

LEADING WITH EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Inclusive Communication

Virtual Instructor-Led Training



CATALYST
WORKPLACES THAT WORK FOR WOMEN

welcome

Leading with equity and inclusion is a journey, not a destination, and this workshop is designed to support you on this journey. The benefits of inclusion are profound: increased productivity, greater team problem-solving and innovation, higher engagement levels, an overall better place to work, and a positive impact on the bottom line.

In this workshop, you will:

- Gain tools to communicate more inclusively, bridge divides, and create meaningful connections across difference.
- Engage in dialogue across difference using essential communication skills—including inquiring across difference, listening and acknowledging, suspending judgment, demonstrating vulnerability, and self-disclosing—to foster inclusion and increase the engagement and contributions of diverse employees on your team.
- Recognize and address biased comments and behaviors.
- Overcome common roadblocks to communicating across difference to build a more inclusive work culture.

ABOUT CATALYST

Catalyst is a global nonprofit working with some of the world's most powerful CEOs and leading companies to help build workplaces that work for women. Founded in 1962, Catalyst drives change with pioneering research, practical tools, and proven solutions to accelerate and advance women into leadership—because progress for women is progress for everyone.

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Warm Up

Capture where group members stand in terms of their comfort level discussing particular aspects of their identity at work. You may also note where your comfort level stands once you've placed your dot on the presentation slide.

GENDER

Very uncomfortable

Very comfortable

RACE & ETHNICITY

Very uncomfortable

Very comfortable

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Very uncomfortable

Very comfortable

SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

Very uncomfortable

Very comfortable

AGE

Very uncomfortable

Very comfortable

RELIGION

Very uncomfortable

Very comfortable

EDUCATION

Very uncomfortable

Very comfortable

YOUR HOME LIFE

Very uncomfortable

Very comfortable

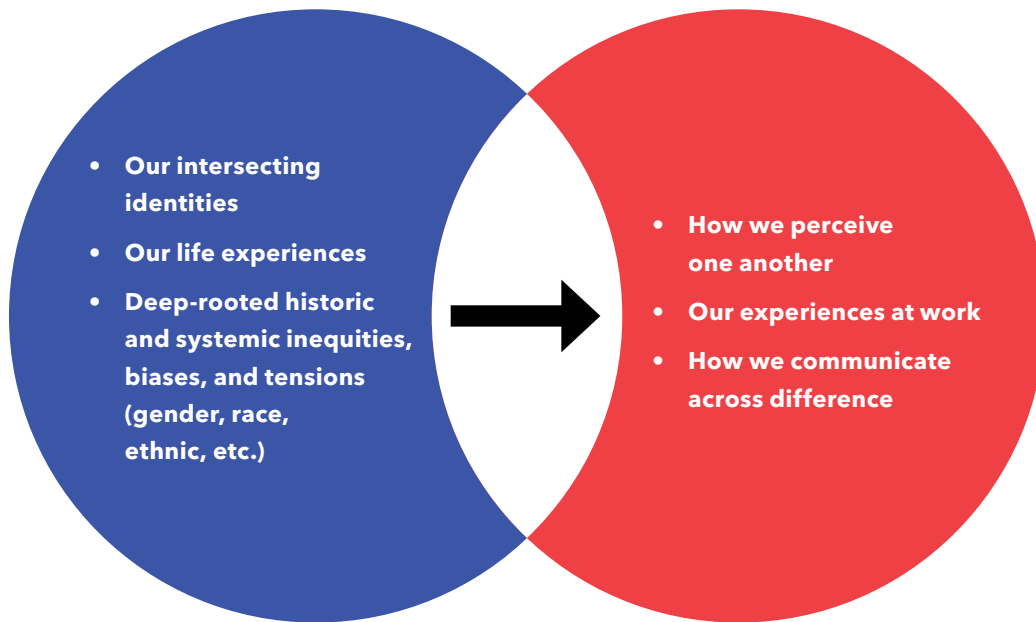
What do you notice about how comfortable group members are discussing aspects of their identity at work?

Why do you think it is important to discuss our identity at work?

Intersectionality and Communication Across Difference

Intersectionality is a framework for understanding the dynamic overlapping of social identities with one another and with the systems of power that oppress and advantage people in the workplace and broader community.

Our intersecting identities—our life experiences along with historical and systemic inequities, biases, and deep-rooted issues— influence how we perceive one another, experience work, and communicate with one another.



NOTES

Why Communicating Across Difference Matters

What have you seen or experienced when we don't communicate across difference?

NONDOMINANT GROUPS MAY EXPERIENCE...

Exclusion and covering
Fear of being stereotyped for speaking out
The burden of educating the dominant group

PEOPLE OF COLOR MAY EXPERIENCE...

Emotional Tax, the experience of being different due to gender, race, and/or ethnicity, and being on guard to protect against bias, coupled with risks to employee well-being and productivity.

DOMINANT AND NONDOMINANT GROUPS MAY EXPERIENCE...

Fear of saying the wrong thing and being penalized for it
An assumption of diversity fatigue
Struggle to make positive change

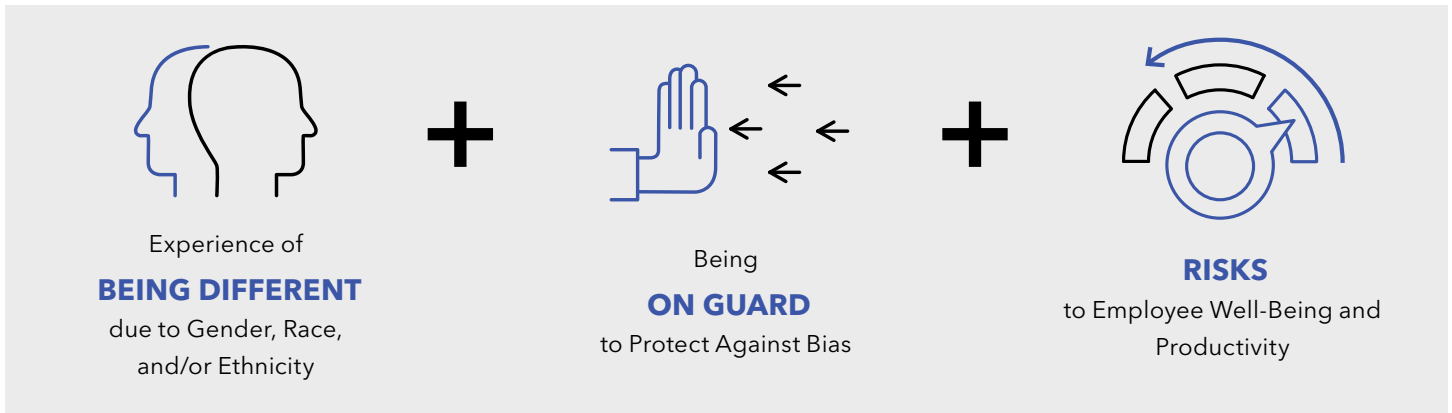
Support given in silence is not support.

NOTES

Sources: Catalyst, *Engaging in Conversations About Gender, Race, and Ethnicity in the Workplace* (2016). Dnika J. Travis and Jennifer Thorpe-Moscon, *Day-to-Day Experiences of Emotional Tax Among Women and Men of Color in the Workplace* (Catalyst, 2018). Jennifer Thorpe-Moscon, Alixandra Pollack, and Olufemi Olu-Lafe, *Empowering Workplaces Combat Emotional Tax for People of Colour in Canada* (Catalyst, 2019).

Emotional Tax

Emotional Tax is the combination of feeling different due to gender, race, and/or ethnicity; being on guard to experiences of bias; and the associated effects on health, well-being, and the ability to thrive at work.



"Being the only one from a different culture in my workplace, I'm constantly on guard. Particularly when racist jokes come up or talk about the presidential election [happens], I'm always on guard. Therefore...I have to take a breather outside, take a break, or just mentally take myself out of the situation and think positive things about my family, my kids, and ignore what I [cannot] change."

