

HOW TO RESPOND: RACISM AT WORK

Racism: a belief that race is a fundamental determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race; Merriam-Webster

DO'S

- Speak firmly - identify the racism
- Recognize power imbalances
- Consider your emotional capacity
- Personalize the impact - use examples

DON'TS

- Scold the speaker
- Converse when it is not safe
- Publicly shame the person
- Act superior to the speaker

Response examples when someone says something racist:

- "What you just said (reference word/phrase/inference) is racist. I'm disappointed to hear it. Would you like to try explaining yourself differently?"
- "Words have power. (Insert comment here) is hurtful and racist. I know that you are a kind person, and do not mean to hurt others. Please do not use those words again."
- "I cannot understand you when you use racist terms like (insert word/phrase here). How would you feel if someone spoke about you like that?"
- "I want to help you, but would prefer you did not use racist words like (insert comment here). It is hurtful to people in our community. Can you try to use different language?"

Micro-aggression: a comment or action that subtly and often unconsciously or unintentionally expresses a prejudiced attitude toward a member of a marginalized group (such as a racial minority); Merriam-Webster

