

*Scenario and role-playing-based learning is widely recognized as an effective tool for addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion issues in a workplace. Storytelling helps to incorporate real-world scenarios that can aid in developing core behaviors and knowledge to further promote equity in the workplace. This approach challenges and engages learners to help them think and problem solve in order to feel more motivated to engage with issues of equity they face in real life. It has been [demonstrated](#) that scenario-based learning encourages reflection and further learning. We encourage taking 30-45 minutes to go through these scenario and role-playing exercises with all employees in your organization in order to learn about, and critically engage with, the process of creating a gender equitable workplace. Following these exercises, we recommend a group discussion of key takeaways and lessons learned.*

## **Scenarios**

*After each scenario, discuss how these examples relate to the task of creating a gender equitable workplace.*

1. Lunchtime is approaching and Bill, the senior policy researcher, asks some of the research assistants and interns to lunch with the hopes of improving mentorship in the office. He specifically asks Eric, a recent hire, and Sara, a college intern, to join him. Bill takes them to a local Indian restaurant and jokes to Sara, whose parents are Pakistani immigrants, that she could “probably make the food better than the chefs in the kitchen!” Later during the meal, Bill jokes to Eric that “If he wants to keep eating like this, he better make a move on Sara while he still can!” Eric and Bill laugh, and Sara joins in after a slight pause. What was inappropriate about Bill’s comments? How could have Eric intervened?
2. Evan is tasked with supervising the recently hired summer intern for the duration of the internship. The intern, Alex, tells Evan through email that they use they/them/their pronouns. Evan makes note of this detail, and gives Alex their first assignment, which involves working alongside the senior policy director, Vincent. Vincent constantly misgenders Alex and is not mindful of the fact that Alex is non-binary. As an unpaid intern, Alex feels powerless and does not want to risk missing out on an opportunity that could greatly benefit their career. How would you rectify this situation?
3. Sam and his colleagues join a meeting with their peers from other organizations to discuss the set of policy recommendations that they have developed for a

government organization. Sam notices that some members of the group, which is composed of only men, are making inappropriate comments about a woman that works in their office. Should Sam interject? Why or why not? What might Sam say?

4. Applications for a summer undergraduate internship with the nuclear disarmament research think tank are closing soon, and Heather, the Human Resources Assistant, notices that many of the applicants are male students from a local, prestigious university, where most of the students are not on financial aid and only 10% of the student body are students of color. How might Heather suggest changes to their recruitment strategies?

## **Role Playing Exercises**

*Debrief after each role play to discuss the group's thoughts and responses to the situations.*

### 1. Roles:

- Audrey: a research scientist for 6 years with her current employer
- Sarah: Audrey's boss

*Act out:*

Audrey learns that her male colleague Lucas is getting paid more than her, despite having more experience and responsibilities than him and positive reviews from supervisors. She is hurt and angry that her employer values her less than her male colleague. Audrey then schedules a meeting with her boss. She understands Audrey's anger, but doesn't supply more information about getting a salary increase.

*Discuss:*

### 2. Roles:

- Samantha: Senior Policy director
- John: Research analyst
- Aaron: Executive director

*Act out:*

Samantha has recently learned that she is pregnant and has decided to not tell her bosses until she is further along in her pregnancy. Another employee, John, is a new father in the

office and has been vocal about how little time he has to be with his newborn. Samantha decides to tell John about her pregnancy and ask for his support in advocating for better parental leave policy. He agrees. They approach their boss with their initiative, but he does not understand the need for this policy.

*Discuss:*

### 3. Roles:

- Kathryn, employee who is in favor of yearlong anti-sexual harassment training program
- Dan, employee who is not in support of the program

*Act out:*

Given a recent report's findings about sexual harassment in the nuclear field, executive management has decided to implement a yearlong anti-sexual harassment training program that requires every staff member to participate. There is strong backlash over this program by a group of employees and Kathryn is taken aback by the response. She meets with one particularly vocal colleague, Dan, to talk about the importance of this program and understand his reasons for his response.

*Discuss:*