

**CATALYST**  
WORKPLACES THAT WORK FOR WOMEN

# Equity and Inclusion in universities: *Moving beyond good intentions*

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CUBA Conference, May 2023

# AGENDA

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CUBA meeting  
Saskatoon, SK  
May 5, 2023

- + About Catalyst
- + My PhD research on Canadian university presidents
- + Diversity, equity and inclusion
- + Intersectionality and emotional tax
- + The Harvard example
- + Unconscious bias
- + Flip the script
- + Male allyship and gender partnership
- + From good intentions to action

# ABOUT CATALYST

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## **Our Mission:**

Catalyst accelerates progress for women through workplace inclusion.

## **Our Vision:**

Catalyst believes that workplaces that work for women work for everyone.

## **Our Values:**

We infuse all our work with respect, collaboration, accountability, and impact.

Catalyst is a global nonprofit supported by many of the world's most powerful CEOs and leading companies to help build workplaces that work for women. Founded in 1962, Catalyst drives change with preeminent thought leadership, actionable solutions, and a galvanized community of multinational corporations to accelerate and advance women into leadership—because progress for women is progress for everyone.

Our mission, vision, and values are grounded in 60 years of experience in accelerating change. Now, corporate leaders have an unprecedented opportunity and challenge: to reimagine the workplace so that it is truly inclusive. Those who don't participate in The Great Reimagining will lose out on talent and may find themselves left behind. Only through more equitable and inclusive workplaces can we truly make work work for women—and for everyone.

## My path to here

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Underrepresentation of women presidents (25-30%)

Overrepresentation of women presidents with unfinished terms (55-70%)

Board governance and communication

Trust within the executive team

Mentorship

Role of the predecessor

Effectiveness of the transitional process

Unconscious bias in times of crisis

# DEFINITIONS

## + Equity

Working toward fair outcomes for people or groups by treating them in ways that address their unique advantages or barriers.

## + Inclusion

An atmosphere where all employees belong, contribute, and can thrive. Requires deliberate and intentional action.

## + Diversity

Encompasses visible (e.g., gender, race, ethnicity) and invisible qualities (e.g., personality, family background, education, personal style) that make individuals unique. It is heterogeneity among all of us and therefore applies to everyone.

### Sources:

<sup>1</sup>12 *Diversity and inclusion terms you need to know* [Blog post]. (2019, May 30). Catalyst.

<sup>2</sup>Travis, D. J., Shaffer, E., & Thorpe-Moscon, J. (2020). *Getting real about inclusive leadership: Why change starts with you*. Catalyst.

<sup>3</sup> *Why diversity and inclusion matter* [Quick Take]. (2020, June 24). Catalyst.

# DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ARE VITAL TO A HEALTHY BUSINESS



Talent



Innovation and  
Group Performance



Reputation and  
Responsibility



Financial  
Performance

Source: Why diversity and inclusion matter: Quick Take. (2020, June 24). Catalyst.

# BENEFITS OF INCLUSION

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Catalyst Research

- +Team Problem-Solving
- +Work Engagement
- +Employee Intent to Stay
- +Employee Innovation
  
- +Universities

**Source:** Travis, D. Shaffer, E., & Thorpe-Moscon, J. (2019). Getting real about inclusive leadership: Why change starts with you. Catalyst.



**Proactively ask about all team members' personal priorities or commitments that are important to honor as the team plans its work stream and deliverables; seek to respect those requests.**

Instead of just saying, "People matter," take the time to set-up one-on-one meetings not only with your direct reports but also with employees two to three levels down to get to know them.



If you plan on sending emails to colleagues at off hours, add a line to your signature that lets people know you are working at that time because it is most convenient for you, but it does not mean you expect people to respond when they otherwise would not be working.



**Don't just gather metrics—go behind the numbers to explore what's really going on. Ask employees (through surveys, focus groups, and interviews) how programs and policies really affect how they feel about their daily work lives.**



**Over the course of several meetings, keep track of whose ideas are acknowledged, built on, or adopted vs. ignored or appropriated. Do you see any patterns based on gender, race, and/or ethnicity?**



**Regarding talent identification and inclusion: Look up. Look down. Look deep. And look often.**

**Upskill yourself on managing remote teams inclusively.**



**Put a Pride flag, "I am an ally" sign, or some other signal of your allyship on your office door or at your desk. A little bit of visibility can go a long way.**



Don't assume that people who work differently (or even less) are less committed; they may be working smart.