–Sandra, Latina, age 26; first-level manager

"I try to make sure my i's are dotted and my t's are crossed. So no one can come up and say the quality of the work [isn't good enough]. So again, that's another burden, another string. The feeling that I cannot afford to make any mistakes. We're human beings, we all do make mistakes at times. But the perception is that I cannot make a mistake. It can bite me harder if I make a mistake."

–Jacque, Black woman, individual contributor

"I face stigma and bias every day at work because I am African American and transgender. I have been at work events where a co-worker mocked [a celebrity] because of her transition (brave at her age), not yet knowing I too am transgender. Once the co-worker found out I am transgender, they never apologized for the remarks...I experience a lot of tribalism at work, where the Polish people socialize with the Polish people, the Asian people with the Asian people, the Italian people with the Italian people....Being the only African American, I don't have anyone with whom I can socialize. They care nothing for the history [of] my ethnicity—only theirs. I am ostracized every day, and cannot wait to leave in a month. I found a more accepting place to work." –Daniel, Black, male, 31; individual contributor

NOTES

Source: Dnika J. Travis and Jennifer Thorpe-Moscon, *Day-to-Day Experiences of Emotional Tax Among Women and Men of Color in the Workplace* (Catalyst, 2018). Jennifer Thorpe-Moscon, Alixandra Pollack, and Olufemi Olu-Lafe, *Empowering Workplaces Combat Emotional Tax for People of Colour in Canada* (Catalyst, 2019).

LEAD OUTWARD AND LEAD INWARD TO BUILD AN INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE

You have the power—and responsibility—to lead with inclusion.
Learn how and reap the benefits for both your team and your business.¹

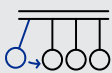
HOW

LEADING OUTWARD, LEADING INWARD

6 core behaviors foster an inclusive culture.²

LEAD OUTWARD

Your ability to bolster team members' capacity to be empowered, treated fairly, and flourish at work.



ACCOUNTABILITY

Hold team members responsible for their behavior, development, and work processes.



OWNERSHIP

Guide them to solve their own problems and make their own decisions.



ALLYSHIP

Actively support people from underrepresented groups.

LEAD INWARD

Your ability to act courageously, learn, and self-reflect.



CURIOSITY

Proactively seek to understand different points of view.



HUMILITY

Take ownership for mistakes and learn from missteps.



COURAGE

Act in accordance with your principles, even when it involves personal risk-taking or is uncomfortable.

WHY

Inclusive leadership explains almost half of employees' experiences of inclusion.



THE IMPACT

AN INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE

Your employees will experience being:



VALUED

They are appreciated and respected for their unique perspectives and talents.



TRUSTED

They make meaningful contributions and are influential in decision-making.



AUTHENTIC

They can bring their full selves to work and express aspects of themselves that may be different from their peers.



PSYCHOLOGICALLY SAFE: LATITUDE

They feel free to hold differing views and make mistakes without being penalized.

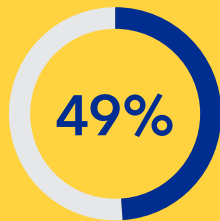


PSYCHOLOGICALLY SAFE: RISK-TAKING

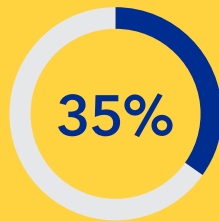
They feel secure enough to address tough issues or take risks.

THE BENEFITS

Employee experiences of inclusion are a key factor in company results. They explain:



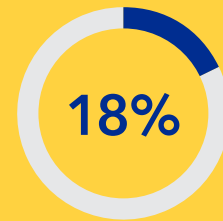
TEAM PROBLEM-SOLVING



WORK ENGAGEMENT



EMPLOYEE INTENT TO STAY



EMPLOYEE INNOVATION

1. Dnika J. Travis, Emily Shaffer, and Jennifer Thorpe-Moscon, *Getting Real About Inclusive Leadership: Why Change Starts With You* (Catalyst, 2019).
2. Catalyst surveyed 2,164 employees in countries across the world. We conducted confirmatory factor analysis to develop the inclusive leadership and inclusion constructs and structural equation modeling to determine the link between inclusive leadership, employee experiences of inclusion, and the outcome variables.



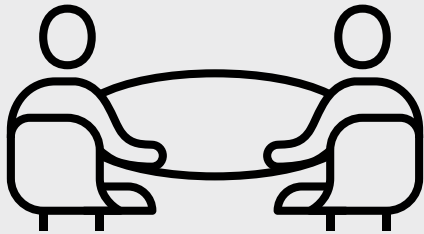
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CATALYST.ORG

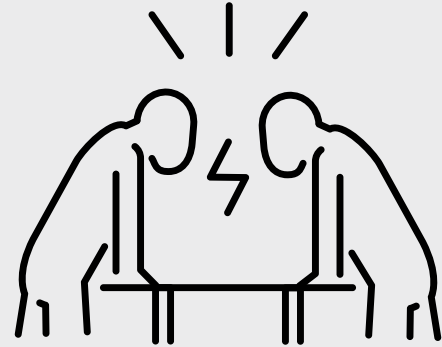
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Dialogue vs. Debate

DIALOGUE VS. DEBATE



DIALOGUE



DEBATE

Dialogue is a two-way conversation focused on learning and building understanding, connection, and trust. This is different from a debate or one-way confrontation, which is about proving a point and winning.

NOTES

Lessons learned from Rockwell Automation's journey to build more inclusive cultures: 1. Get people talking first. 2. Formalize structures to capitalize on dialogue and facilitate action. 3. Don't let action eclipse dialogue.

Sarah Dinolfo, Jeanine Prime, and Heather Foust-Cummings, *Anatomy Of Change: How Inclusive Cultures Evolve* (Catalyst, 2013)

Dialogue Opportunities

When we think about opening up a conversation across difference, we may not know where to start or what we should say or ask. Below are examples of opportunities to engage in dialogue across difference. Some opportunities may be used in the moment in response to something someone says, while others may be more appropriate for structured or team settings.

In the Moment

- Would you be comfortable sharing more about that (after someone brings up something related to their identity)?
- Would you like to contribute a different perspective (particularly for a silent team member)?

Structured

- Do you feel our workplace honors your identity and cultural background?
- What are the most salient issues for different ethnic groups in our country, in our organization, and in our work team?

NOTES

Five Inclusive Communication Skills

1

INQUIRE ACROSS DIFFERENCES

Instead of shying away from conversations about difference that can sometimes make people uncomfortable, ask questions to learn more about your colleagues' experiences. These conversations can uncover commonalities among people, as well as highlight the differences that make your teammates uniquely who they are. Expressing interest in learning more can make people feel valued and appreciated.

LISTEN & ACKNOWLEDGE

Listening to hear, feel, understand and empathize with what the person is saying, checking yourself to see if any biases are getting in the way of fully hearing them, and then acknowledging what you hear helps that person feel heard and understood and valued. Without acknowledgment a person will not know if you heard them well.

2

3

SUSPEND JUDGMENT

It is human to judge. In fact, many of us are hired into our roles because of our ability to critically assess ideas and make the best decisions. However, as an inclusive leader you have a responsibility to suspend judgment and refrain from inserting your opinions when your team members are speaking to you so that you create a space where even if all ideas are not used, they are welcomed. Suspending judgment is a critical way to foster a safe space, which Catalyst research has found leads to increased innovation as well as higher levels of engagement.

DEMONSTRATE VULNERABILITY

Be forthcoming about your own vulnerabilities so that you cultivate a safe environment where others can do the same. Act as a role model by being humble enough and courageous enough to admit what you don't know yet, and demonstrate the work that you are doing to learn from others' perspectives.

4

5

SELF-DISCLOSE

Share your past experiences and reveal your strengths, shortcomings, goals, and challenges. Timely and relevant self-disclosure builds connections and opens the door for others to do the same. Catalyst research has found that disclosing is a key behavior for building trust with diverse groups.

Dialogue Across Difference: Practice

1. Think of an aspect of your identity that matters to you. It can be visible or invisible. Write down the aspect of your identity that you chose.

2. In your breakout room, introduce yourselves to each other. Decide who will share first. If there are three people in the room, two will listen and ask questions while the third shares the aspect of their identity they have chosen.

