

Write down words that come to mind when you think of 'typical' gender styles for...

(communication, behavior, attitudes, etc.)

Women

Men

....and what is usually on their minds?



Discussion Questions (part 1)

- Who do you enjoy communicating with more - men or women? Why?
- What puzzles you the most about the opposite gender?
What do you like the most about the opposite gender? What bothers you?
- What have you noticed about how homogenous gender groups communicate differently?
- How do you communicate differently with a man or a woman?
- In your experience, how do men and women approach these aspects of communication differently?
 - apologizing
 - giving compliments
 - interrupting
 - arguing
 - solving problems
 - eye contactWhat are some other differences in how men and women communicate and behave?

Discussion Questions (part 2)

- How much do you agree with the various points made about gender-based differences in the readings and videos we saw. Which 'ring true'? Which don't?
- Do you think there is a generational component to gender-based differences?
(e.g. Are your attitudes toward gender different than your parents or grandparents?)
- Have you noticed any culture based differences in gender communication and behaviors?
(e.g. Korean women vs. Western women, Busan men vs. Seoul men)
Have you observed any of these differences while traveling?
- How do you think men and women are treated differently in society, family, school, and work? Which do you think are fair or unfair? Which would you like to change?
- Did your parents treat their sons and daughters differently?
If you have children, will you treat your sons differently from your daughters? How so?
- Are there certain jobs that you think men or women are better able to do?
- What are the best and worst parts of being your gender?
- In what ways are you typical and atypical of your gender?
- If you had the option of choosing your gender next time, which would you choose? Why?

Discussion Questions (part 2)

- How much do you agree with the various points made about gender-based differences in the readings and videos we saw. Which 'ring true'? Which don't?
- Do you think there is a generational component to gender-based differences?
(e.g. Are your attitudes toward gender different than your parents or grandparents?)
- Have you noticed any culture based differences in gender communication and behaviors?
(e.g. Korean women vs. Western women, Busan men vs. Seoul men)
Have you observed any of these differences while traveling?
- How do you think men and women are treated differently in society, family, school, and work? Which do you think are fair or unfair? Which would you like to change?
- Did your parents treat their sons and daughters differently?
If you have children, will you treat your sons differently from your daughters? How so?
- Are there certain jobs that you think men or women are better able to do?
- What are the best and worst parts of being your gender?
- In what ways are you typical and atypical of your gender?
- If you had the option of choosing your gender next time, which would you choose? Why?

Gender-based differences in Communication Styles

According to Melissa Dittman Tracey, there are five main communication differences between the sexes:

1. **Women's brains are always "on."**

There is more neural activity in the female brain at any given time than in the male brain.

2. **Men just want the facts.**

Men usually ask fewer questions to stimulate conversation in their work relationships and often end conversations more abruptly than women.

3. **Women focus on friendship first.**

For female salespeople, they tend to build relationships when they sell. They don't tend to go into a transaction focused on the final outcome but wanting to build rapport and learn more about the client first.

4. **Men take it one task at a time.**

Men tend to like to focus on one task at a time, whereas women's brains are more geared to multitask.

5. **Women remember the little details.**

Females can generally remember more physical and relational details than men.

6. **Chatterbox**-Surprisingly in the long run men and women talk about the same amount. The differences are in the subject and goals of the discussions. Women talk more to family and close friends, exchanging support and experiences, while men's goal is to exchange information whether at work or in formal or social situations.

Meanwhile, Susan Sherwood, PhD, maintains that there are 10 specific areas within communication that the genders differ:

1. **Nonverbal** - Women are more demonstrative while men are more conservative.
2. **Body orientation** -Women appear more physically engaged, but appearances can be deceiving.
3. **Arguments** -Men are more direct and less concerned about feelings, while women often approach issues in a more circuitous fashion.
4. **Apologies** -Women apologize more, hoping to create or sustain connections. Men view apologies as a loss of face.
5. **Compliments**-Women use these as a way of connecting with others, while men are more likely to offer evaluations and advice.
6. **Problem solving** -Men prefer action and desire immediate results; women discuss problems and feelings, and look for common experiences to share with others.
7. **Negotiation**-Women prefer discussion, their goal being agreement. Men feel that this is manipulation. They are more direct and want speedy results.
8. **Interrupting**-Women interrupt to demonstrate concern. Men interrupt to try to control the conversation.

