

We don't need saving...we need allies

Resources:

Parliamentarian Toolkit (<https://parlgendertools.org/en/male-allies-gender-equality/#:~:text=Male%20allies%20for%20gender%20equality%20are%20advocates%20who%20work%20in,harmful%20gender%20relations%20and%20stereotypes>)

So, You Want To Be A Male Ally For Gender Equality? (And You Should): Results from a National Survey, and a Few Things You Should Know (<https://promundoglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Male-Allyship-Study-Web.pdf>)

How Men Can Become Better Allies to Women (<https://hbr.org/2018/10/how-men-can-become-better-allies-to-women>)

The Importance of Male Allies: A Review of the Literature (<https://altogether.swe.org/2019/04/the-importance-of-male-allies-a-review-of-the-literature/>)

Nine Tips for Being a Male Ally at Work

(https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/nine_tips_for_being_a_male_ally_at_work)

Workplaces Respond to Domestic and Sexual Violence Resource Center

(<https://www.workplacesrespond.org/resource-library/model-guidelines/>)

Diversity consultant Jennifer Brown recognizes that not all male allies are equally evolved. She frames allyship on a continuum:

Apathetic	Aware	Active	Advocate
(clueless and disinterested regarding gender issues)	(has some grasp of the issues but not at all active or engaged in addressing them)	(well-informed and willing to engage in gender equity efforts, but only when asked)	(routinely and proactively champions gender inclusion)

Effective practices for men who want to be better collaborators with women:

Just listen!

Consultant Chuck Shelton reminds men that listening to women's voices in a way that inspires trust and respect is a fundamental relationship promise you must make, and then keep, with women who invite you to participate around equity. Generous, world-class listening requires focus, sincerity, empathy, refusal to interrupt, and genuine valuing of both her experience and her willingness to share it with you.

Respect the space.

Women's conferences and ERGs are often one outgrowth of experiences of exclusion, marginalization, and discrimination. Many of these experiences are painful. Large events and local resource groups have afforded women a powerful platform for sharing experiences, providing support, and strategizing equity initiatives. Tread respectfully into these spaces and before you utter a word, revisit the recommendation above.

Remember, it's not about you.

Ask women how you can amplify, not replace or usurp existing gender parity efforts. A large dose of gender humility will help here. Decades of research on prosocial (helpful) behavior reveals a stark gender difference in how it is expressed. While women often express helpfulness communally and relationally, men show helpful intentions through action-oriented behaviors. Sometimes, we need to rein this in. Refrain from taking center stage, speaking for women, or mansplaining how women should approach gender equity efforts.

Get comfortable being uncomfortable.

Developing psychological standing requires a commitment to learning and advocating for gender equity. Learning about the professional challenges of women may produce feelings of self-shame or self-blame that cause anxiety. The solution is more interaction and learning, not less.

Engage in supportive partnerships with women.

The best cross-gender ally relationships are reciprocal, and mutually growth-enhancing. Share your social capital (influence, information, knowledge, and organizational resources) with women's groups but ask them — don't assume — how you can best support their efforts.

Remember the two parts to allyship.

Keep in mind that committing to express as little sexism as possible in your interactions with women is the easy part of allyship. The hard part requires you to take informed action. Use your experience in women's events and initiatives to learn how you can best become a public ally for social justice around gender. When the time comes, this may require you to upset the status quo.