3. Take turns sharing the aspect of your identity you have chosen, and work together to build understanding and connection using the Five Inclusive Communication Skills:

1. Inquire Across Difference
2. Listen and Acknowledge

3. Suspend Judgment
4. Demonstrate Vulnerability

5. Self-Disclose

Sample questions for the listener(s) to ask:

(You may use these questions or any others you feel will help you to build understanding and connection.)

- *Why does this part of your identity matter to you?*
- *How does this part of your identity impact how you operate in the world? How about in the workplace?*
- *Are there challenges you've faced—or a benefit you've received—because of this identity trait?*

Post-Dialogue Reflection:

What did you gain from this experience?

Any challenges you encountered in practicing the Five Inclusive Communication Skills?

Microaggressions

Our biases can be conscious and overt, and they can also be unconscious and operate in more covert ways. We know that blatant acts of discrimination in the workplace are discouraged, often illegal, and come with some very real consequences to employees and to the business. But there are other more subtle forms of discrimination that can be conscious or unconscious. The person communicating may even think that she is giving a compliment, when in fact there is a negative assumption embedded within the interaction.

We call these slights microaggressions. Microaggressions are everyday slights or insults that convey a negative underlying message to the target based solely on their marginalized group identity. They can be verbal or nonverbal, intentional or unintentional, hurtful, and exclusionary.

Examples of Microaggressions

- "You speak great English." "You're so articulate."
- You arrive at a work event and mistake the presenter, who is a person of color, for support staff and ask him if he can refill the coffee.
- You greet a group of people and shake everyone's hand except the hand of the only woman on the team.
- "You're not like other black people," "You don't seem gay," "What are you?"
- You have team members who are Jewish and observe Shabbat, but you consistently plan an after-work happy hour on Fridays.
- You express surprise and say, "I can't believe you're married!" to a co-worker with a disability.

Jot down additional examples of verbal or nonverbal microaggressions you think of.

Three Tips



1. PAY ATTENTION

Tune in to what you and others are experiencing.

- Do you feel triggered? Do you need time to calm yourself?
- Is your first response to ignore or excuse the microaggression, or do you feel immobilized by it?
- What is causing you to respond this way?
- What may others involved be experiencing or feeling?
- What is the impact on the recipient(s) and his/her/their colleagues?



2. ASSESS CONTEXT

Assess the dynamics, timing, and place for addressing the microaggression.

- What is the impact if you ignore it? What harm may be done?
- Are there power differentials influencing how you are thinking of responding?
- Will addressing it publicly or privately, directly or indirectly, be more beneficial? With whom do you need to speak to interrupt bias and show care?



3. FLIP THE SCRIPT

Choose words and actions that...

- Promote learning, not shame.
- Respond with heart, not harm.
- Assume positive intent.
- Create connection, not conflict.
- Demonstrate curiosity, support, humility, empathy, courage, accountability, and allyship.

Scenario: Small Group Activity

Review the scenario below.

Discuss the scenario in small groups, using the Three Tips for addressing microaggressions:

- 1. Pay attention**
- 2. Assess the context**
- 3. Flip the script**

Scenario:

Jordan, VP of Client Engagement, introduces Alana, a new Relationship Manager, to the team. Jordan says, "Alana was a long-time customer and knows our customers well. She is really articulate and will be able to help us to connect to our customers better."

Bill, a Relationship Manager and White male who joined the team only a year ago, is shocked and disturbed by Jordan's use of the word "articulate," which Jordan, his boss, has never used to introduce a colleague before. Jordan is White, as are the rest of the team members. Alana is Black, as are the majority of the company's customers. Bill found this comment to be a microaggression. His heart is racing. He can't tell how Alana experienced Jordan's introduction, or whether Jordan is aware of how her comment came across. He wonders what to do.

What should Bill do or say?

Roadblocks to Meaningful Dialogue Across Difference

WHAT ARE CONVERSATION ROADBLOCKS?



Assumptions, attitudes, or experiences that can stifle our ability to talk about our differences.

Roadblocks often have an underlying motivation—e.g., fear, resistance, emotional fatigue, lack of knowledge, or perceived inability to make a difference.

THREE THEMES

THERE ISN'T A PROBLEM

"Gender differences don't matter—we view men and women equally."

"We don't see color—only people."

"Race and ethnicity are not relevant in certain places."

THERE'S NO BENEFIT TO TALKING

"Talking about our differences can only further divide us."

"Talking won't solve anything."

THERE WILL BE NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES TO MY ACTIONS

"People have said they think I'm overly sensitive, and I feel that my experiences are minimized."

"I will say something inappropriate—or worse, be viewed as racist or sexist."

"It's not safe to speak up."

NOTES

Conversation Roadblocks

ROLE PLAY DIALOGUES

Directions:

- In groups of three, role play a partner dialogue to address each of the three themes of conversation roadblocks. Remember to use the Five Inclusive Communication Skills.
- Rotate through three roles—Resistor, Inclusive Communicator, and Observer—switching for each roadblock theme.
- You may use the statements below or insert your own comments for each roadblock theme. Determine the relationship between the two people engaged in dialogue before you begin (e.g., peer-to-peer, manager and direct report, etc.).
- The Observer takes notes on the following page and gives feedback to the Inclusive Communicator after each role play. The Resistor and Inclusive Communicator take a minute to self-reflect prior to receiving the Observer's feedback.
- Take 10 minutes per roadblock theme, including feedback and reflection time.

THREE CONVERSATION ROADBLOCK THEMES

THERE ISN'T A PROBLEM

"Our diversity numbers are good, so what's the issue?"

"People don't really care about this anyway."

"We already have so many programs in place."

THERE'S NO BENEFIT TO TALKING

"We are not making progress anyway."

"It's not going to make a difference, no matter what we do."

"I am tired of this diversity stuff."

THERE WILL BE NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES

"I don't want to talk about it."
"C'mon, it's not worth the risk."

"My team needs to focus on business priorities."

Conversation Roadblocks

ROLE-PLAY DIALOGUE AND DEBRIEF—OBSERVER NOTES

Take notes on how the Inclusive Communicator uses the Five Inclusive Communication Skills to respond to the Resistor and the conversation roadblock theme. Note strengths and growth opportunities. Be prepared to share feedback with your group.

STRENGTHS

GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

There isn't a problem.

Inquire Across Differences
Listen and Acknowledge
Suspend Judgment
Demonstrate Vulnerability
Self-Disclose

There's no benefit to talking.

Inquire Across Differences
Listen and Acknowledge
Suspend Judgment
Demonstrate Vulnerability
Self-Disclose

There will be negative consequences.

Inquire Across Differences
Listen and Acknowledge
Suspend Judgment
Demonstrate Vulnerability
Self-Disclose

Inclusive Communication Self-Reflection and Action Plan

Becoming an inclusive communicator is an ongoing process and takes time and practice. Use this tool to reflect on your key learnings from the session, including your strengths and growth areas as well as priority actions you intend to take to foster inclusion in your workplace and beyond.

ENGAGING IN DIALOGUE ACROSS DIFFERENCE

Skill/Tool	Key Learnings	Strengths	Growth Areas	Priority Action(s)
Creating Dialogue Opportunities				
Using Five Inclusive Communication Skills: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inquire across differences 2. Listen and acknowledge 3. Suspend judgment 4. Demonstrate vulnerability 5. Self-disclose 				

ADDRESSING MICROAGGRESSIONS

Skill/Tool	Key Learnings	Strengths	Growth Areas	Priority Action(s)
Using Three Tips to Address Microaggressions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pay attention 2. Assess context 3. Flip the script 				

GETTING UNSTUCK

Skill/Tool	Key Learnings	Strengths	Growth Areas	Priority Action(s)
Overcoming conversation roadblocks: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "There isn't a problem." 2. "There's no benefit to talking." 3. "There will be negative consequences." 				

APPENDIX

**tools and
research**

HOW WHY

TO CREATE AN EMPOWERING WORKPLACE

WHERE EMPLOYEES HAVE THE AUTONOMY, RESOURCES, AND SUPPORT THEY NEED TO SUCCEED.¹

TALK TO ME



WHAT EMPLOYEES SAY

Encourage me and your other direct reports and colleagues to have open discussions of our unique experiences.³

TAKE ACTION

- Inquire across differences: Explore the experiences of others through genuine curiosity.
- Suspend judgment: Actively refrain from adding your own editorial comments or lens to someone else's experiences.
- Demonstrate vulnerability and self-disclose: Acknowledge your shortcomings and share elements of your experience that may feel uncomfortable or risky.

