



Client Service

A Starting Place Discussion Guide for Clinical, Retail and Hospitality Service Settings

Gender: Your Guide (GYG) is aimed at people who may not know much about gender diversity, and welcomes beginners into the project of making spaces where gender is less rigid: a source of more joy and less harm. This discussion guide offers a starting place for people who work together in service settings that meet the needs of walk-in clients, be they patients or customers.

Before you host the discussion... it might be a good idea to read the whole book. Answers to many common questions are found in GYG's pages, and are given in accessible language. I suggest thinking ahead about questions or thoughts you have heard from the people who are participating, and marking relevant passages.

Suggested advanced reading for everyone:

- Chapter 3: Learning About the Transgender Spectrum + Chapter 4: A Gender-Neutral Pronoun Primer

Begin your discussion by... asking participants to share a situation in which gender emerged as an issue when serving a patient or client, whether they were involved or heard about it from someone else.

Suggested group readings (together, aloud) and activities:

- Read Chapter 6: Noticing and Changing Gendered Language (pp. 136-141 including the sidebar)
 - This section brings up two examples to illustrate how gendered our language can be, and some workarounds: Service Canada counters, and doctors' offices. What are some parallels you see with your setting? For both charts, re-create the 'Less-Gender Friendly' and 'More Gender-Friendly' columns and fill in ways of talking about clients (p. 140) and office greetings (p. 141) that might take place where you are. What changes can you make?
- Read Chapter 6: Noticing and Changing Gendered Language (pp. 146-149 including the sidebar)
 - What role, if any, does formal language play in your setting? How can you indicate a formal respect for clients or patients, if needed, that is also gender-friendly?
- Read Chapter 7: How to Stop Telling People Who They Are, Gender-Wise, by Accident (pp. 160-164)
 - As a group, describe the process through which clients or patients (as applicable) access washrooms for their use. Is this process gender-friendly? What changes can you make?
 - If your shared context is retail, also discuss implications for changing room access.
 - Read the sidebar on p. 164. In pairs or in a fishbowl (where participants tap in and out of playing the different roles at their discretion), role play an interaction with a client or patient who is complaining about someone using a particular gendered washroom.
- What are some ways you can give a gender-friendly welcome to a client or patient who isn't doing gender in a way that matches your expectations?

Next steps: Create an action plan with some next steps for implementing more gender-friendly language and washroom practices that you learned about. Consider scheduling a time to meet together as a team to complete the *Gender-Neutral Pronoun Practice* guide (available on www.genderyourguide.com).