sincerely apologize for referring to you as the incorrect gender. I will make every effort to affirm you correctly because you deserve to feel included and respected here."

Fail To Address Transphobic Remarks

"I take responsibility for not speaking up when those disrespectful remarks were made. Moving forward, I will address inappropriate comments properly in the moment."

Call to Action

Continuously Learn

Learning is an ongoing experience, so it's ok to acknowledge that you might not know some things.

Listen with Intention

Supporting employees as humans who are experiencing human emotions.

Create Space for Authentic Sharing

Open communication can foster happier employees and more human workplaces.

Practice Active Empathy & Allyship

When any group of employees takes the time to share their experience with their employer, there is a responsibility to respond.