TRUST ME



WHAT EMPLOYEES SAY

Trust me to do my work. Give me the autonomy to do my work where and when works best for me.⁴ Be confident in my ability to achieve results.

TAKE ACTION

- Recognize the talents of employees and create opportunities for ongoing development.
- Ensure flexible working arrangements are equally available and accessible to all employees.⁵
- Do not penalize employees who use flexible working arrangements or treat them differently than those who choose not to use them.⁶

HOW²

STAND BY ME



WHAT EMPLOYEES SAY

When issues occur, back me up and give me air cover.⁷ Focus on solutions rather than blame.

TAKE ACTION

- Treat missteps and challenges as learning moments.
- Assume positive intent.
- Approach difficulties with a growth mindset, helping employees to develop and improve.

EQUIP ME



WHAT EMPLOYEES SAY

Enable me to do my job to the best of my ability. Provide me with the tools and support I need to thrive.

TAKE ACTION

- Make sure employees have sufficient access to the information and resources necessary to do their job well.⁸
- Ensure employees are kept in the know about all issues that are critical to their job performance.

WHY

BLACK, EAST ASIAN, AND SOUTH ASIAN PROFESSIONALS IN CANADA⁹

ASIAN, BLACK, LATINX, AND MULTIRACIAL PROFESSIONALS IN THE UNITED STATES¹⁰

86%

Of those highly on guard to bias aspire to leadership positions at work.

89%

82%

Of those highly on guard to bias want to remain in the same company.

91%

AND YET

39%

Report being highly on guard to protect against racial and ethnic bias.

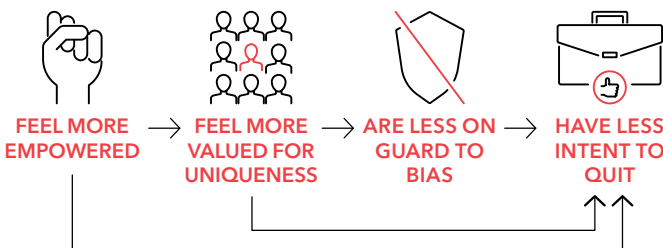
41%

68% 59% 53%
BLACK EAST ASIAN SOUTH ASIAN

Who experience high levels of Emotional Tax are thinking about quitting their jobs.

29% 37% 43%
ASIAN BLACK LATINX

AN EMPOWERING WORKPLACE CAN COMBAT EMOTIONAL TAX AND ATTRITION¹¹



EMOTIONAL TAX

The combination of feeling different from peers at work because of gender, race, and/or ethnicity, being on guard to experiences of bias, and the associated effects on health, well-being, and ability to thrive at work.

¹ Jennifer Thorpe-Moscon, Alixandra Pollack, and Olufemi Olu-Lafe, *Empowering Workplaces Combat Emotional Tax for People of Colour in Canada* (Catalyst, 2019); Dnika J. Travis and Jennifer Thorpe-Moscon, *Day-to-Day Experiences of Emotional Tax Among Women and Men of Color in the Workplace* (Catalyst, 2018); Jeanine Prime and Elizabeth R. Salib, *Inclusive Leadership: The View From Six Countries* (Catalyst, 2014).
² Jennifer Thorpe-Moscon, Alixandra Pollack, and Olufemi Olu-Lafe, *Empowering Workplaces Combat Emotional Tax for People of Colour in Canada* (Catalyst, 2019).
³ Catalyst, *Engaging in Conversations About Gender, Race, and Ethnicity in the Workplace* (2016).
⁴ Jeanine Prime and Elizabeth R. Salib, *Inclusive Leadership: The View From Six Countries* (Catalyst, 2014); Anna Beninger and Nancy M. Carter, *The Great Debate: Flexibility vs. Face Time—Busting the Myths Behind Flexible Work Arrangements* (Catalyst 2013); Nicholas Bloom, James Liang, John Roberts, and Zhichun Jenny Ying, "Does Working from Home Work? Evidence From a Chinese Experiment," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, vol. 130, no. 1 (February 2015): p. 165-218.
⁵ Emily Cohen, Liz Mulligan-Ferry, and Jan Combopiano, "Flex Works," (Catalyst, 2013); Nicholas Bloom, James Liang, John Roberts, and Zhichun Jenny Ying, "Does Working from Home Work? Evidence From a Chinese Experiment," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, vol. 130, no. 1 (February 2015): p. 165-218.
⁶ Anna Beninger and Nancy M. Carter, *The Great Debate: Flexibility vs. Face Time—Busting the Myths Behind Flexible Work Arrangements* (Catalyst, 2013)
⁷ Jeanine Prime and Elizabeth R. Salib, *The Secret to Inclusion in Australian Workplaces: Psychological Safety* (Catalyst, 2015).
⁸ Anna Beninger, *Managing Flex 2: Successfully Managing Employees Working Flexibly* (Catalyst, 2014).
⁹ Jennifer Thorpe-Moscon, Alixandra Pollack, and Olufemi Olu-Lafe, *Empowering Workplaces Combat Emotional Tax for People of Colour in Canada* (Catalyst, 2019).
¹⁰ Dnika J. Travis and Jennifer Thorpe-Moscon, *Day-to-Day Experiences of Emotional Tax Among Women and Men of Color in the Workplace* (Catalyst, 2018).
¹¹ Jennifer Thorpe-Moscon, Alixandra Pollack, and Olufemi Olu-Lafe, *Empowering Workplaces Combat Emotional Tax for People of Colour in Canada* (Catalyst, 2019).

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CATALYST

HEY, TALK LEADS TO ACTION

Open and honest conversations about inequities in the workplace are all too rare. But without these conversations, how can equality be achieved?



**TALK IS MIGHTIER
THAN THE SWORD—**
as long as it's the *right* kind of talk.



IS CRITICAL TO AN INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE

Honest and meaningful conversations don't always happen. Training may be necessary to help people gain the skills to be open, non-judgmental and empathetic listeners.

Change starts when people start talking.



ENABLES ACTION

Dialogue doesn't always happen on its own. Learning Circles (formal or informal groups in which people discuss topics of shared interest) create opportunities for learning and support change.

Talk can lead to commitment.



IS ESSENTIAL TO CREATING BUY-IN AND FINDING SOLUTIONS

A continued honing of skills around dialogue ensures that the foundation for change remains strong and doesn't get lost in the rush toward action planning and implementation.

Conversations must continue for lasting change.

Dialogue → Action → Workplaces Where Everyone Is Valued

SOURCE

Sarah Dinolfo, Jeanine Prime and Heather Foust-Cummings, *Anatomy of Change: How Inclusive Cultures Evolve* (Catalyst, 2013).

MAKE DIALOGUE A SPRINGBOARD FOR CULTURAL CHANGE

How do you make a seriously **male-oriented organization more inclusive**, so both women and minorities can advance?



AND GET ALL EMPLOYEES TALKING MORE HONESTLY ABOUT THEIR DIFFERENCES

Candid, respectful communication (and lots of it) is the foundation for building a more inclusive workplace and achieving concrete change.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM ROCKWELL AUTOMATION'S JOURNEY

In *Anatomy of Change: How Inclusive Cultures Evolve*, we examined Rockwell Automation's predominantly white male-oriented North American Sales division as it works toward achieving a more equitable workplace. Through in-depth focus groups, we identified the critical factors necessary for creating inclusive organizations.



GET PEOPLE TALKING



FORMALIZE STRUCTURES TO CAPITALIZE ON DIALOGUE AND FACILITATE ACTION



MAKE A COMMITMENT TO ACTION

It takes more than lip service about gender and racial inequities to change a company's culture. Organizations must commit to having candid conversations on these sensitive issues, and teach employees across all levels how to talk openly and honestly with each other about their differences."

Putting the Pieces Together

CONNECTING ACROSS DIFFERENCE

Instead of...

