



Being an Upstander: Racism

A Practical Guide

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Using this Guide

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”--Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The events across our country highlight the institutionalized rampant racism that plagues our society, and has left us as a nation with raw emotions of hurt and pain, and wondering: How can this still be happening?

Diversity Best Practices stands united and committed to doing everything we can to drive the expansive change that is necessary to support our lives and the way we work. We denounce racist acts that threaten our society. We call upon our DBP members to be upstanders against this injustice and elevate our long standing work toward inclusion, equality and justice.

How To Use This Guide: We have developed a few best practices to support your efforts to address these issues and continue having essential dialogue both internally and externally to support your employees, your stakeholders and your customers. Our array of proposed solutions will equip you to be an upstander: someone that speaks out or acts in support of another being attacked or discriminated against. Incorporate this content into your messaging, programming, and communications:

- Speaking Up Against Injustice: IQEE
- Be an Upstander Against Racism and Bigotry
- Having Essential Conversations
- How to Leverage your ERGs
- Additional resources

We acknowledge that while we may not have all the answers, we are committed to supporting you and your organizations. We encourage you to reach out to us as we are here for you.

Speaking UP Against Injustice: IQEE



INTERRUPT

INTERRUPT:

- “Excuse me, can I just clarify what I think I heard?”
- “Hold on, can we go back to what you called the virus.”
- “Just a second—let’s discuss your point that the virus is somebody’s fault.”
- “Before we continue, I want to talk about the language you just used.”



QUESTION

QUESTION:

- “Why do you feel that way?”
- “What made you say that?”
- “Where did you get that information?/Were the facts validated?”
- “Why do you think some people may find what you said inappropriate or harmful?”
- “Have you considered the implications of your actions/words?”



EDUCATE

EDUCATE:

- “I’d like to share a different perspective”
- “Let me share my personal experiences”
- “Here’s what I know about the historical impact”
- Share data, facts, personal experiences, not necessarily as a means to convince but as a means to think differently.



ECHO

ECHO:

- When someone else speaks up, echo and reinforce. This encourages others to speak up and amplifies the upstander. It also lets others know you are not complicit.
- “Thank you for saying something”
- “I agree with that and let me add”

Be an Upstander Against Racism/Bigotry

Monitor content online or in the media

- Report offensive content - large social media platforms can take down offensive content
- Widen your use of media (diversify your visual content to be inclusive)
- Use social media to stand with people who are victims of discrimination
- If recurring, bring the problem to the attention of decision makers or human rights organizations

Activate your power by standing with others' human rights and celebrating unity

- Join or sponsor events in support and celebration of diversity, human rights and unity - internally and externally (work events, schools)
- Volunteer or join public events with a group that promotes anti-discrimination

Call on leaders to fight discrimination

- Urge your community and organization's leaders (e.g. religious, sporting, cultural leaders) to make public commitments to human rights, including anti-discrimination
- Write your local law enforcement and government officials to require cross cultural education and training
- Ask educators to diversify curriculum to include addressing racism and other inequities across the world

Address The Issues: Essential Conversations

Engage in Essential Conversations

- Have the conversations necessary to make progress on difficult subjects such as race, racism, ethnicity, and privilege. Important ground rules to consider:
 - **Stay Engaged:** Give yourself permission to focus fully on the conversation. Share a story, state your opinion, ask a question—risk and grow!
 - **Speak Your Truth:** Value everyone's thoughts. Start by assuming good intentions. It's important that we create a safe environment where everyone is free to speak openly. Disagree respectfully.
 - **Allow for mistakes/Faux pas:** There will be concerns of saying something wrong. Consider these learning opportunities.
 - **Listen for Understanding:** Listen without thinking about how you are going to respond. Try to understand where another person is coming from as best you can.
 - **Honor Confidentiality:** What is shared here, stays here.
 - **Expect and Accept Non-closure:** Engaging in race conversations is ongoing work that does not necessarily leave a person walking away feeling everything turned out the way they hoped. Accept that much of this is about changing yourself, not others.
 - **Responsibility to Each Other and to the Process:** Conversation participants should encourage each other to follow the ground rules. Additionally, they should be invited to propose any other rules to create a safe environment for sharing.

Address The Issues: Essential Conversations

Prepare Questions, Facilitate a Session

- Below are some sample questions to get you started in facilitating a conversation to raise awareness and understanding for the bias that persists today and encourage people of all backgrounds to show up for one another in the quest to mitigate bias.
 - How have current events/racism impacted your work?
 - How have current events/racism impacted you personally?
 - What would you like your colleagues to know about you? About how this has impacted you?
 - What support do you need from your employers?
 - How difficult is it to talk about racism/injustice/bigotry?
 - Why is it important to talk about racism/injustice/bigotry at work?
 - What gets in the way of talking about these issues?
 - How can we support each other better? What actions can we take?
- Consider pre-reads or viewings. There are many movies and books that address inequity, social justice, and racism.
Having your teams view them first will allow you to develop a dialogue around learnings and insights

Support/Leverage Your ERGs

ERGs can help lead events to bring awareness to current events/issues/situation

- o Host Virtual “Essential Conversations” to understand concerns and provide support/encouragement
- o Leverage Executive Sponsors to serve as part of essential conversations and provide visible support; share their feelings, concerns and how it is impacting them (sincerity, concern, understanding, condemning of injustice, etc.), how are they using this situation as a way to learn more about their employees who are impacted?
- o Check in with each other; understand how the events are impacting mental health; promote your organization’s resources.
- o Offer suggestions to C-suite on how they can address the community, offer support/resources.

Link with other ERGs or organizations in your industry or through your community

- o Invite allies to be part of essential conversations; share how they can support you/your ERG or community.
- o Gather and share insights on how leaders are showing up, being visible and providing support.

Be a source of information, but don’t feel as if you must be the voice for ALL solutions

- o Use intersectionality to demonstrate how the actions outside of work impact you as an employee.
- o Be authentic about your feelings and how leadership can enable with their voice or actions.
- o Ask hard questions of each other...what are we doing to inspire or help create “change” in our company or community?
- o Lean on external subject matter experts and organizations to assist you.

Additional Resources

[Diversity Best Practices Resource Guide: “Digging Deep” on how to facilitate challenging, essential discussions.](#)

[Remember, No One Is Coming to Save Us by Roxane Gay](#)

Eventually doctors will develop a coronavirus vaccine, but black people will continue to wait for a cure for racism.

[Trevor Noah shares his thoughts](#) on the killing of George Floyd, the protests in Minneapolis, the dominos of racial injustice and police brutality, and how the contract between society and black Americans has been broken time and time again.

[Companies Taking A Stand Against Racism and Inequality](#)

Readings:

- What Does it Mean To Be White? Developing White Racial Literacy, Robin DiAngelo
- White Fragility, Robin DiAngelo
- How to be Anti-Racist, Ibram X. Kendi
- Me and White Supremacy, Layla Saad
- Whistling Vivaldi: And Other Clues to How Stereotypes Affect Us (Issues of Our Time), Claude Steele

Diversity Best Practices is a membership organization. For full access to resources or membership, please contact Donnice.Peterson@diversitybestpractices.com.