



Allyship Beyond the Basics:

Personal Pronouns and Why They Matter

Why should you include your pronouns when you introduce yourself?

1. It's a quick and easy way to **vocalize inclusion** as well as to support, celebrate, and affirm our transgender and nonbinary colleagues.
2. It communicates **where our values lie** and that we envision a world where diversity is celebrated and all people are respected, valued, and affirmed inclusive of their sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.
3. It can be a **conversation starter** that allows us to lead with our allyship and educate new and potential allies about gender identity, gender expression, and the gender spectrum.

Pronoun		Nominative	Oblique	Possessive	Possessive	Reflexive
Binary	He	He is laughing	I called him	His eyes gleam	That is his	He likes himself
	She	She is laughing	I called her	Her eyes gleam	That is hers	She likes herself
Non-binary	They (most common)	They are laughing	I called them	Their eyes gleam	That is theirs	They like themselves
	Xe "zee"	Xe is laughing	I called xem	Xyr eyes gleam	That is xyrs	Xe likes xemself
	Ze "zee"	Ze his laughing	I called zir	Zir eyes gleam	That is zirs	Ze likes zirself

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Adapted from *Gender Diversity and Non-Binary Inclusion in the Workplace: The Essential Guide for Employers* (2018) by Sarah Gibson & J. Fernandez

What do I use?

- **She/her/hers:** Typically used for people who identify as female, regardless of how they were assigned at birth. *Example: She is the woman who is the CEO of the corporation.*
- **He/him/his:** Typically used for people who identify as male, regardless of what they were assigned at birth. *Example: He is a man who likes cats.*
- **They/them/theirs:** Typically seen as a gender-neutral or gender-fluid designation, often used by people who were assigned a binary sex with which they do not identify. *Example: Jamie went to the store and they bought soda.*
- **Xe/Ze and Xyr/Zir:** These terms are most often used with individuals who identify as nonbinary in their gender identity. These words are often associated with (but certainly not limited to) more activist and academic spaces. *Example: Ze is really good at trigonometry.*