Try...

1 Fixing

Understanding

2 Assuming

Asking

3 Guessing

Listening

4 Judging

Being curious

5 Being scared

Being intrigued

6 Projecting

Remaining neutral

7 Challenging

Validating

8 Being colorblind

Acknowledging difference

9 Avoiding

Approaching

10 Repressing

Expressing

Exclusionary Meetings Dynamics

Common Exclusionary Meeting Dynamics

The following are common exclusionary meeting dynamics. Are there other's you see happening?

Pay attention to when these occur. You can mark down what the situation was, how it was handled (did someone/you intervene?), and what the outcome was, to share with the group at the next meeting's check-in.

- Women often get interrupted whereas men do not.
- Some people dominate meetings, making the conversations exclusionary.
- Cultural differences can make it very hard for individuals to speak up in a meeting or "take up space" the way majority groups tend to do.
- Women often make a point or offer an idea that is then revisited by someone else, who ends up getting the credit for the original statement.
- Women are made to feel they can't say things "like a man" for fear of coming off aggressive, and therefore tend to state things in a less direct manner.

Ways to Address Exclusivity in Meetings

- Set ground rules about talking over others and interrupting. Make someone accountable at each meeting for watching for these behaviors and re-directing to give each person a chance to speak. Be especially conscious of those who speak most and those who speak less to help even the balance when opportunities arise to do so.
- While it is sometimes difficult to do, challenge participants who are trying to "pull rank" in the room. Remind meeting participants of simple rules like speaking one at a time, attentive listening, respect for different opinions, and for confidentiality.
- Designating someone to watch meeting dynamics (e.g., "Jeff will be on the lookout for any exclusionary behaviors today and redirect us as needed"). Rotate this position among meeting members and genders.
- Give credit when you want to reiterate someone's point. "I like what Sharon suggested. Can we explore that idea?"
- Keep issues aboveboard. While it is nice to get support for your position, trying to create a lobby group outside of the meeting spells exclusion. As a practice, strive to keep all related discussions within the meeting to avoid some members having an unfair advantage over others.
- If possible, provide meeting materials in advance. By doing so, you give participants an opportunity to ask any questions, obtain translations if required, or just give them more time to absorb the information.
- Chairing the meeting: remember to indicate any changes in topic, break times, and adjournments. Whenever possible, try to stay on schedule as some of your guests may have physical or medical issues that they need to take care of during a break at a certain time.
- Don't sit quietly when exclusionary and biased statements are made by others! Practice courage and intervene in a way that you feel is appropriate. This gives other people the courage to act as an inclusive leader as well and gives you influence as a champion.

CONVERSATION GROUND RULES

"A conversation is a dialogue, not a monologue." –Truman Capote

Work of any kind requires communication—and you may need to broach difficult subjects. Your challenge is to create open and productive discussions where people feel safe sharing their experiences and perspectives, and are receptive to learning. Start by following some fundamental ground rules for all conversations—whether with colleagues, in a team, or in larger group settings.¹

1

ASSUME POSITIVE INTENT.

- Embrace a mindset that talking will lead to something good.
- Put aside your own judgments, viewpoints, and biases to focus on what the person actually means—and recognize that you might not know his or her true intent or what he or she has experienced.
- Pay attention to non-verbal cues (e.g., facial expressions, body language, and silence).
- Ask whether you are being understood and whether you are understanding correctly.

2

ENGAGE IN DIALOGUE—NOT DEBATE.

- Dialogue is open-ended—you express your experiences, viewpoints, and perspectives and learn from someone else's.
- Be open to being challenged, accept the other person's understanding, and retry if necessary.
- Shared learning is the goal—not winning an argument.

3

HOLD YOURSELF AND OTHERS ACCOUNTABLE FOR DEMONSTRATING CULTURAL HUMILITY.²

- Pause for self-reflection and to analyze your assumptions, behaviors, and experiences. Role model this behavior for others.
- Suggest alternative ways of thinking and talking when you see others engaging in biased behaviors.

4

BE OPEN, TRANSPARENT, AND WILLING TO ADMIT MISTAKES.

- Practice, practice, practice. Honest communication is a skill to be developed.
- Accept the fact that you won't always say the right thing.
- Approach miscommunication with openness and positive inquiry—the goal is to understand, not to accuse.

5

EMBRACE THE POWER OF HUMBLE LISTENING.

- Don't just hear what someone is saying—listen.
- Put your own ego, assumptions, and viewpoints aside to reflect on and learn from someone else's experiences.³

6

CREATE TRUSTING AND SAFE SPACES—WHERE A LITTLE BIT OF DISCOMFORT IS OKAY.

- Admit that sharing perspectives might involve taking a risk and that it might be uncomfortable.
- Be open to trying different approaches—different people will feel safe in different ways depending on cultural background, experiences, and expectations.

7

COMMIT TO HAVING CONVERSATIONS THAT MATTER BY SPEAKING UP TO BRIDGE DIVIDES.

- Engage in conversations in which people feel valued and respected for their differences.
- Be willing to speak up as a champion for inclusion when you witness difficult situations or exclusionary behaviors, bias, and discrimination.

¹ Catalyst, *Engaging in Conversations About Gender, Race, and Ethnicity in the Workplace* (2016).

² Marcie Fisher-Borne, Jessie Montana Cain, and Suzanne L. Martin, "From Mastery to Accountability: Cultural Humility as an Alternative to Cultural Competence," *Social Work Education: The International Journal*, vol. 25, no. 2: p. 165-181.

³ Catalyst, *Inclusive Leadership Training: Leading With Effective Communication* (2016).



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WORKPLACES THAT WORK FOR WOMEN

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CREATE CONNECTIONS, NOT CONFLICT, IN TOUGH CONVERSATIONS

Words are powerful. Even with the best intentions, we can say or do things that shut down dialogue before it gets started. It's especially easy to do this when the topic is sensitive, controversial, or provocative. But we need to have these tough conversations to understand and bridge differences¹ and successfully collaborate in teams.² Create opportunities for connections by using words that invite different perspectives and help people feel heard and valued.³

UNSUPPORTIVE ←

→ SUPPORTIVE

WHAT PEOPLE SAY
"IF YOU DON'T HAVE SOMETHING NICE TO SAY, DON'T SAY IT AT ALL."

HOW IT'S UNSUPPORTIVE
 Shuts down a conversation. Doesn't allow for disagreement or the safety to call out others' missteps.⁴ Makes it difficult to give honest feedback that can help others learn.

WHAT TO SAY INSTEAD
 "I want to hear what you have to say, even if it may be difficult."

Be **SUPPORTIVE** of tough conversations by encouraging honesty and transparency, even when what is being shared may be challenging to hear.

NOT CURIOUS ←

→ CURIOUS

WHAT PEOPLE SAY
"I'VE HEARD THIS ALREADY."

HOW IT'S NOT CURIOUS
 Sounds dismissive. Can be hurtful to suggest that your colleagues' feelings, perspectives, or experiences do not deserve to be heard.⁵ Implies that you think you know it all and can't possibly have more to learn.

WHAT TO SAY INSTEAD
 "This is what I know... Help me understand what I may be missing or getting wrong."

Show **CURIOSITY** by asking questions, being open to new or different perspectives, and being willing to go beyond what is familiar or comfortable. Listening to and acknowledging the emotions of others lets them know you are interested in their experiences.⁶

NOT HUMBLE ←

→ HUMBLE

WHAT PEOPLE SAY
"OH NO, HERE WE GO AGAIN."

HOW IT'S NOT HUMBLE
 Puts the speaker on the defensive and closes the opportunity for open dialogue.⁷ Assumes you know what someone will say before you've taken the time to actually listen to them.

WHAT TO SAY INSTEAD
 "It sounds like you have a strong point of view. Help me understand how you see this issue."

Demonstrate **HUMILITY** by accepting that your views may be incomplete and showing your willingness to hear other points of view.

NOT EMPATHIC ←

→ EMPATHIC

WHAT PEOPLE SAY
"THAT HAPPENS TO ME, AND YOU DON'T HEAR ME COMPLAINING."

