Identifying and Confronting Bias & Prejudice

More information at diversity.missouri.edu
Spotting Bias & Prejudice

Insensitive remarks
EXAMPLES:
“Can I touch your hair?” (to an African American)
“That’s so ghetto.”
“Your English is so good!” (to an Asian American)
“But you don’t look Native American.”

Belittling jokes
Jokes that poke fun of an individual or group’s race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, nationality, age, socioeconomic class, political affiliation, or physical appearance. The teller of the joke is often attempting to be “ironic.”

Non-inclusive language
EXAMPLE:
Using “he” or “men” when referring to both men and women.

Stereotyping
An over-generalization about a group.
EXAMPLES:
“Mexicans are lazy.”
“Muslims are terrorists.”
“Women are weak.”

Social avoidance
Avoiding a person or group based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, nationality, age, socioeconomic class, political affiliation, or physical appearance.

Ridiculing
Making fun of or mocking someone.

Bullying
Constantly criticizing, ridiculing, dismissing, or ignoring/ostracizing

Slurs & Name-calling
Derogatory terms used to insult individuals or groups.
EXAMPLES:
The “N-word,” “chink,” “wetback,” “spic,” “retard,” “slut,” “faggot,” “towel head,” “white trash,” “redneck” among others.

De-humanization
EXAMPLES:
“She’s a dog.”

Vandalism & Desecration
EXAMPLES:
Writing belittling remarks on or defacing someone else’s fliers or posters.
Destroying property motivated by hate for another individual or group.

Threats, Rape & Assault
Some of the most severe forms of bias and prejudice. ‘Nuf said.
Why are we afraid to speak up?

If I call her out, it will damage our friendship.

Maybe it was just a joke and they didn’t mean anything by it?

Did I just hear what I think I heard?

Maybe I’m overreacting?

Concern for relationships

Uncertainty about intention

Uncertainty about one’s own perception

Why do we need to speak up?

Intentional or not, words hurt.

Not speaking up just sends the message that this behavior is ‘normal’ and okay.

Inclusion, Diversity & Equity
University of Missouri

More information at diversity.missouri.edu
How should we speak up?

GET READY!

Now or Later?
Should I speak up right when it happens or wait until the situation is less emotionally charged?

One-on-One or with Others?
Does it make sense to confront the person in a group so that I have others to back me up?
Or is it better to talk about it one-on-one over coffee or lunch?

GET SET!

Be Respectful
Address the behavior. Don’t attack the person.

Listen First
Listen for the feelings behind the statement. People may make biased comments when they are feeling frustrated, disappointed, or angry. Listen first to understand where they’re coming from.

CALLING SOMEONE “RACIST” OR “IGNORANT” GENERALLY ISN’T A GOOD WAY TO GET THEM TO LISTEN TO YOU.

GO!

Respond in a way that’s comfortable to you and respectful of the other person. “I” messages can be helpful.

“When I heard you say ____, I felt ____ (hurt, uncomfortable, angry) because____ (it’s important to me that... I think we should ... my beliefs are...)”

A NOTE ABOUT THREATS, VANDALISM, RAPE, ASSAULT
If you have experienced threats or been the victim of vandalism, rape, or assault and need medical or other emergency assistance, call 911 or the MU Police at 573-874-7652. You can also submit an anonymous bias incident report by going to biasreport.missouri.edu. If this does not apply to your situation, continue to Step 1.

If this does not apply to your situation, continue to Step 1.

A NOTE ABOUT THREATS, VANDALISM, RAPE, ASSAULT
If you have experienced threats or been the victim of vandalism, rape, or assault and need medical or other emergency assistance, call 911 or the MU Police at 573-874-7652. You can also submit an anonymous bias incident report by going to biasreport.missouri.edu. If this does not apply to your situation, continue to Step 1.