Ways Men and Women Communicate Differently by Richard Drobnick.

1. Why Talk?

He believes communication should have a clear purpose. Behind every conversation is a problem that needs solving or a point that needs to be made. Communication is used to get to the root of the dilemma as efficiently as possible. *She* uses communication to discover how she is feeling and what it is she wants to say. She sees conversation as an act of sharing and an opportunity to increase intimacy with her partner. By sharing, she releases negative feelings and solidifies her bond with the man she loves.

2. How Much Should You Say?

He prioritizes productivity and efficiency in his daily life, and conversation is no exception. When he tells a story he has already sorted through the muck in his own head, and shares only those details that he deems essential to the point of the story. He might wonder, "Why do women need to talk as much as they do?" Often he will interrupt a woman once he has heard enough to offer a solution.

She uses communication to explore and organize her thoughts — to discover the point of the story. She may not know what information is necessary or excessive until the words come spilling out. But a woman isn't necessarily searching for a solution when she initiates a conversation. She's looking for someone to listen and understand what she's feeling.

3. What Does It Mean To Listen?

He is conditioned to listen actively. When a woman initiates conversation he assumes she is seeking his advice or assistance. He engages with the woman, filtering everything she's saying through the lens of, "What can we actually do about this?" Learning to listen patiently doesn't come easily to him. *She* sees conversation as a productive end in and of itself. If she feels sufficiently heard or understood she may not need to take further action to resolve a problem or "make things better." The fact that she has been listened to assuages her anxieties and dulls the pangs of negative feelings. Sharing with someone who understands and loves her heals her.

Ways Men and Women Communicate Differently by Richard Drobnick.

4. When *She* Is Feeling Down ...

He will want to tackle her problems head on, like a fireman. He feels impatient to put the fire out as quickly as possible. For him, the quickest way to put the fire out is by giving solutions. He might hear things literally, not realizing that when his spouse is upset she will use words as tools to explore and express difficult emotions.

She values support and nurture, and is most fulfilled by sharing, cooperation and community. When he shows interest in her by asking caring questions or expressing heartfelt concerns she feels loved and cared for. He is fulfilling her first primary love need.

5. When *He* Is Feeling Down ...

He will often withdraw into his "cave" (becoming quiet and withdrawn) when he's upset or stressed. A man's "cave time" is like a short vacation: he reduces stress by forgetting about his problems and focusing on other things like watching television, reading the newspaper, or playing video games. He might avoid communication with his spouse during times of duress. If she persists with nurturing questions or criticism, he withdraws even further, fearing that his partner doesn't trust him to take care of business on his own.

She might interpret her spouse's silence as a sign that she is failing him or that she's losing him. She instinctively tries to nurture him through his problems by asking an abundance of caring questions. Or she may react defensively out of fear that her own need for healthy open communication is not being respected within the relationship.

6. Communication Breaks Down When ...

He feels like he's being told what to do. The most important thing to a man is doing a good job. When his competence is questioned he'll not only feel hurt, but he'll throw up a wall of resistance, and communication begins to breakdown. He thrives in an environment where he's the expert. Rather than being told, "You should do X" he is likely to respond better to, "What do you think of X?" The trick to improving him is to resist telling him what to do. *She* hears from her spouse that her problems aren't as real and pressing as they seem in that very moment. Her spouse may mistakenly think he's being helpful in providing "reality checks" like: "*You're making a mountain out of a mole hill*". To her it feels like he is attempting to minimize her feelings or talk her out of having them.

Gender-based differences in Communication Styles

According to Melissa Dittman Tracey, there are five main communication differences between the sexes:

1. **Women's brains are always "on."**

There is more neural activity in the female brain at any given time than in the male brain.

2. **Men just want the facts.**

Men usually ask fewer questions to stimulate conversation in their work relationships and often end conversations more abruptly than women.

3. **Women focus on friendship first.**

For female salespeople, they tend to build relationships when they sell. They don't tend to go into a transaction focused on the final outcome but wanting to build rapport and learn more about the client first.

4. **Men take it one task at a time.**

Men tend to like to focus on one task at a time, whereas women's brains are more geared to multitask.

5. **Women remember the little details.**

Females can generally remember more physical and relational details than men.

