

# FEMALE CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND EMPOWERMENT

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*Topic 3*

**DIGI**  
**GEN**



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# THINK- MANAGER, THINK-MALE

Leadership as a male paradigm?

- Unconscious bias and stereotypes
- Implicit leadership theories
- Role congruity theory

# **UNCONSCIOUS BIAS & STEREOTYPES**

Humans are simply fallible to  
**UNCONSCIOUS BIAS**. We don't  
mean to be biased, we don't want to be  
biased. But **we are**. And we don't get  
past it by pointing it out to one another.

*Kerry Edelstein*

*The emotional, sexual and psychological stereotyping of females begins when the doctor says, 'It's a girl'.*

*Shirley Chisholm*

# STEREOTYPES

are mental shortcuts that  
we take to make sense of a  
complicated world.

Timothy D. Wilson

# GROUP DISCUSSION

*Impact of stereotypes*

Where do you encounter stereotypes?

How do stereotypes affect female leaders?

What do you do in your counselling to support women  
who self-stereotype?

# Effects of gender stereotyping



Book recommendation:  
*Invisible Women* by  
Caroline Criado Perez

- Expectations from an early age
- Self-stereotyping
- Development of skills
- Career development
- Stereotyped roles (e.g., caretaking tasks, raising children)
- Disparities in health, education, wages, financial independence

# IMPLICIT LEADERSHIP THEORIES



**IMPLICIT LEADERSHIP THEORIES** are subconscious beliefs, assumptions, and mental frameworks that individuals hold about the traits, behaviours, and characteristics associated with effective leaders; they influence how individuals perceive and react to leaders.

# Implicit leadership theories

## THE RESEARCH PARADIGMS

How stereotypically male are leaders/leadership positions perceived?

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THINK MANAGER –  
THINK MALE

AGENCY –  
COMMUNION

MASCULINITY –  
FEMININITY

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*Meta-Analysis by Koenig et al. (2011)*


# Think Manager – Think Male

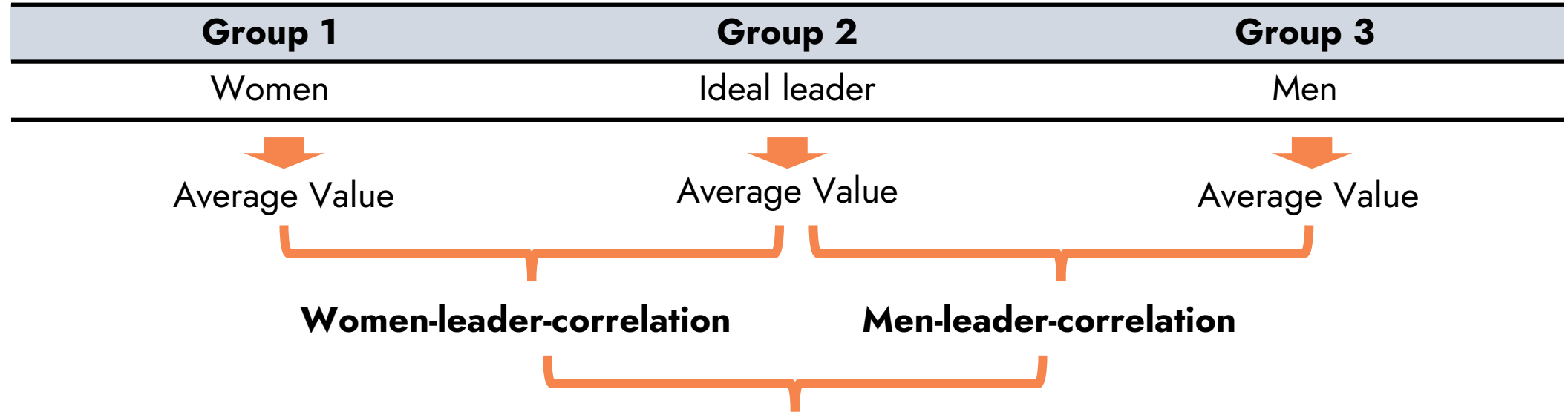


Koenig et al. (2011)

All experimental groups receive the same list of attributes (e.g., Revised Descriptive Index), which are to be evaluated in relation to a certain group of persons.