Intentionally seek out ideas/insights from people who may not look like you.



**Engage with people of different levels and backgrounds at the water cooler (either virtually or in person).**

## Be Inclusive Every Day

Start with these easy, practical, intentional actions that **organizations**, **leaders**, and **teams** can take today for a more inclusive workplace.

Support diversity by accommodating the way people process and react to information. Send material in advance so that introverts may prepare and communicate their thoughts.



**Next time you ask someone for advice on a project (your go-to folks), stop and ask yourself—who did you miss/not ask? Why?**



**Review and revamp existing practices to uncover potentially exclusionary norms.**



Avoid making "jokes" at the expense of an individual or group. And when you hear others using this kind of harmful "humor," speak up to let them know its not okay.

**Validate employees' experiences—both the good and the bad—by transparently acknowledging barriers and setbacks faced by the organization. Share plans that illustrate an awareness of both challenges left to face and the continued progress that is possible.**



Avoid making "jokes" at the expense of an individual or group. And when you hear others using this kind of harmful "humor," speak up to let them know its not okay.

**Implement a "no-interruption" rule at brainstorming and staff meetings to ensure that everyone is being heard.**



**Be open to hybrid work—a flexible combination of remote and onsite work.**

Think about your interactions with your direct reports over the past week. Whom did you offer to connect with a more senior colleague? To whom did you mention a plum opportunity? To whom did you offer insight on workplace politics? How, if at all, did these interactions vary by gender, race, ethnicity?

**Source:** Be inclusive every day [Infographic]. Catalyst.

# INTERSECTIONALITY and EMOTIONAL TAX

Intersectionality is a framework for understanding how social identities—such as gender, race, ethnicity, social class, religion, sexual orientation, and ability—overlap with one another and with systems of power that oppress and advantage people in the workplace and broader community.

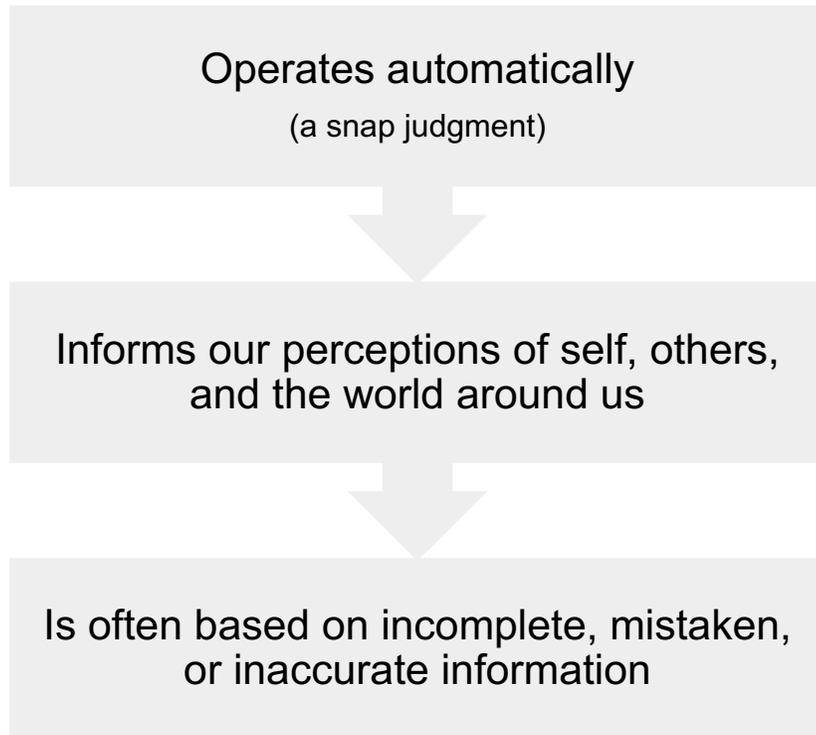
- + Creating an empowering and inclusive environment can be the key to retaining highly motivated and talented employees. Benefits can be seen in:
  - + lower turnover rates
  - + more creativity
  - + a higher likelihood of speaking up.

