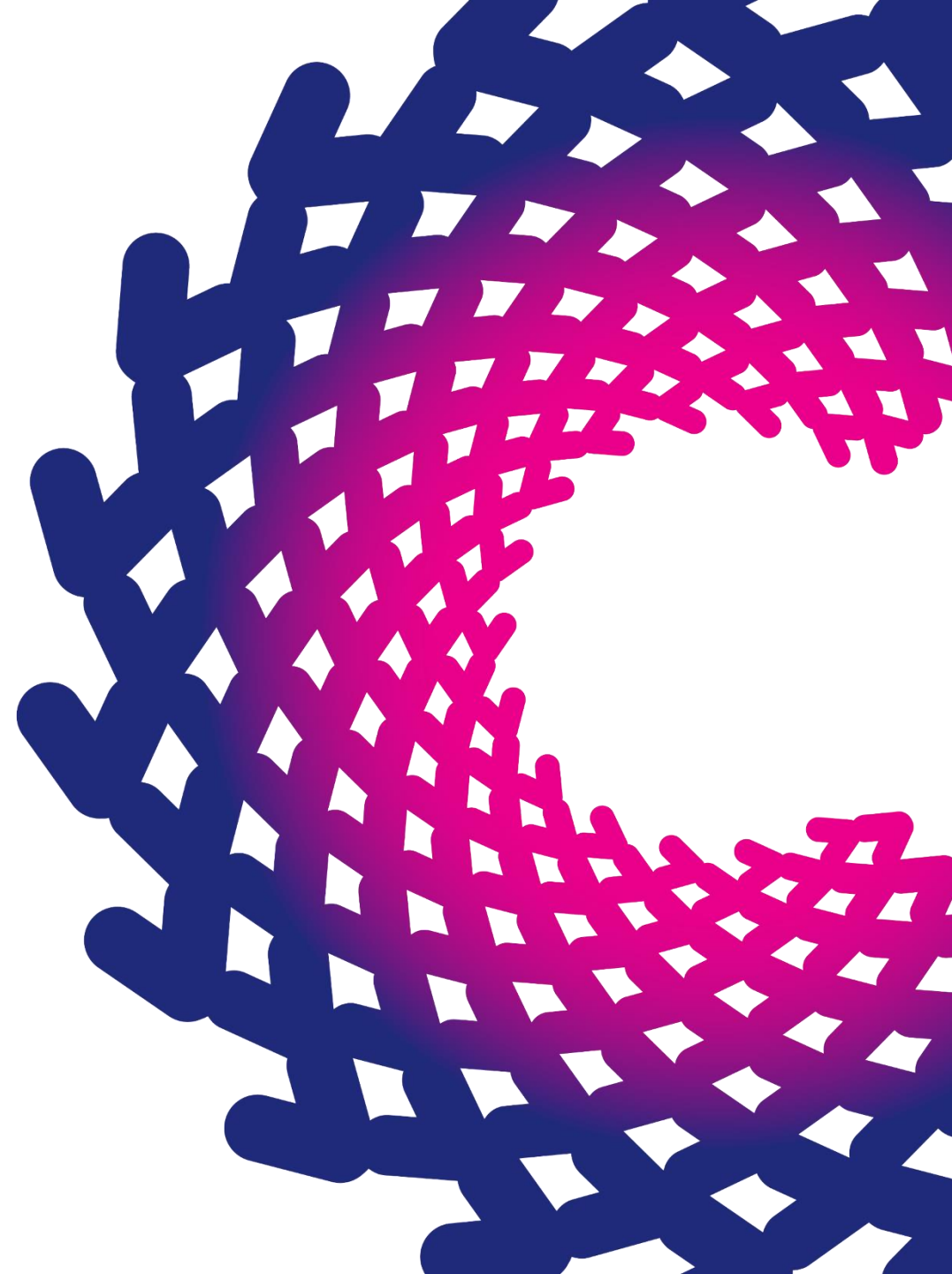




Exploring Power & Positionality:

Examining How Personal Power Shows Up in Conversations About DEI

Presented in partnership with





Today's Agenda

01. Welcome
02. Purpose of this series
03. Power, positionality & perspective
04. Considering complexity - small group discussion
05. Takeaways to apply
06. Closing

Purpose of this series

Positionality, Power & Perspective

Positional Power



Legitimate Power
"The Boss"



Reward Power
"Bribery"



Coercive Power
"Protection Racket"



Resource Power
"Controlling Access"

Personal Power



Referent Power
"I like you"



Expert Power
"Special abilities"