women/men/leaders are:

 Hard-working  
       
Not applicable      Applicable



Stereotypically male leadership understanding if *Men-leader-correlation* > *Women-leader-correlation*

# Agency-communion

## Bem Sex-Role-Inventory (BSRI)



<https://www.psychtoolkit.org/cgi-bin/3.4.4/survey?s=BsNnQ>

**Imagine your ideal  
leader!**

# Agency-communion

Koenig et al. (2011); Ferrer-Pérez & Bosch-Fiol (2014)

Items for evaluating masculinity	Items for evaluating femininity	Non-typed items
1.- Self-reliant.	2.- Yielding.	3.- Helpful.
4.- Defends own beliefs.	5.- Cheerful.	6.- Moody.
7.- Independent.	8.- Shy.	9.- Conscientious.
10.- Athletic.	11.- Affectionate.	12.- Theatrical.
13.- Assertive.	14.- Not susceptible to flattery.	15.- Happy.
16.- Strong personality.	17.- Loyal.	18.- Unpredictable.
19.- Forceful.	20.- Feminine.	21.- Reliable.
22.- Analytical.	23.- Sympathetic.	24.- Jealous.
25.- Leadership ability.	26.- Sensitive to others' needs.	27.- Truthful.
28.- Willing to take risks.	29.- Understanding.	30.- Secretive.
31.- Makes decisions easily.	32.- Compassionate.	33.- Sincere.
34.- Self-sufficient.	35.- Eager to soothe hurt feelings.	36.- Conceited.
37.- Dominant.	38.- Soft-spoken.	39.- Likeable.
40.- Masculine.	41.- Warm.	42.- Solemn.
43.- Willing to take a stand.	44.- Tender.	45.- Friendly.
46.- Aggressive.	47.- Gullible.	48.- Inefficient.
49.- Acts as a leader.	50.- Childlike.	51.- Adaptable.
52.- Individualistic.	53.- Does not use harsh language.	54.- Unsystematic.
55.- Competitive.	56.- Loves children.	57.- Tactful.
58.- Ambitious.	59.- Gentle.	60.- Conventional.

*All participants receive the same list of connotative characteristics (e.g., Bem Sex-Role Inventory), which are to be evaluated in relation to leaders.*

Leaders are:



Forceful (a)

Not Applicable

Applicable


Shy (c)

Stereotypically male leadership understanding if *male (a)gentic* attributes > *female (c)ommunal* attributes

# Masculinity-femininity

*All participants receive the same list of professions (e.g., classification of professions), which are to be evaluated in terms of masculinity/femininity.*

Professions are:

	masculine	feminine
 politicians	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
chefs	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Stereotypically male leadership/profession  
understanding if *masculine* > *feminine*

# Findings

- **Time of publication**

- Over time, the understanding of leadership has become more feminine; female competencies are increasingly associated with leadership positions.

- **Gender of participants**

- Men are more likely to associate leadership with masculine connotated competencies than women.

- **Hierarchical level of leadership position**

- Leadership competencies with a masculine connotation tend to be associated with managers at higher levels.