# DESIGNING INCLUSION @ Harvard

- 
- Fixing structures and processes and *not women*
  - Seeing is believing
  - Culture carriers



# THE CHALLENGE of UNCONSCIOUS BIAS



**Unconscious biases:  
We all have them.**



**Sources:** Whyte, A. (2021, January 29). Recognizing implicit bias to promote diversity and support a culture of inclusion and innovation. *Forbes*; *The cost of unconscious bias in the workplace*. (2019, April 12). True Office Learning; *What is unconscious bias?* (2014, December 11). Catalyst.

# FLIP THE SCRIPT

WHAT PEOPLE  
THINK, SAY, OR DO:

**“That candidate  
is not the  
right fit.”**

## How It's Not Allyship

We often define those who “fit” as those who reflect our own image. In addition, the unconscious association of leadership behaviors with characteristics attributed to men can make it harder for others to be seen as “fitting” and block their access to opportunities.

WHAT YOU THINK,  
SAY, OR DO INSTEAD:

**“Although this person  
doesn't fit the mold of what  
I am used to, let's talk  
about how we could  
leverage their differences  
as an added value to our  
team.”**

# Flip the Script

**WHAT PEOPLE THINK,  
SAY, OR DO:**

**“Race isn’t an issue  
in our university.”**

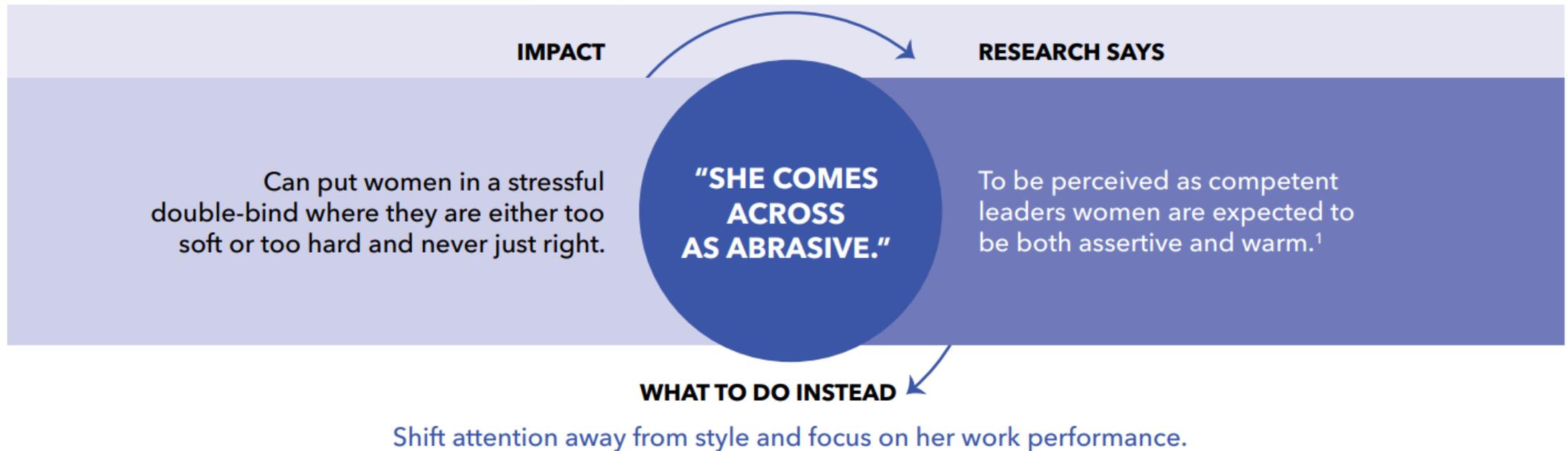
## WHY THIS IS DESTRUCTIVE

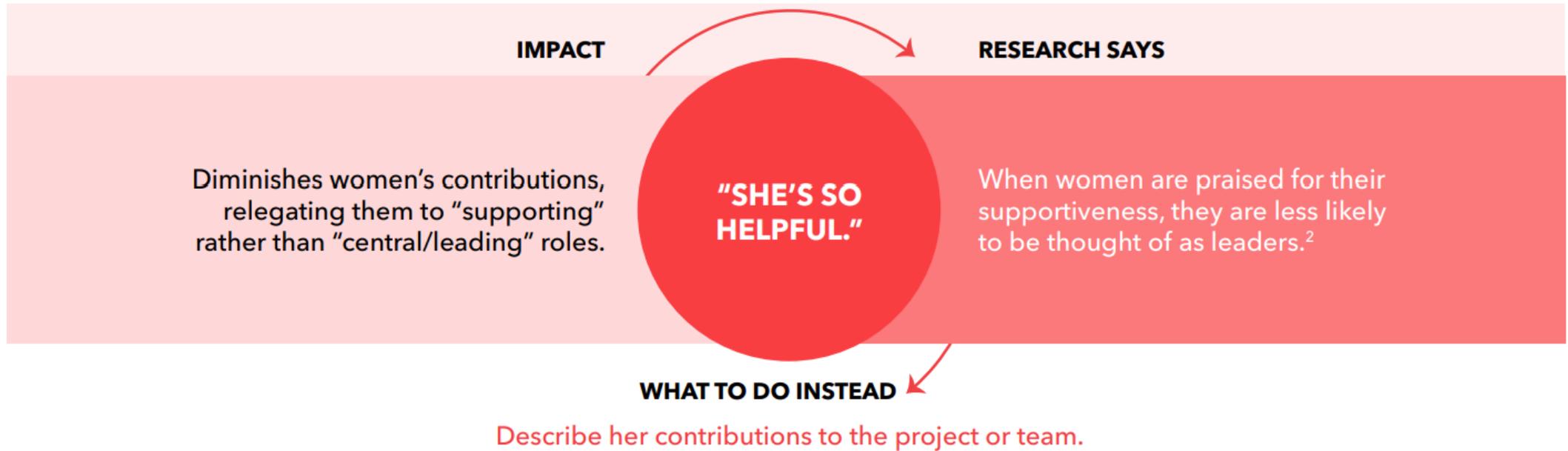