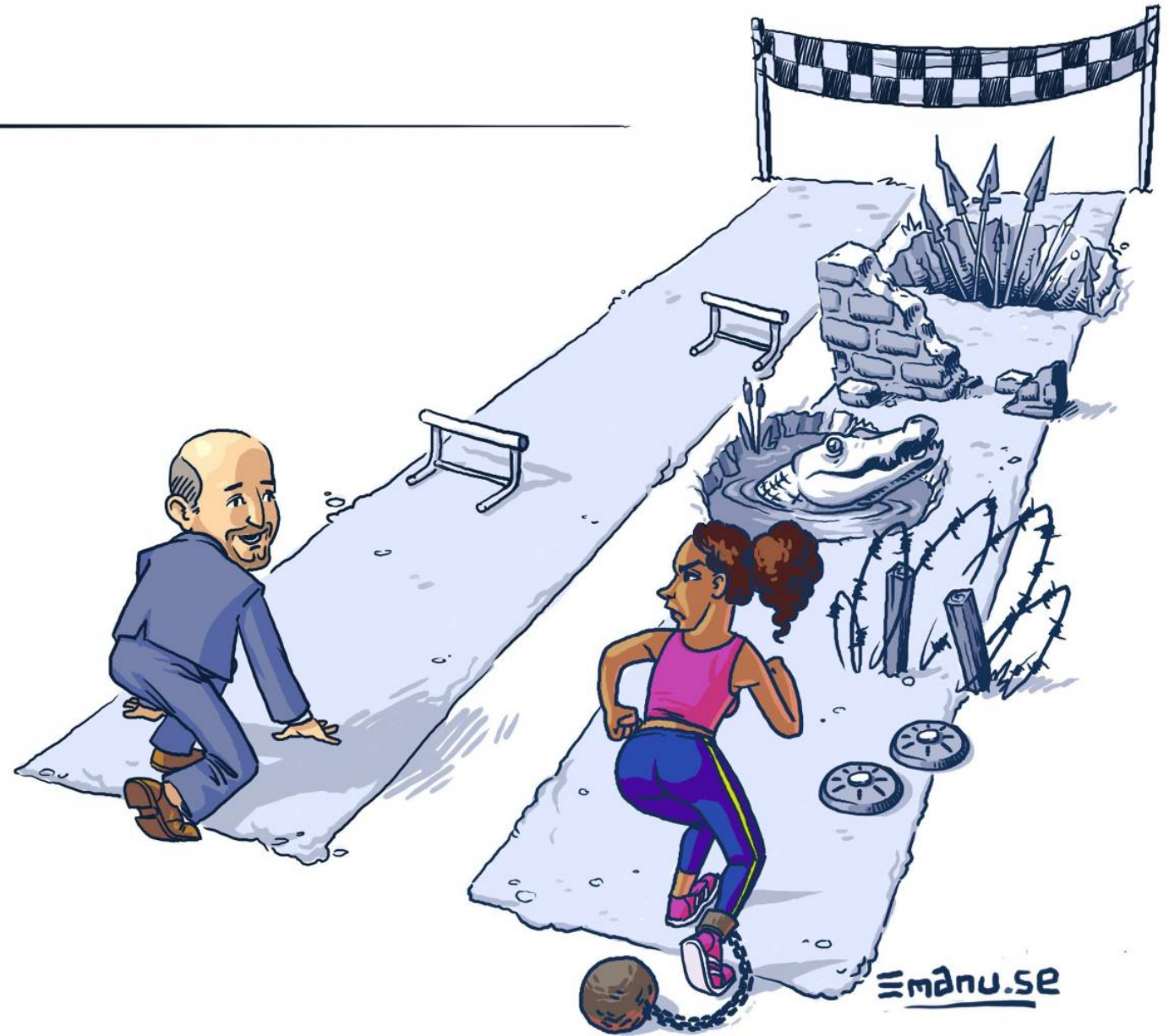


Information Power
"It's what you know"



Connection Power
"... and who you know"

What is privilege?



“What’s the matter?
It’s the same distance!”

Social privilege is a theory of **special advantage** or entitlement, used to **one's own benefit** and/or to the **detriment of others**.

Privilege must be understood as the **inverse of social inequality**, in that it focuses on how **power structures** in society **aid societally privileged people**, as opposed to how those structures oppress others.

What is privilege
based on?

neurodivergence

education

Generational wealth

gender

Family status

Nationality

class

skin tone

RACE

CASTE

Age

physical attractiveness

body size

ethnicity

Religion

immigration status

primary language

disability

sexual orientation

What is intersectionality?



Intersectionality is the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating **overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.**

When applying **intersectionality** to the concept of **social privilege**, it can be understood as the way **one form of privilege** can be **mitigated** by other areas in which a person **lacks privilege.**

Complex identities

Autistic, white, new employee

- May struggle with social queues
- May need accommodations
- New employee, might not feel comfortable yet
- May not have disclosed their condition
- Has racial privilege as a white person

H1-B visa holder, speaks English fluently, but as a second language

- Might not feel as secure in their job as US citizen counterparts
- Could feel threatened by xenophobic rhetoric in news, politics
- Might feel self-conscious about and/or have their language abilities questioned
- May or may not have racial/ethnic privilege

Complex identities

Latino male, Ph.D. candidate, single parent, popular in the office

- May have their expertise questioned, based on racial/ethnic identity, also due to their education status
- Also have privilege based on their level of educational attainment
- Single parenting might make certain aspects of work difficult
- Referent power

Woman, vice president, Jewish, is known in the company for being “difficult”

- Has positional authority, privilege as VP
- May have her expertise, position questioned, based on gender
- May not have all of her religious holidays and celebrations respected; possible stereotyping
- “Difficult” moniker could be accurate, maybe not; could be stereotype based on gender

Practice:

Considering the complexity of
your colleagues' experiences

Consider:

How might the characteristics listed impact each person's respective work experiences?

How might you better support colleagues in similar situations?

How can your company better support similarly situated colleagues?

1. Black, male, scientist, working at company for 5+ years

2. Lesbian woman, recently divorced, keeps to themselves in the office, seeking a promotion to manage a team

3. Asian American, uses a cane, aged 59, practices Buddhism

4. South Asian, M.D., works remotely, is a college friend of the COO

5. White, identifies as nonbinary, lab technician, practices Christianity

Share out:

Recorders place group
notes in the chat

Takeaways

1. Understanding your own positionality can illuminate the ways that your actions are perceived and impact other people and their circumstances.
2. By identifying aspects of your and your colleagues' identities where you each hold privilege and also might be subjected to marginalization, you can build empathy and better understand each other experiences.
3. Knowing how power and privilege operate within your company can help you interrupt forms of inequity and prevent harm.

Thank You!

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