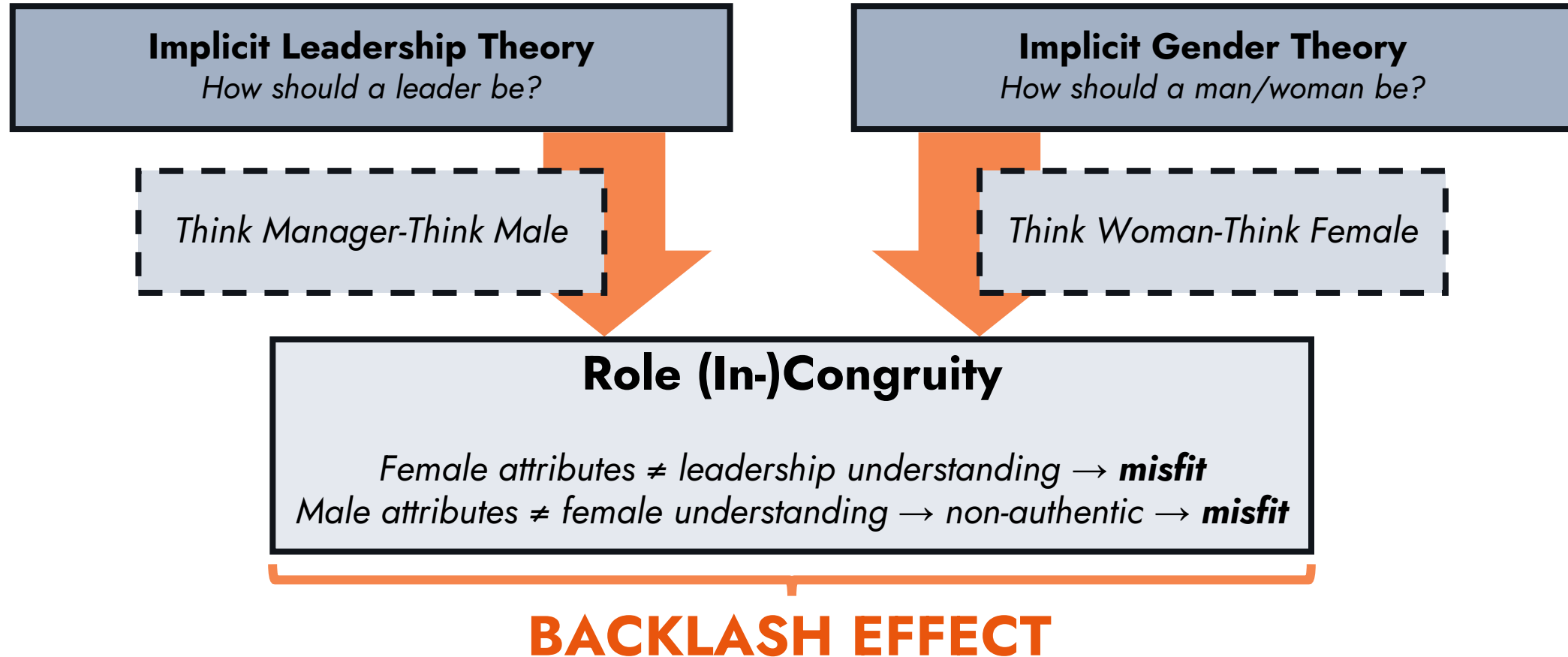


**ROLE  
CONGRUITY  
THEORY**



**ROLE CONGRUITY** is the extent to which an individual's perception (*implicit gender theory*) matches the preconceived expectations (*implicit leadership theories*) held towards a role (*leading position*).

