

## Key elements of context:

**Identity** is about a person's self, it's internal to each of us, and influences how we behave in different contexts (e.g., as a parent, spouse, partner, worker, carer, friend).

**Identification** is about how a person is seen by others; it's external to each of us. Identification is often done to us by someone of authority, influence or power, for example a teacher, an employer, a manager, a public authority. Identification often focuses on one aspect of identity such as gender, race, age or religion.

**Conflict** can arise when there is a mismatch between *felt identity* and *observed identification*.

## What is the issue?

At Sodexo we employ over 425,000 people and value the diversity of our identities in relation to age, gender, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, and the many other aspects of our identity that make each one of us unique. We also serve millions of people at different moments of their daily life and at different times in their life. Today, our identities seem to be more varied and complex than ever before and we need to navigate them on a daily basis.

## What research did the Sodexo Institute for Quality of Life do in relation to identity in the 21st century?

In March 2017, the Institute convened a roundtable with academic experts from University College London to shed light on the leading approaches to thinking about identity in different contexts. The roundtable provided expertise to deconstruct the concept of 'identity', exploring how identities are constructed with multiple intersecting vectors that may or may not inform one another.

## What did we learn?

Useful tips for thinking about identity in the 21st century include:

- understanding different stages of freedom over identity
- understanding how identity can be a resource (or a liability)
- understanding identity in relation to the online world and social media

Find out more by reading the report *A brief introduction to thinking about identity in the 21st century* **here**.

## About the Institute

As an in-house 'think-tank', the Sodexo Institute for Quality of Life is inspired by Sodexo's deeply held conviction that improving Quality of Life leads to the progress of individuals and contributes to the performance of organisations. Its role is to gather and develop insight to help Sodexo understand better what are the levers of Quality of Life.

QualityofLifeInstitute@sodexo.com

[www.sodexo.com](http://www.sodexo.com)