HOW IT'S NOT EMPATHIC
Downplays the challenges people face. Suggests their feelings and perspectives are not valid, creating an "empathy gap."⁸ Signals that you are unwilling to see the difference between your own experiences and those of others.⁹

WHAT TO SAY INSTEAD
"I think I face something similar, but it sounds like it impacts you differently. Tell me more about why it affects you that way."

Express **EMPATHY** by showing that you understand and appreciate another point of view or experience. Actively listen to the meaning of others' words to deepen your understanding of their perspectives.

NOT COURAGEOUS ←

→ COURAGEOUS

WHAT PEOPLE SAY
"THERE'S NO POINT IN TALKING ABOUT THIS."

HOW IT'S NOT COURAGEOUS
Sends a message that you are unwilling to engage in dialogue.¹⁰ Suggests that the goal of understanding each other better is not worthwhile, when, in fact, it can help build inclusion.¹¹

WHAT TO SAY INSTEAD
"To make real change, we have to understand each other. That takes talking and, importantly, listening to each other to bridge our differences. Let's start there."

Communicate **COURAGEOUSLY** by acknowledging that talking about some topics is challenging but that you are open to doing so, even when difficult. Demonstrate that it is safe to bring sensitive issues up with you.

UNACCOUNTABLE ←

→ ACCOUNTABLE

WHAT PEOPLE SAY
"I'M NOT SEXIST, BUT...."

HOW IT'S UNACCOUNTABLE
Opening the statement with denial shuts down candid conversations and says that you are unwilling to explore your potential blind spots.¹²

WHAT TO SAY INSTEAD
"I acknowledge that I have biases that may be bubbling up here. I'd like to have a courageous and honest conversation to help me uncover my blind spots or see things from a different perspective."

Demonstrate **ACCOUNTABILITY** by taking responsibility for how your words and actions affect those around you. Invite feedback to learn how your impact might be different from what you intended.¹³

BE OPEN
Start with an open mind, and invite conversations by asking questions. Respect and affirm your colleagues' views, even if you disagree or their views are different from your own.

LEAD WITH INTENTION
Use your words and actions to purposefully create different opportunities for dialogue. Rethink the "I tried once, and it did not work..." mindset—it takes time to build trust and connection. Continue to assume positive intent.

ROLE MODEL
Inspire others to connect across divides through your example. Seek to learn, even in tough situations, and encourage others to do the same.

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FLIP script

the

**RESPOND WITH HEART, NOT HARM,
IN TOUGH CONVERSATIONS**

Words are powerful. Even with the best intentions, our immediate reactions during tough conversations can sometimes be dismissive, offensive, or unproductive, undermining inclusive dialogue. It's important to use words that demonstrate understanding, partnership, and a commitment to continued communication. Respond with heart by staying engaged and open when discussing difficult topics, which helps to resolve conflicts and work collaboratively across differences.¹

UNSUPPORTIVE ←

→ SUPPORTIVE

WHAT PEOPLE SAY
"NO OFFENSE..."

HOW IT'S UNSUPPORTIVE
Feels offensive and inauthentic as soon as the words are spoken. Puts people in a position to brace for a potential insult, even if that's not your intention.² Takes away a person's right to be reasonably upset as an equal in the dialogue.³

WHAT TO SAY INSTEAD
Nothing. If you want to make this statement, it's generally a sign that what you are about to say is offensive. Don't say it.

Be **SUPPORTIVE** during tough conversations by listening to others to encourage, rather than stifle, dialogue.

NOT CURIOUS ←

→ CURIOUS

WHAT PEOPLE SAY
"I'M NOT COMFORTABLE;
LET'S NOT GO THERE."

HOW IT'S NOT CURIOUS
Leaves no space to resolve differences. Shuts down the conversation because you may be worried about doing the wrong thing, being judged, or hearing a perspective that may challenge your way of thinking.⁴

WHAT TO SAY INSTEAD
"I know this is a delicate subject and I may say the wrong thing, but I'd like to try to talk about this so I can learn more."

Show **CURIOSITY** by asking questions, being open to new or different perspectives, and being willing to go beyond what is familiar or comfortable. You'll learn more about yourself and others.

NOT HUMBLE ←

→ HUMBLE

WHAT PEOPLE SAY
"I'M RIGHT"
AND/OR
"YOU'RE WRONG."

HOW IT'S NOT HUMBLE
Can be perceived as arrogant and overconfident.⁵ Focusing on "right" and "wrong" does not allow for a discussion—only winning or losing the argument.⁶

WHAT TO SAY INSTEAD
"We may not agree, but let's try to reach understanding."

Demonstrate **HUMILITY** by accepting that your views may be incomplete. Listen with humility to better understand others and show you are open to learning and thinking differently.⁷

← NOT EMPATHIC → EMPATHIC

WHAT PEOPLE SAY
"I'M SORRY YOU FEEL THAT WAY."

HOW IT'S NOT EMPATHIC
 Takes no personal ownership for any harm done.⁸ Comes across as not being genuine, and devalues the other person's experiences and emotions.

WHAT TO SAY INSTEAD
 "I apologize for my actions and how they have impacted you. Although my intention was not to cause any harm, I see it did and will try to do differently in the future."

Express **EMPATHY** by showing that you understand and appreciate another point of view or experience. Acknowledge that your words and actions may have had a different effect than what you intended.⁹

← NOT COURAGEOUS → COURAGEOUS

WHAT PEOPLE SAY
"DON'T ROCK THE BOAT."

HOW IT'S NOT COURAGEOUS
 Does not provide a safe space for speaking up. Does not show willingness to step out of your comfort zone in order to make progress.¹⁰ May make others feel like they have to communicate carefully around a topic or "walk on eggshells."

WHAT TO SAY INSTEAD
 "Dialogue is important and welcome, even when it's not easy."

Communicate **COURAGEOUSLY** by leaning into difficult conversations, rather than shutting them down. Doing this signals that you are willing to talk about tough or "undiscussable" issues.¹¹

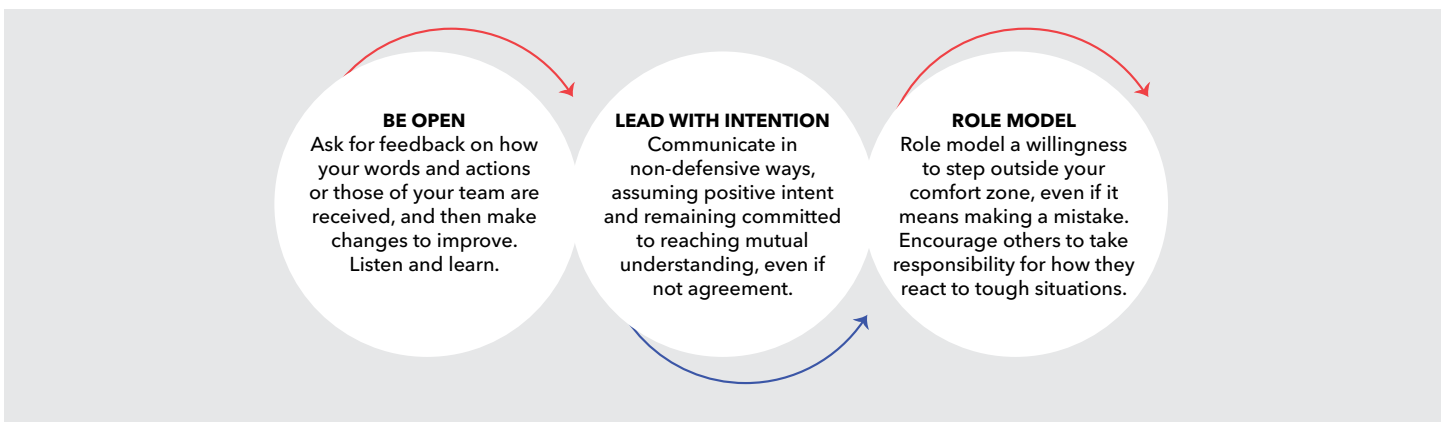
← UNACCOUNTABLE → ACCOUNTABLE

WHAT PEOPLE SAY
"DON'T BE SO SENSITIVE."