Meanwhile, Susan Sherwood, PhD, maintains that there are 10 specific areas within communication that the genders differ:

1. **Nonverbal** - Women are more demonstrative while men are more conservative.

2. **Body orientation** - Women appear more physically engaged, but appearances can be deceiving.

3. **Arguments** - Men are more direct and less concerned about feelings, while women often approach issues in a more circuitous fashion.

4. **Apologies** - Women apologize more, hoping to create or sustain connections. Men view apologies as a loss of face.

5. **Compliments** - Women use these as a way of connecting with others, while men are more likely to offer evaluations and advice.

6. **Problem solving** - Men prefer action and desire immediate results; women discuss problems and feelings, and look for common experiences to share with others.

7. **Negotiation** - Women prefer discussion, their goal being agreement. Men feel that this is manipulation. They are more direct and want speedy results.

8. **Chatterbox** - Surprisingly in the long run men and women talk about the same amount. The differences are in the subject and goals of the discussions. Women talk more to family and close friends, exchanging support and experiences, while men's goal is to exchange information whether at work or in formal or social situations.

Different Brains: Different Abilities

The difference between the male and female brain is not evidence of superiority or inferiority, but of **specialization**. The research showed that on average, female brains are highly connected across the left and right hemispheres, and connections in male brains are typically stronger between the front and back regions. Men's brains tend to perform tasks predominantly on the left-side, which is the logical/rational side of the brain. Women, on the other hand, use both sides of their brains because a woman's brain has a larger Corpus Callosum, which means women can transfer data between the right and left hemispheres faster than men.!

- **Social Context:** Women are better at social thinking & interactions than men, while men are more abstract and task-orientated. This is why women are normally better at communication while men more often prefer relying on themselves to get things done.
- **Emotions:** Women typically have a larger limbic system than men, which makes them more in touch and expressive with their emotions. Women are usually more empathic and comprehensive in thinking, while men focus on exact issues and disregard impertinent information. Men have a difficult time understanding emotions not explicitly verbalized but can think more logically, while women have a more wholesome view of thinking & understanding but their emotions can sometimes cloud judgements.
- **Language:** Women are more attuned to words and sounds and are normally better at learning languages. This is also why men tend to have a harder time expressing emotions verbally.
- **Memory:** Women generally have better memory than men. They have greater activity in the brain's hippocampus, which is part of the brain that helps store memories. Studies have shown women are generally better at recalling words, names, faces, pictures, objects, and everyday events.
- **Risks & Rewards:** Men has a brain wired for risk-taking more than women. Male brains get a bigger burst of endorphins, sensation of pleasure, when faced with a risky or challenging situation. And the bigger the reward is, the more likely a man will take a risk.
- **Senses & Sex:** Men focus more on their visual sense, among other senses of perception; while women tend to use multiple senses. In terms of sexual activity, men are prevalently turned on by what they see, whereas women are turned on by multiple sources: ambience, touch, scent, as well as visual perception.
- Girls ***tend to be more vocal than boys, are better at hearing higher frequencies, and do better than boys in reading and vocabulary tests.***
- Males have a vastly superior ability to ***visualize a three dimensional object than do women.*** This gives the male his often-observed superior abilities in math and geometrical reasoning. In addition, males are better skilled in gross motor movements than are girls.
- Women have four times as many brain cells (neurons) connecting the right and left side of their brain (This latter finding provides physical evidence that supports the observation that ***men*** rely easily and more heavily on their left brain to solve ***one problem one step at a time***).
- Women have more efficient access to both sides of their brain (therefore greater use of their right brain. ***Women*** can focus on more than one problem at one time and frequently prefer to solve problems through ***multiple activities at a time***).

Smell

Women have a greater ability to detect smells than men, and this may be linked to estrogen hormones. The structure of the nose is the same in women as men, and they don't have any more receptors in the nose, but studies have shown smells activate a greater region in the brain in women than men. In one study, they were able to do better than men in differentiating between odors and picking up faint and slight odors.. In another unrelated study, men were given clean cotton t-shirts to sleep in for two nights. The t-shirts were subsequently sealed in plastic bags and then sent to women to smell and rate how attractive they thought the t-shirt wearer was. The most striking find of the study was that the women often picked the men who had the strongest immune systems.

