

How the Gender Code plays out in your life today

This is a general summary presenting what I found from my research. If you keep an open mind, you can reflect on it, start to change the conversation with increased awareness and choose whether or not to do things differently.

Focus area	Male — typical	Female — typical
<p>Childhood play</p> <p>The socialisation process begins to establish gender norms.</p>	<p>Games tend to be structured and competitive, have a hierarchy, rules and a clear outcome with winners and losers.</p> <p>Players lose about 50 per cent of the time.</p> <p>Players deal with losing, learn from it, move on, focus on the next win and build a strategy.</p>	<p>Play tends to be process and relationship based — no winner or loser — and competition can be seen as a relationship breakdown.</p> <p>Play doesn't allow for practising to lose.</p> <p>Play competition and clashes are taken more personally: is it about me? Is it my fault?</p>
<p>Rules and expectations</p>	<p>The male hierarchy structure provides order — this plays out in organisations with org charts.</p> <p>The rules of the workplace are written for the male way of operating.</p>	<p>Relationships and women connecting with each other — flatter structures.</p> <p>The rules of the traditional workplace are not drawn up for the female way of operating.</p>
<p>Approaching challenges/tasks</p>	<p>Goal-focused — what is the goal, find the solution and solve the problem.</p>	<p>Process-driven — discuss the problem, what are the options?</p>

Breaking the Gender Code

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Job appraisal	<p>I am a 10/10 superstar — dial up expectations and don't highlight unsuccessful areas.</p> <p>Self-promote, push up the performance rating and expect to be moderated down.</p> <p>Perception is that expectations were exceeded and ahead of the bell curve.</p> <p>Exceeded expectations may attract a 4 per cent pay increase.</p>	<p>Perception is met, but didn't go beyond expectations. Personal expectations are higher to start with.</p> <p>Less self-promotion.</p> <p>Perception is that expectations were met.</p> <p>Meeting expectations may attract 2 per cent pay rise.</p> <p>A period of 10 years with consistent increases results in a 20 per cent difference in pay across genders.</p>
Problem-solving	<p>Desire to solve.</p> <p>Shoe discussion.</p>	<p>Desire to discuss.</p> <p>Shoe discussion.</p>
Social codes	<p>More acceptable to be aggressive and a wider range of behaviours.</p> <p>Aggressive = adhering to the code.</p>	<p>Different rules: aggression and assertiveness are not acceptable.</p> <p>Aggressive = violation of the code.</p>
Workplace competition	<p>In a meeting men may be highly competitive, even aggressive but, after the meeting is over, go off and have a beer together.</p> <p>Letting go of the loss/win and looking for the next one.</p>	<p>The discussion is not over and will probably continue.</p> <p>Less likely to let go of the loss and move on.</p>

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<p>Success and failure</p>	<p>Success due to own skills, strengths and abilities.</p> <p>Failure due to something in the external world.</p>	<p>Success due to the external world — I was lucky, someone helped me.</p> <p>Failures due to me — what have I done wrong? What is wrong with me? I am not good enough.</p> <p>Solution — draw a box around it, drop the loss and don't drag it around — it was this boss, this time.</p> <p>Evolve and learn from the loss.</p>
<p>Competition</p>	<p>Constant — not personal, but playing the game.</p> <p>Business is a game — not about me.</p> <p>Take risks.</p> <p>Segment and partition.</p> <p>Embrace competition.</p>	<p>One to one — best friend.</p> <p>Competition can be damaging to relationships.</p> <p>Avoid competition.</p> <p>Women perceived as risk-averse — not given as many opportunities.</p> <p>Example: "Get out of the tree, you might fall", which is code for you are more physically fragile.</p> <p>Current scientific research reveals that women are not more fragile.</p>

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Self-promotion	<p>Bragging is a survival skill — ego.</p> <p>Talk about successes.</p> <p>Talk about potential and track record.</p> <p>Open and clear about aims.</p>	<p>Good girls don't brag.</p> <p>Don't talk about yourself too much.</p> <p>Expectation is if I am good and work hard I will be recognised.</p> <p>People should know what I want — read my mind.</p> <p>Second-guessing and questioning internal voices — driven by fear of disconnection when it is all about connection.</p>
Communication process	<p>Pull the problem inside.</p> <p>Process the problem/question/challenge internally.</p> <p>Find a solution.</p> <p>Express externally.</p> <p>Internalise and verbalise.</p> <p>Perceived to have lost position of power when asking for discussion based on the hierarchy rules.</p> <p>Bottom line first and then backfill.</p>	<p>Share the problem externally.</p> <p>Process externally.</p> <p>Speaking, sharing and processing with people builds relationships.</p> <p>Process, then arrive at the bottom line.</p>

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Body language	<p>Open body stance generally.</p> <p>Stand firmly in place.</p> <p>I belong here — which can sometimes be bravado.</p> <p>Example: male bikers on the road riding two or more abreast.</p> <p>Males spreading their legs on planes.</p>	<p>Socialised to be thin, beautiful and quiet.</p> <p>Can sometimes shrink and be conscious of taking up space.</p> <p>Women in meetings — especially small women.</p>
Negotiating	<p>Don't ask, don't get.</p> <p>More likely to make a bold proposal.</p> <p>Four times more likely to negotiate than women.</p> <p>More acceptable to be tougher — expected behaviour with no negative outcomes.</p> <p>Example: graduate males asking for positions.</p>	<p>Concerned about asking due to potential social consequences — may seem aggressive.</p> <p>Cooperative negotiation — let's talk with the boss rather than let's fight the boss (unions) — positive outcomes with less aggression.</p> <p>Example: graduate females expected to be asked to fill positions based on merit.</p>
Emotions	More likely to mask.	More likely to show.