# Role Congruity Theory



# Perception of applicant fit

HR describes the leader they look for



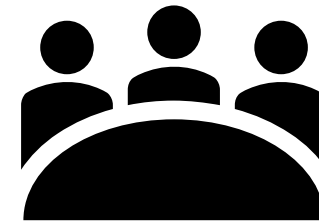
→ *Think Manager – Think Male*

(Biased) job advertisement



→ *Self-ascribed role incongruity*  
→ *Self-exclusion of female applicants*

HR meets applicants for job interviews

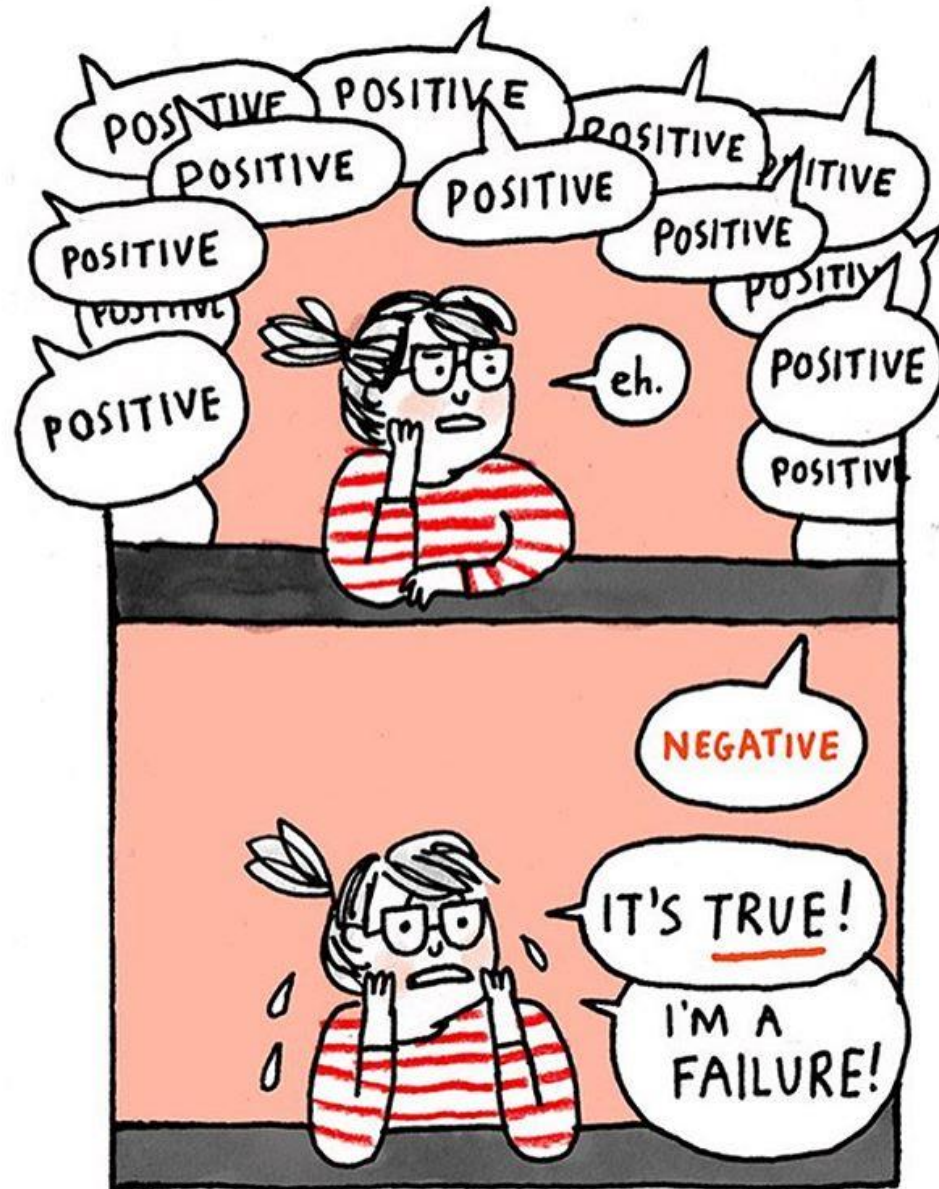


→ *Third-party-ascribed role incongruity*  
→ *Third-party-exclusion of female applicants*

# EFFECTS ON FEMALE CAREERS

Chosen aspects of workplace  
interaction

- Female-specific challenges
- Role models



Gemma CORRELL '17



**FEMALE-  
SPECIFIC  
CHALLENGES**

# Imposter Syndrome

You think, “**Why would** anyone want to see me again in a movie? And **I don't know how to** act anyway, so why am I doing this?”

Meryl Streep, 21 Oscar nominations, 3 Oscars

# Queen Bee Syndrome

Queen bee syndrome describes a  
woman of authority who views  
or treats subordinates more critically if  
they are female

First defined by G.L. Staines, T.E. Jayaratne and C. Tavis in 1973



# Crab Basket Syndrome

When there is **one crab** in a basket, it can **easily climb** out. However, as soon as there are **multiple crabs** in the basket and one of them wants to escape, the **others pull the climbing crab** back down. **Women do this to each other** as well, by unnecessarily judging one another and keeping **each other small** in that way.