HOW IT'S UNACCOUNTABLE
 Blames a person for their reaction and does not take responsibility for the way your words came across.¹² Suggests the other person is the problem for being "overly sensitive" and harms their sense of worth.

WHAT TO SAY INSTEAD
 "It sounds like what I was trying to say came across differently than how I intended it. Can you help me understand how you heard what I said? That might help me try again."

Demonstrate **ACCOUNTABILITY** by taking responsibility for how your words and actions affect those around you. Use words and actions that demonstrate you want to work toward a constructive conversation.¹³



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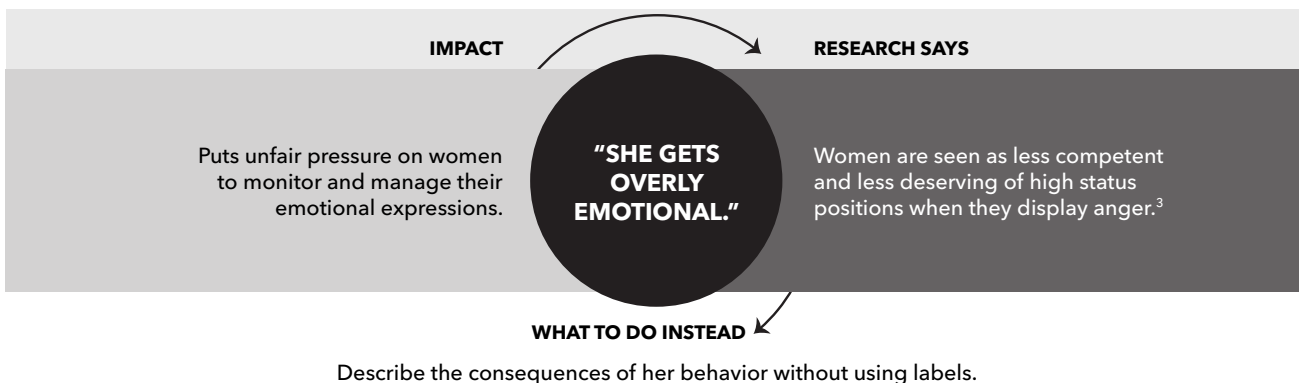
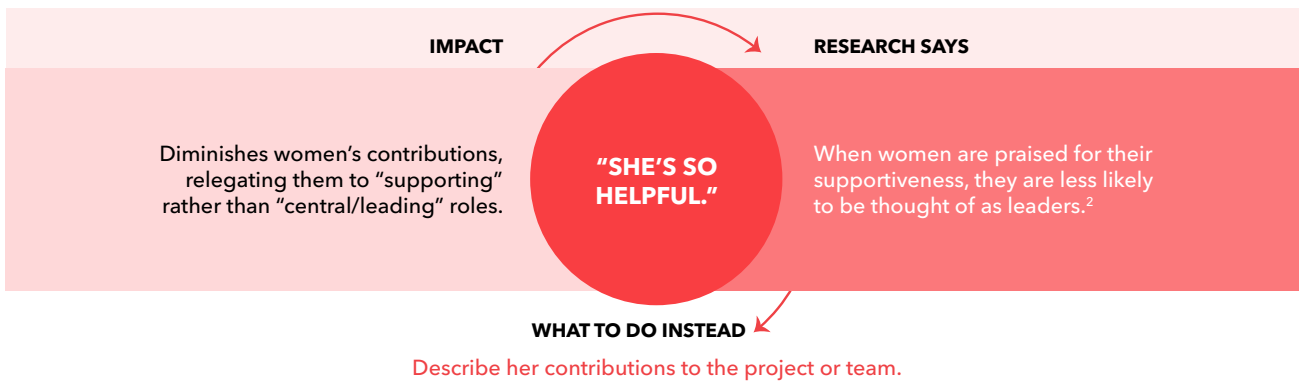
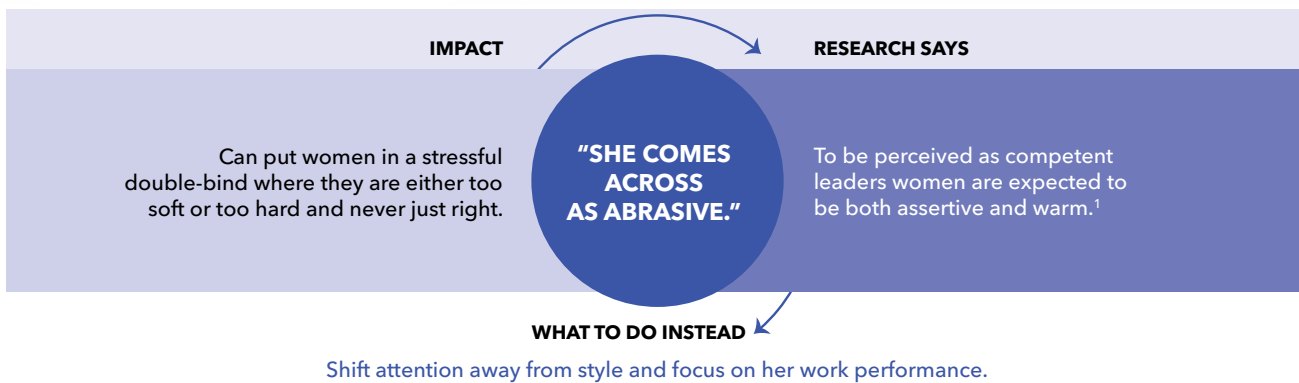
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WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE

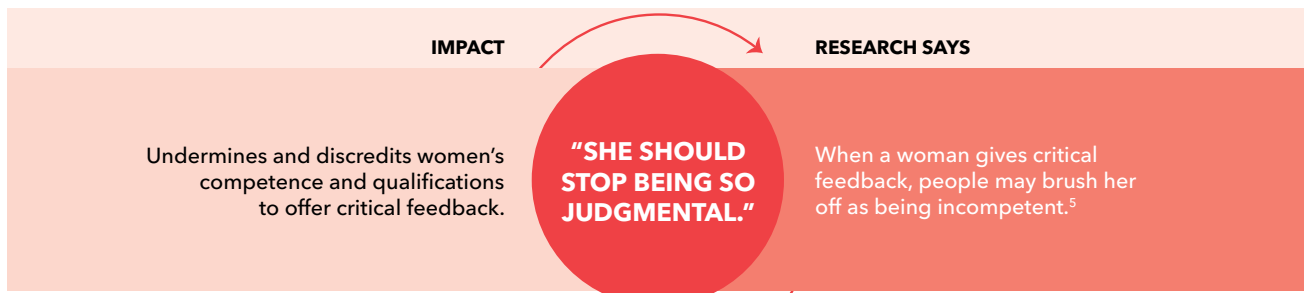
Words reflect workplace culture and can reinforce negative gender stereotypes.

Stop using these common words and phrases, which harm women's advancement opportunities, and focus on performance and outcomes instead.



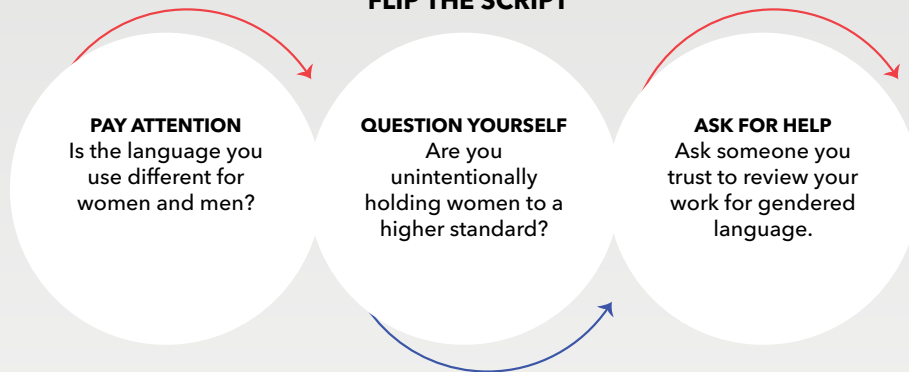


WHAT TO DO INSTEAD
Stop using code and explain what you mean other than "not her."



WHAT TO DO INSTEAD
Don't make it about leadership style, but whether she is demonstrating good judgment.