Pain Tolerance

Ever thought your girlfriend or wife was overreacting to a crushed finger or stubbed toe? Well, she might not have been overreacting at all, as women have more nerve receptors, which cause them to feel pain more intensely than men. Women average 34 nerve fibers per square centimeter of facial skin, while men only average 17 nerve fibers. You're not being tougher than her by charismatically surviving a bee sting; you're just not feeling it at her intensity. This has far-reaching effects, as in the treatment of chronic pain sufferers may need higher dosages of painkillers. About 70% of chronic pain sufferers are women, as well. Their being sensitive and tolerant to pain is different though. Let me repeat: they are sensitive, yet tolerant to pain. They have more coping mechanisms than men do to deal with pain and can therefore get through much more arduous parts of life, such as childbirth.

Sight. When it comes to the sense of sight, there are some big differences between men and women. While men can read finer print and are better at night vision and discerning movement, women can sense colors better, have a wider periphery of vision and have more of a chance of being a tetrachromat. A tetrachromat has another type of cone in between the red and green (somewhere in the orange range) and its 100 shades, theoretically, would allow a woman to see 100 million different colors. Only a woman can be a tetrachromat. This is because the genes for the pigments in green and red cones lie on the X chromosome, and only women have two X chromosomes, creating the opportunity for one type of red cone to be activated on one X chromosome and the other type of red cone on the other one. 8 percent of men in the world have a color deficiency as compared to 0.5% of women.

Friendships. The way friendships are forged and maintained also differs between male and female. Men expect competition in companionship. They avoid communicating weakness and vulnerability as well as personal and emotional concerns. For women there is little to no problems with communicating weakness and vulnerability, even seeking out friendships during hardships. For this reason one could say that women are emotionally closer to their friends than men are. Women tend to value and bond with their friends for listening and responding non-critically, showing support and offering comfort. On the other hand, men grow closer to each other by doing activities with each other, or doing each other favors. Young boys at school will play more vigorously, and occupy more space in their play area, than girls. Girls will opt for more sedentary games, and girls are more likely to accept a new classmate to their group, whereas a new boy will have to demonstrate his usefulness to the group.

Time. In a 2001 study participants were asked to judge how much time had passed at an interval of 1, 3, 7 or 20 seconds. The results weren't mind-blowing, but they showed that men regularly overshoot the interval while women undershot. It also showed that the difference between sexes does not change with length of interval perceived. This could possibly purport that men feel time go by faster while women feel it goes by slower. Women perceive time by using landmarks or milestones in time to identify other points in time (i.e. that was shortly after my mother died or that was during lunchtime) while men were more likely to state the year, date, or time something happened. As some of you may have noticed, this is similar to the relationship between men and women on spatial awareness. There is some truth to this also. The lobule that is responsible for the perception of speed and the mental ability to rotate 3-D objects is also responsible for perceiving time.

Arguments Women often try to get their point across by asking many types of questions: defiant, informational and rhetorical. The questions are designed to present an opposition or gather data. Men's contributions to arguments are often simple and direct. They're so straightforward, in contrast to women's questions, that men might not even realize that a conflict is occurring. When, finally, both parties realize they are disagreeing, their communication styles have great impact. Men are concerned with being right and less concerned about anyone else's feelings. This perceived lack of compassion upsets women. Men dislike questions, interpreting them as censure, and they react by closing down emotionally. This pattern leads women to become increasingly suspicious and wary. Time to go to separate corners.

Apologizing

Women use apologies to try to create or maintain connections. Men, on the other hand, are concerned with what an apology might do: It might lower them to a subordinate position, a place where they've never wanted to be since boyhood..

After a male-female quarrel, gender differences can prolong negative feelings. If a man fears losing power and avoids apologizing, a woman might consider this insensitive behavior, becoming offended and annoyed. Thus the argument continues .

Body Orientation

One specific aspect of nonverbal communication is body orientation. If a man won't make eye contact or face his female conversational partner, she (perceiving conversation as integral to relationships) may interpret this as a lack of interest. He may become annoyed that she is rejecting his efforts; to him, his relaxed body position is actually helping him concentrate. The differences in physical alignment can make it difficult for talkers to reconcile the two styles.

Interrupting

Most people dislike being interrupted, but most people do it at one time or another. Women interrupt to show concern, but they think men disrupt the discussion by shifting the subject. Men do try to control the conversation by disrupting it. They also believe a woman's supportive interjections (for example, "go on") are interruptions.