# Professional Challenges

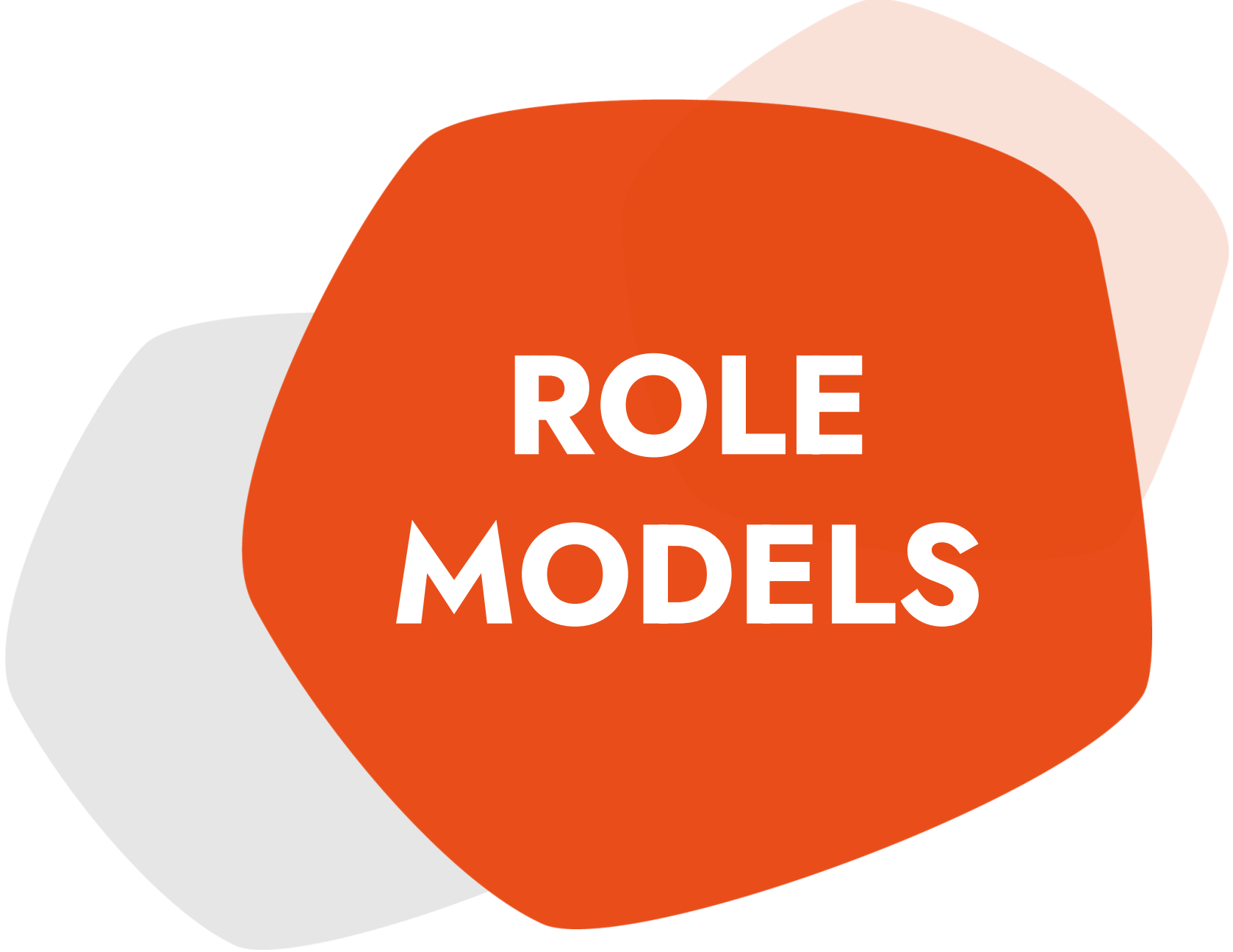
## **Potential self- and third-party-stereotyping might be about:**

- Gender roles and belongings
- Abilities; e.g. technical/digital, interpersonal, etc.

# Private Challenges

## **Potential private challenges addressed by a female might be:**

- Physical challenges (e.g. menstruation, pregnancy, menopause)
- Care taking responsibilities
- Other individual challenges she might consider hindering her leadership ability



# ROLE MODELS

# GROUP DISCUSSION

*Importance of role models*

What is a role model in terms of female leadership?

Why are role models needed?

How to activate/create role models as a guidance professional?

„Each generation expanded its horizons, learning from the successes and failures of the preceding generation and leaving lessons for the next wave of women.“

C. Goldin (2023)

# Effect of role models

- Role models represent and expand what is possible
- Role models inspire women to be more ambitious and aim higher
- Role models demonstrate the mindsets and behaviours of how to rise

→ **Role models go along with female mentorship**

## **Activate role models?**

- *Express the necessity; emphasise the effect*
- *Address the imposter syndrome*
- *Spread it throughout hierarchy*



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## LICENCE

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