A NOTE ABOUT THREATS, VANDALISM, RAPE, ASSAULT
If you have experienced threats or been the victim of vandalism, rape, or assault and need medical or other emergency assistance, call 911 or the MU Police at 573-874-7652. You can also submit an anonymous bias incident report by going to biasreport.missouri.edu. If this does not apply to your situation, continue to Step 1.
More Ways to Speak Up

Adapted from Promoting Diversity and Social Justice (2nd edition) by Diane J. Goodman. © 2011.

**Strategy #1: “The Echo”**
Paraphrase or repeat back what they said

By restating what the other person said, you make sure you understand what they said and it gives the other person the opportunity to reflect on what they said. Tone of voice is important. You’re not trying to ridicule, just trying to understand and clarify.

*So, you’re saying that all people on welfare are just lazy and looking for a free ride?*

**Strategy #2: “The Questionator”**
Ask for more information

This strategy is a great way to help you understand why they said what they said. And again, it gives the person another chance to reflect on what they said. After saying it again, they might realize their statement doesn’t make sense or is unfounded. Being genuine is important. Shaming or using sarcasm can backfire.

*I’m wondering what led you to believe this about ____.*
More Ways to Speak Up

Adapted from Promoting Diversity and Social Justice (2nd edition) by Diane J. Goodman. © 2011.

**STRATEGY #3: “THE HUH?”**

**Play dumb**

Another way to get them to reflect on what they said—especially good for responding to jokes. You can ask them why race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, nationality, disability, etc. is relevant to the story, or ask them to explain the meaning of a specific slur or derogatory term.

**WHY DOES THEIR RACE, GENDER, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, ETC. MATTER? DID I MISS SOMETHING?**

**WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY _____?**

**STRATEGY #4: “THE DEBUNKER”**

**Challenge the stereotype**

Offer another side of the story by challenging the assumption or stereotype. Use your personal experiences and knowledge to show how the stereotype presented isn’t valid.

**THAT’S INTERESTING. IN HIGH SCHOOL, I KNEW SEVERAL AFRICAN-AMERICANS WHO WEREN’T REALLY INTO SPORTS AT ALL. WE GEEKED OUT IN SCIENCE CLUB ON OUR ODYSSEY OF THE MIND PROJECT.**

More information at diversity.missouri.edu

Inclusion, Diversity & Equity
University of Missouri
Strategy #5: “The Connector”
Highlight commonalities

Comments based on bias and prejudice create an “us vs. them” situation. Highlighting the ways in which the person making the comment is the same as the subject of the comments can help dial down the “otherness.”

Yes, Jameel is Muslim, but did you know he’s also a huge gamer. You like to play Xbox games, too, right?

Strategy #6: “The Emoter”
Express your feelings

Tell the person how you feel and why and then offer a more appropriate alternative.

When I heard you say “That’s so gay,” I was angry because it’s insulting and hurtful to gay people. I know you didn’t mean it that way. Using “ridiculous,” “irrational,” asinine,” “absurd,” etc. might be a better way to make your point.
STRATEGY #7: “THE ‘I’VE BEEN THERE’”
Share your own process

Without sounding self-righteous, talk about how you used to think the same but you’ve changed. Explain what made you change your views.

I used to use the term “jewed” but then I found out more about what it really means and how hurtful it can be to people who are Jewish. I say “bargained” now instead.

STRATEGY #8: “THE ONE-WORDER”
Say Ouch

Sometimes you might want to respond immediately but can’t think of a good response. Saying “Ouch!” generally stops the person making the comment and let’s them know that what they said was hurtful. It’s a safe, simple, and effective strategy.

OUCH!
Oops!

What if I realize I’ve said something wrong or hurtful?

Everyone has, at one time or another, made a comment rooted in bias or prejudice. Here are a few things you can do if you have said something hurtful or wrong.

Say “Oops!”

Apologize to the those you may have hurt with your comment.

Use it as a opportunity to learn why others found your comment hurtful or wrong.