Frequent interruptions, no matter the cause, no matter the target, can lead to frustration. This can build to anger and, unless the guilty party gets things under control, the discussion will come to a screeching halt. Or perhaps just screeching.

Giving Compliments

From a young age, females learn to give compliments; it's almost reflexive. Compliments are a way of reaching out to one another, an offer of affirmation and inclusion. Men are more likely to volunteer evaluations instead of hand out compliments. Similarly, they will not seek out compliments because they want to avoid being critiqued themselves. Naturally, these differing approaches complicate communication. If a woman asks a question with the hope of being praised or flattered, a man may well see it as a way to offer advice. This affects their relative power:

Problem Solving. Men and women approach an analytical discussion differently. Men tend to focus on facts and seek immediate resolutions; action is the conversational goal. Women desire more extensive talk about problems, sharing feelings and finding common experiences. Even if there's a mutual dilemma to resolve, such diverse communication goals can lead to frustration. Men don't understand why women don't want to solve problems, why they seem ungrateful for direct help. Women are hurt by the perceived disregard for emotions and frustrated when they believe they are being pushed to decide too quickly.

Nonverbal Communication. Women's actions {direct eye contact, sympathetic looks, hugs etc} all focus on maintaining the relationship. Women give attention and encourage participation from other women. Men are goal orientated. Their actions depend on what needs to be done. Does he want to appear to be in charge? Then he uses his body movements to control the discussion. If he wants to seem empathetic he will keep a calm face.

Physical Differences between men and women

Men and women differ in countless ways, many of which they aren't even conscious of. Here are just a few of those differences:

1. A woman has greater constitutional vitality, perhaps because of her unique chromosomal pattern. Normally, she outlives a man by three or four years in the U.S. Females simply have a stronger hold on life than males, even in the uterus. More than 140 male babies are conceived for every 100 females; by the time birth occurs, the ratio is 105 to 100.
2. Men have a higher incidence of death from almost every disease except three: benign tumors, disorders related to female reproduction, and breast cancer.
3. The sexes differ in skeletal structure, women having a shorter head, broader face, less protruding chin, shorter legs, and longer trunk. The first finger of a woman's hand is usually longer than the third; with men the reverse is true. Boys' teeth last longer than do those of girls.
4. Women's blood contains more water (20 percent fewer red cells). Since red cells supply oxygen to the body, she tires more easily and is more prone to faint. Her constitutional viability is therefore strictly a long-range matter.
5. Women's hearts beat more rapidly than those of men (80 versus 72 beats per minute). Their blood pressure (ten points lower than men) varies more from minute to minute, but they have much less tendency to high blood pressure—at least until after menopause.
6. Women can withstand high temperatures better than men because their metabolism slows down less.

Sexual Mythology Versus Scientific Facts

Sex differentiation takes place immediately as the male or female begins to develop within the womb. Men and women differ in every cell of their bodies because they carry a differing chromosomal pattern. The implications of those genetic components range from obvious to extremely subtle.

- On average- girls begin **puberty changing** approximately two years before boys.
- Women are more **sensitive** to sound than men
- Men have larger hearts and lungs, and their higher levels of testosterone cause them to produce greater amounts of red blood cells called erythrocytes.
- The lung capacity of men is 25 to 30 percent greater than that of women. This gives men still another advantage in the processing of oxygen and in doing aerobic work.
- Women have a larger stomach, kidneys, liver and appendix, and smaller lungs than men.
- Men have thicker **skin**, (Men's skin has more collagen and sebum, which makes it more thicker and oilier than women's skin).
- Men have better distance vision and depth perception, and usually better vision in lighted environments.
- Women generally have a greater body fat percentage than men. Women carry about 10 percentage points more body fat than do men of the same age.
- Men accumulate fat primarily in the **back, chest, and abdomen**
- Women gain fat in the **buttocks, arms, and thighs**.
- Women can withstand higher temperatures better than men due to a difference in their metabolism. A woman's response to heat stress differs somewhat from a man's. Women sweat less, lose less heat through evaporation, and reach higher body temperatures before sweating starts. Nevertheless, women can adapt to heat stress as well as men.
- A man's skull is almost always thicker and stronger than a woman's