FLIP THE SCRIPT



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RACE & ETHNICITY

Even with the best intentions, we can say or do things that are offensive and hurtful. Getting past these missteps means recognizing that our words matter. This means taking action by using words that create inclusive environments where people feel both that they are valued and that they belong.¹

IMPACT		RESEARCH SAYS
Ignoring differences can stifle trust, authentic communication, and your ability to connect with someone who is different from you in some way.	"WE DON'T SEE COLOR-ONLY PEOPLE."	It is not racist to see a person's race or ethnicity—it is in fact a natural tendency. Avoiding conversations about race to maintain neutrality will not create an ideal work environment for <i>all</i> employees. ²

WHAT TO DO INSTEAD

Ask your colleagues who have a different racial, ethnic, or cultural background than yours if they feel your workplace honors their identity and experiences.

IMPACT		RESEARCH SAYS
Implies that you had lower expectations, possibly because of the person's race or ethnicity.	"YOU ARE SO ARTICULATE."	This reinforces the stereotype that people of color and ethnic minorities are less competent than their white counterparts, and that those who are successful are an "exception to the rule." ³

WHAT TO DO INSTEAD

Provide concrete examples of why and how you felt the individual excelled. For example, *"Your presentation was very motivating, and it aligned with our business goals very well."*

IMPACT		RESEARCH SAYS
Insinuates that racial or ethnic minorities are "outsiders" who can't speak English and don't really belong where they live or work.	"SHE SPEAKS ENGLISH WELL."	People of all races and ethnicities can speak English well. ⁴

WHAT TO DO INSTEAD

Unless the person has previously struggled with the English language and has made vast improvements, it is better to congratulate your peer on the content of their work.



WHAT TO DO INSTEAD

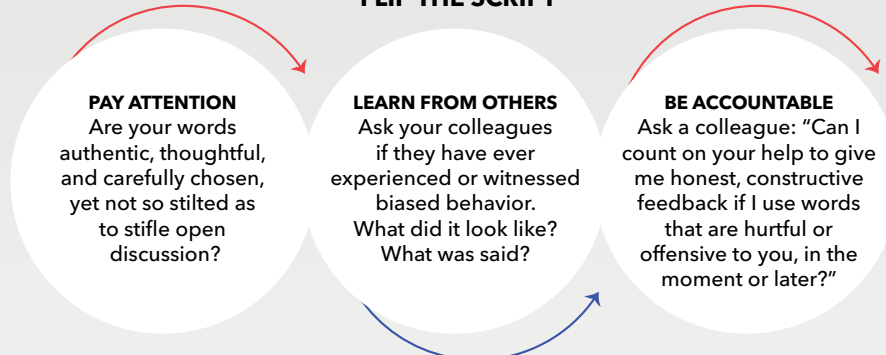
Step into another person's shoes and learn more about their experiences. For example, "I recognize that this is important to you; I'd like to understand more..."



WHAT TO DO INSTEAD

Congratulate your colleague on the new position. Ask questions such as, "What energizes you about your new role? How can I support your transition? How can we team up to advance our company's mission?"

FLIP THE SCRIPT



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SEXUAL ORIENTATION IN THE WORKPLACE

Words reflect workplace culture. Even when we have the best intentions, our words can reinforce negative stereotypes around sexual orientation. We must recognize that our words matter and take action by using words that create inclusive environments where people feel both that they are valued and that they belong.

IMPACT		RESEARCH SAYS
Not being able to bring their whole selves to work can isolate lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) employees and chip away at their ability to forge valuable relationships with co-workers.	"TALKING ABOUT YOUR SEXUAL ORIENTATION IS NOT PROFESSIONAL."	Straight workers often make casual references to their sexual orientation with colleagues during routine small talk. Similar sharing by LGB individuals can be unfairly deemed inappropriate or unprofessional. ¹

WHAT TO DO INSTEAD

Use inclusive language such as "partner" or "spouse" rather than "husband" or "wife."

IMPACT		RESEARCH SAYS
Depending on the situation, outing colleagues can have serious repercussions on their emotional and/or physical well-being, employment, economic stability, personal safety, and/or religious or family situations. ²	"YOU KNOW THEY'RE GAY, RIGHT?"	Coming out is a deeply personal individual choice and process that rarely happens just once. Approximately three-quarters of all lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) workers hide who they are in the workplace to some extent, with nearly half choosing to be open with some colleagues but not others. ³

WHAT TO DO INSTEAD

Ask colleagues how you can best be an ally for them while respecting their privacy.⁴

IMPACT		RESEARCH SAYS
This phrase can demean LGB employees, make them feel unsafe and unwelcome, and may lead them to become less engaged at work. ⁵	"THAT'S SO GAY."	Over 40% of LGBT employees have experienced some form of discrimination on the job ⁶ or take actions such as hiding who they are to avoid it. ⁷

WHAT TO DO INSTEAD

Interrupt derogatory language, offensive comments, and "jokes" to let people know that this kind of language is not okay.⁸

IMPACT

Stereotyping can exacerbate bias and discrimination⁹ and may heighten experiences of "otherness" for LGB employees.¹⁰

RESEARCH SAYS

Stereotyping may limit employees' ability to innovate and perform to their full potential. Stereotypes related to sexual orientation that conflict with prevailing leadership norms may cause LGB employees to be overlooked for opportunities,¹¹ resulting in downsized aspirations and loss of talent.¹²

"HE'S GAY, SO OBVIOUSLY HE'S NOT RIGHT FOR THIS."

WHAT TO DO INSTEAD

Focus on objective standards of performance, not assumptions or subjective preferences such as "style" or "fit."

IMPACT

Implicitly asking employees to cover or downplay aspects of their personality or presentation to conform to heteronormative standards (i.e., "gender performance"¹³) prevents them from bringing their authentic selves to work.

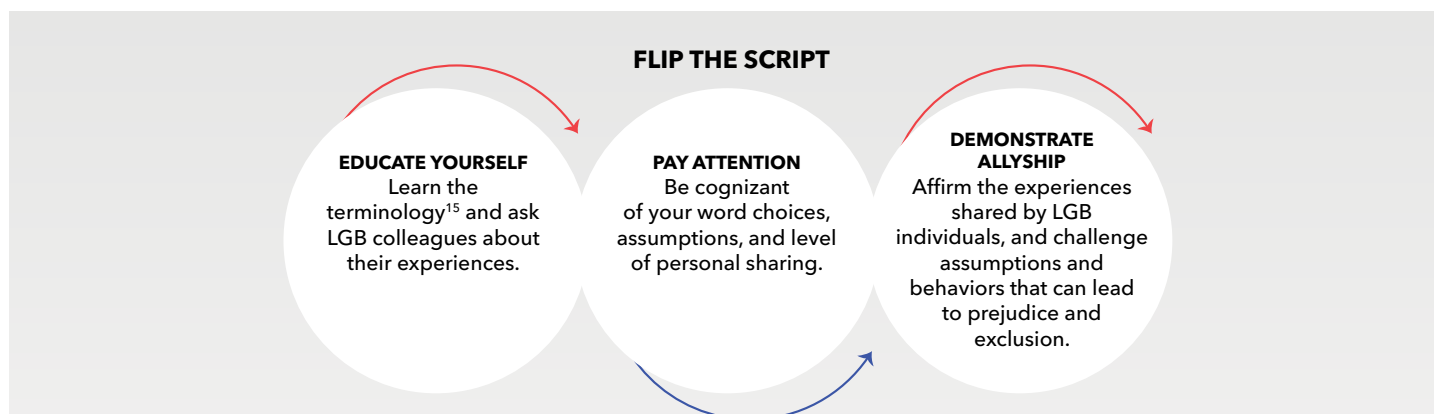
RESEARCH SAYS

Over 60% of employees of all backgrounds, including LGB individuals, report actively hiding an aspect of themselves at work. Covering can lead employees to feel unable to fulfill their potential and can damage their sense of self and commitment to the organization.¹⁴

"CAN YOU TONE DOWN THE GAY?"

WHAT TO DO INSTEAD

Get to know colleagues who are different from you, and engage in courageous conversations to broaden your perspectives.



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