This type of blanket statement ignores the reality of racism and discrimination as well as the lived experiences of people from marginalized groups.

**WHAT YOU THINK,  
SAY, OR DO INSTEAD:**

**“Let’s work toward  
creating a more inclusive  
and equitable work  
environment.”**

# The Double Bind for women presidents





# MALE ALLYSHIP

## WHY FOCUS ON MEN?

Research shows:



96%

of companies surveyed globally reported progress when men were engaged in gender diversity.

Only



30%

showed progress when men were not involved.

**Source:** Krentz, M., Wierzba, O., Abouzahr, K., Garcia-Alonso, J., & Taplett, F. B. (2017). *Five ways men can improve gender diversity at work*. Boston Consulting Group.

# BARRIERS TO ACTION

Our research revealed three main barriers:



**Apathy**



**Fear**



**Ignorance**  
(real or perceived)

Even when men have good intentions and want to support gender equity, they face many barriers, including deeply ingrained gender norms and societal expectations around masculinity.

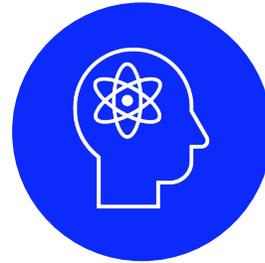
**Source:** Kerr, G. & Pollack, A. (2022). *Engaging men: Barriers and gender norms*. Catalyst.

# FACTORS THAT DRIVE AWARENESS AND ACTION

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If men are to become advocates of gender equity, they must first recognize that gender bias exists; they must acknowledge that the status quo needs changing.

**Source:** Kerr, G. & Pollack, A. (2022). *Engaging men: The journey toward equity*. Catalyst.



## AWARENESS

Defiance of masculine norms

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Having women mentors



## ACTION

Strong sense of fair play

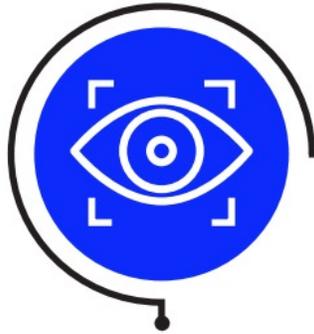
## GENDER EQUITY

# WHAT'S IN IT FOR MEN?

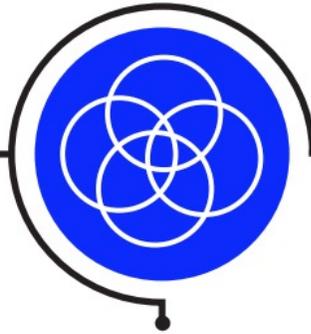
- + Freedom to define themselves according to their own values rather than traditional gender norms.
- + Freedom to be more involved in parenting/caregiving.
- + More rewarding relationships with children, spouse/partner, and family.
- + Better physical and mental health.
- + Opportunity to share financial responsibilities with spouse/partner.

**Sources:** Prime, J. & Moss-Racusin, C. A. (2009). *Engaging men in gender initiatives: What change agents need to know*. Catalyst; DiMuccio, S., Sattari, N., Shaffer, E., & Cline, J. (2021). *Masculine anxiety and interrupting sexism at work*. Catalyst.

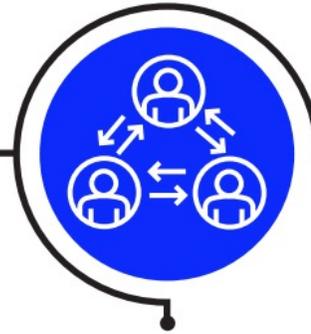
# PUTTING GENDER PARTNERSHIP INTO ACTION



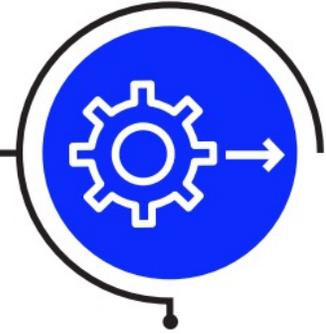
1. Recognize that gender impacts everyone.



2. Acknowledge the intersectional nature of gender and advancing gender equity.



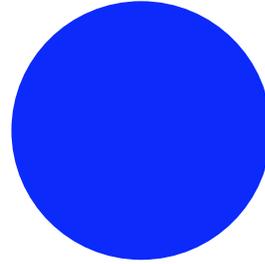
3. Engage in multidirectional action.



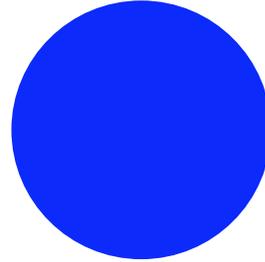
4. Take accountability for your own learning and behavior change.

# From good intentions *to action*

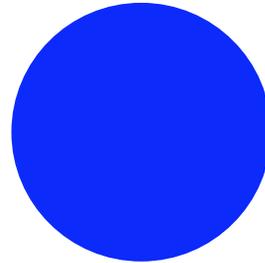
- 
- Good intentions are not enough
  - Fix systems and processes, *not* women
  - Performative behaviour
  - Moral credentialing
  - Canadian universities need to turn a mirror on themselves.



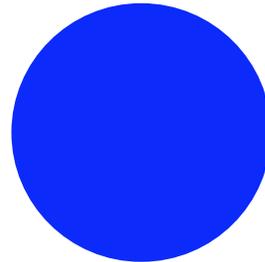
Create a plan to uncover unconscious bias at Senate and Board meetings. Change culture, systems, policies and programs to account for unconscious bias.



Develop a succession plan with a foundation of diversity. Be an ally, sponsor and advocate for diversity.



At the board level, plan for times of crisis and understand role of bias during these times in particular.



Track diversity data and metrics. Share the good *and* bad news.

# CONNECT WITH US

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