

# Take PRIDE

## in Your IT Customer Service

*Stephanie Brooks*

### Does your institutional technology support model include your LGBTQIA+ users?

For Pride Month, June 2023, I offer four strategies for IT organizations to center allyship as a customer service fundamental while providing technology support. These suggestions are pulled from my experience as an IT Technology Services Specialist at the Roger Williams University Help Desk. While these strategies are most effective when adopted by the IT operations administration, they are truly designed to be implemented by the technicians who are on the front line of support.

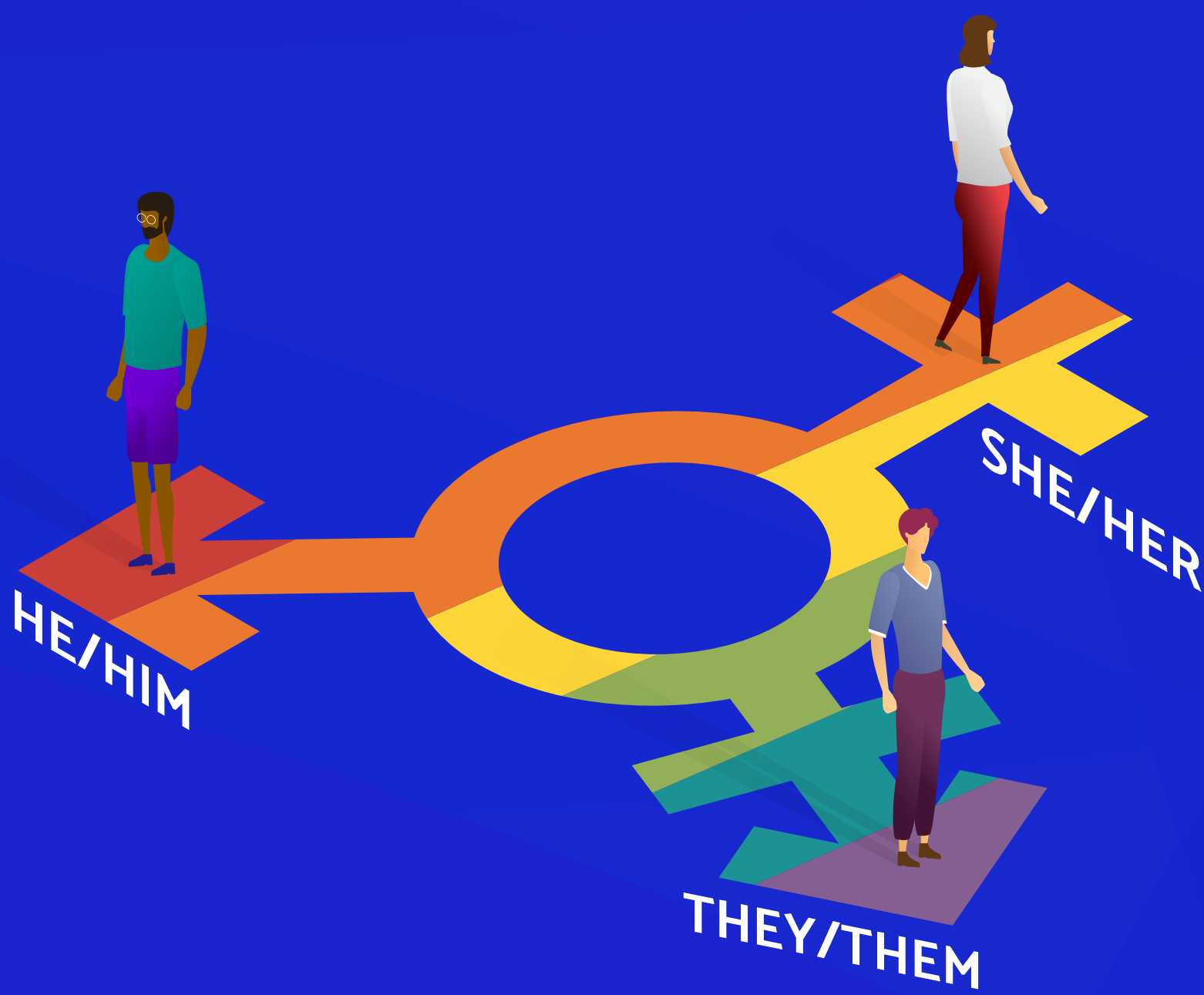
#### #1. Train with LGBTQIA+ Inclusivity in Mind.

Incorporate LGBTQIA+ allyship courses as part of customer service training and professional development for staff. Many colleges and universities have existing training curricula for LGBTQIA+ allyship. Reach out to your institution's office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Additional resources exist on LinkedIn Learning and other online platforms (see below).



#### #2. Implement Inclusive Language into Ticketing Practices.

Use gender-neutral language in your ticketing system to refer to users who have not identified their pronouns. Avoid using titles associated with a specific gender (e.g., Mr. or Mrs.). Default to using a customer's full name. Support technicians can also add their pronouns to their ticketing system signature, if applicable. Use gender-inclusive language in all forms of technology documentation including knowledge-base articles.



#### #3. Support Inclusive Software Features.

The IT organization can offer support and documentation on inclusive features within software used by the institution. For example, supporting features such as the “Inclusiveness” option in the Microsoft Word spelling and grammar check can help create an inclusive digital campus landscape.

**INCLUSION**



#### #4. Listen to the LGBTQIA+ Community.

Become an ally—and amplify the voices—of your LGBTQIA+ patrons. Things change, and so do the needs of this community. Listen to what they are asking for, and implement changes based on their requests. You can further your knowledge through podcasts, newsletters, and courses designed by and for the LGBTQIA+ community.



**I hope these strategies can spark additional LGBTQIA+ research and training, either taken individually or adapted into a larger IT support model.**

### Resources

[The Trevor Project](#)  
[The Safe Zone Project](#)  
[“Using Gender Inclusive Language” \(LinkedIn Learning course\)](#)  
[“Understanding and Supporting LGBTQ+ Employees” \(LinkedIn Learning course\)](#)  
[The EDUCAUSE Guide to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#)  
[EDUCAUSE Inclusive Language Guide](#)

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