

## Cultural Comfort Strategy #1: Be Mindful of Gender Roles

1. **Avoid the generic use of the word “man.”** For example, instead of saying, “Ever since the dawn of civilization, man has attempted to expand his horizons and learn new things,” say, “Ever since the dawn of civilization, humans have attempted to expand their horizons and learn new things.”
2. **Use the plural, non-specific gender form of the personal pronoun.** For example, instead of saying, “When a new supervisor encounters a problem, he usually asks his mentor for advice,” say, “When new supervisors encounter a problem, they usually ask their mentors for advice.”
3. **Search for alternatives to male-oriented job positions.** For example, change “warehouse foreman” to “warehouse supervisor or manager;” “salesman” to “sales agent or representative;” and “cameraman” to “camera operator.”
4. **Be completely consistent with social titles.** In a group presentation, do not address the male speaker as “Mr. Chen” and the female speaker as “Iris.” (Use either “Mr. Chen” and “Ms. Li” or “Bo” and “Iris.”)
5. **Avoid references to the physical body (unless, of course, your presentation is about the physical body).** Don’t introduce your speaking partner as “handsome” or “beautiful.” Stick to their professional qualifications, not their physical attributes. I once had a male client from Hong Kong who introduced his female colleague as “sexy”—which is a lawsuit waiting to happen.