

What do gender related microaggressions look like?



In addition to the behavior highlighted above, gender related micro-aggressive behaviors can be verbal, non-verbal or environmental, including:

- Focusing a woman's value on her role as a mother, wife, or girlfriend, for example when introducing her
- Senior men assuming seniority automatically in meetings and teams
- Focusing attention and praise on someone's appearance or attractiveness rather than their skills and knowledge
- Lacking policies that support women in the workplace such as not having shared family friendly policies and women's health policies
- Making inappropriate comments about someone's appearance and staring inappropriately at a woman's body
- Expecting women to be 'attractive' and 'likable' and are therefore seen as less commanding and competent when they behave this way
- Not asking for input into work or a project a person is involved in and not taking their contributions seriously due to the fact that they're a woman
- Talking down to someone based on assumptions about their gender
- Having your judgement questioned in your area of expertise and being asked to provide additional evidence of your competence
- "Mansplaining": When men feel the need to explain something to a woman without first ascertaining that the woman either requires or welcomes the explanation.
- Engaging in unwanted sexual attention or touching including touching someone's arm or lower back when talking to them
- When asking for meetings to be held at a particular time of day to support with their caring responsibilities they are accused of being difficult or the request is ignored
- Experiencing unconscious bias at the recruitment stage; that is assuming women are not as intelligent as men or not as capable as a man and not considering them for the role.
- When a woman is confident and assertive accusing her of being too aggressive or challenging whereas men who behave in a similar manner are considered competent leaders
- Lack of empathy and support when there are experiences of women's health issues such as periods, pregnancy, miscarriage and menopause. Not taking them seriously as a genuine reason to be off from work
- Judging someone for not fitting into stereotypes of femininity, such as not being caring or submissive
- Assuming the woman is the primary caregiver or will take on the domestic duties such as pouring the tea or coffee in a meeting
- There may also be unconscious bias at the recruitment stage compounded by other factors such as a woman's faith for example if she wears a hijab, if she has an accent or has a disability
- Mis-gendering people by not using the pronouns they have said they prefer. Being misgendered is an indication that their identity is not valued
- Not being invited for drinks or dinner despite your male colleagues of the same grade being invited
- When you are having a meeting with you and your male colleague, the other people in the meeting regularly speak directly to and look at your male colleague even though you're speaking or the leading the meeting
- Calling a woman 'love', 'sweetheart'
- Being paid a lower salary despite having more experience and qualifications than their better paid male counterparts
- Having a male colleague sense check or confirm what the female colleague has produced or suggested before going ahead with the project or idea
- When a woman has an idea or suggestion, and it gets ignored. However, when a man says the exact same thing, he gets credit for it
- If you're a lead, but your team members approach your male deputy, to clarify if the advice, policy or process you have explained is correct
- Men are given more time in meetings to share their thoughts, women are cut off or told to speed up.
- Being repeatedly passed over for senior roles in favour of less well qualified males

These may happen more often to black women:

- Commenting on a woman's body shape (whether it is considered a positive or negative comment)
- Receiving comments about "being calm/composed" or "speaking well" for a black person
- Receiving comments about "being smart for a black Pharmacist"
- Commenting on a woman's hair or asking to touch it, as it is 'different'
- Making jokes about men wearing feminine or flamboyant clothing asking them to dress like a man
- Patients preferring to be nursed by a female staff rather than a male staff
- Judging someone for not fitting into stereotypes of masculinity, such as by being caring or chatty
- Making comments about men who are always seen hanging out with women and no male friends assuming their sexual orientation

Men may also be subjected to gender microaggressions; these could include: