



RESPONDING TO EVERYDAY BIGOTRY

SPEAK UP!

Foreword

Last year we asked you to *"Please tell us your story of inclusion"* and you responded with numerous stories that allowed us to better understand how to ensure our workplace is inclusive to all. We heard how important it is for each of us to feel empowered to speak up against discrimination. Whether we work, study, train, advance science, or seek care within our healthcare system, we all deserve to feel safe, welcome, and included.

We now wish to work with you to take the pledge to *"Speak Up!"* against comments in the workplace that are discriminatory or sexist and do not reflect how we aspire to be here at Penn. We are asking that if you *Hear Something* that you *Say Something*. Together we can ensure our culture and climate is inclusive for everyone.

**If you
Hear Something**

Say Something

SPEAK UP!



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Introduction

This booklet is an excerpt of a resource made available for public use by The Southern Poverty Law Center. The Center gathered hundreds of stories of everyday bigotry from people across the United States. People told their stories through email, personal interviews and round table discussions in four cities. People spoke about encounters at work and in many other venues, including stores and restaurants. They spoke about family, friends, classmates and co-workers. They spoke about what they did or didn't say - and what they wished they did or didn't say.

These stories echoed each other but more importantly they echoed what we heard here at Penn.

We use these stories rather than similar ones from the Penn community to preserve the trust and anonymity of those that shared their experiences.

In addition to these illustrative stories are concrete steps on what we can do to change our culture, resources to initiate discussions within your departments, and the pledge to **Speak UP!**

Penn Medicine Health Equity Taskforce

**Hear
Something
Say
Something**

WHAT CAN I DO

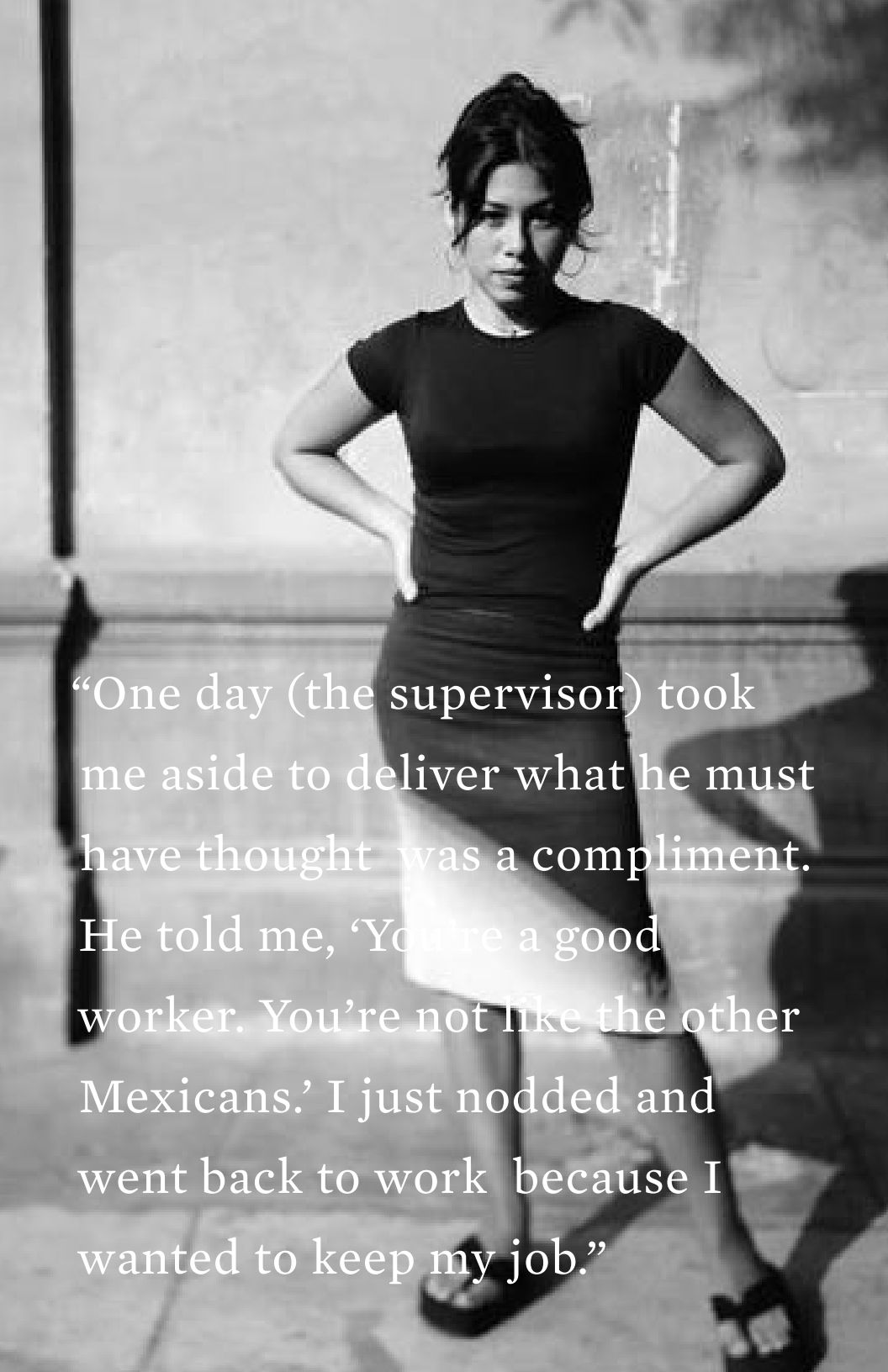
AT WORK?



THE WORKPLACE IS, FOR SOME, THE ONLY PLACE THEY EXPERIENCE DIVERSITY. For those who live in segregated neighborhoods, attend segregated houses of worship or take part in segregated hobbies or activities, work becomes the only place they interact with people of varied and diverse backgrounds. It often is, for these people, a testing ground.

The workplace often offers built-in grievance procedures, tied to policies or laws, which can be used to respond to some forms of everyday bigotry. You need not file a lawsuit to have such a policy be effective; many roundtable participants spoke of invoking such policies when speaking up, saying the mere mention carries weight.

Power, too, comes into play at the workplace. The dynamic of an employee speaking to a supervisor is very different than a supervisor speaking to an employee. Likewise, an executive's tacit acceptance of bigoted remarks can create an atmosphere where bias thrives — just as one powerfully placed comment from that executive can curb everyday bigotry in significant ways. Who sets the tone at your office? And what leverage do you have with that person? If you lack leverage, who has it? And might that person be an ally?



“One day (the supervisor) took me aside to deliver what he must have thought was a compliment. He told me, ‘You’re a good worker. You’re not like the other Mexicans.’ I just nodded and went back to work because I wanted to keep my job.”



WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT CASUAL COMMENTS?

‘HAVE YOU HAD DICTION LESSONS’

- × An African American businesswoman in the South writes: “I was speaking with a white co-worker when, midway through the conversation, she smiled and said, ‘You speak so clearly. Have you had diction lessons?’ — like for an African American to speak clearly, we’d have to have diction lessons.”
- × A manager writes: “One of my employees constantly makes ‘jokes’ about people being ‘bipolar’ or ‘going postal’ or being ‘off their meds.’ I happen to know that one of our other employees — within earshot of these comments — is on medication for depression. How can I stop the bad behavior without revealing proprietary information?”
- × One co-worker asks another if she wants to go out for lunch. “We’re going to get Ping-Pong chicken,” she says, faking a vaguely Asian accent.

- × An Italian American woman’s co-worker makes daily comments about her heritage. “Are you in the mafia?” “Are you related to the Godfather?” There are only six colleagues in the office, and the Italian American woman doesn’t know how — or if — to respond.

SPEAKING UP

Core-value statements and other policies sitting on dusty shelves don’t establish an office’s culture; casual interactions do. Whether you’re a staffer, a manager or an executive, there’s a role for you to play in setting a respectful and unbiased tone in the office. Consider these actions:

Interrupt early. Workplace culture largely is determined by what is or isn’t allowed to occur. If people are lax in responding to bigotry, then bigotry prevails. Speak up early and often in order to build a more inclusive environment.

Use — or establish — policies. Call upon existing — too often forgotten or ignored — policies to address bigoted language or behavior. Work with your personnel director or human resources department to create new policies and procedures, as needed. Also ask your company to provide anti-bias training.

Go up the ladder. If behavior persists, take your complaints up the management ladder. Find allies in upper management, and call on them to help create and maintain an office environment free of bias and bigotry.

Band together. Like-minded colleagues also may form an alliance and then ask the colleague or supervisor to change his or her tone or behavior.

WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT WORKPLACE HUMOR?

‘PLEASE DON’T TELL IT’

A man mentions to a colleague that he is originally from West Virginia. The colleague laughs and says she knows some “jokes” about people from West Virginia.

She begins to tell one, and it’s clear that the “joke” will have an offensive punch line.

The man holds up his hand and says, “Don’t tell it. Please don’t tell it.”

She laughs, perhaps thinking he’s joking himself, and tells not one but three “jokes,” each with an increasingly bigoted punch line.

The man, at a loss for words, simply sits down when she is done.

SPEAKING UP

Humor can enliven the workplace, provide relief from routine tasks and help foster team spirit. When humor goes sour, however, the work culture suffers, and collegiality can be harmed or damaged. When faced with bigoted “jokes” in the office, try this:

Don’t laugh. Meet a bigoted “joke” with silence, and maybe a raised eyebrow. Use body language to communicate your distaste for bigoted “humor.”

Interrupt the laughter. “Why does everyone think that’s funny?” Tell your co-workers why the “joke” offends you, that it feels demeaning and prejudicial. And don’t hesitate to interrupt a “joke” with as many additional “no” messages as needed.

Set a “not in my workspace” rule. Prohibit bigotry in your cubicle, your office or whatever other boundaries define your workspace. Be firm, and get others to join in. Allies can be invaluable in helping to curb bigoted remarks and behavior at the workplace.

Provide alternate humor. Learn and share jokes that don’t rely on bias, bigotry or stereotypes as the root of their humor.

WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT SEXIST REMARKS?

‘BUSINESS AS USUAL’

- × A female manager routinely is referred to as the “office mom.” No male manager is ever referred to as the office “dad,” and male managers expect the female manager to handle office birthdays and other non-job-related tasks. “That kind of sexism happens all the time,” she says.
- × A female employee reports, “One of my male coworkers always comments on the physical appearance of our female colleagues. ‘She’s such a pretty girl,’ or ‘She’s a lovely woman.’ I find these comments inappropriate and have commented to him about them, but his behavior doesn’t change.”
- × A male employee bakes cookies and brings them to the office. A female employee, arriving later, asks who brought them. She thanks the man, then asks, “Did your wife bake them?” Another man wrote of a co-worker telling him his knowledge of gardening makes him seem “like a woman.”



SPEAKING UP

In our professional lives, we hope to be judged and perceived based on the quality of our contributions. Sometimes, however, traditional gender roles distort the ways in which colleagues perceive us. When faced with sexist assumptions or comments, consider the following approaches:

Be direct. Respond to the speaker in a way that makes sexist assumptions clear. “I’m not the office mom; I’m the office manager.” Or, “No, I’m the baker in our household, not my wife.”

Identify the pattern. Tell your supervisor, “In our weekly manager meetings, I’ve noticed that people expect me to take notes. I’m wondering if we could rotate that responsibility, so it’s evenly distributed between male and female managers.”

Start a brown-bag discussion group. If sexism is a persistent problem in your workplace, start an informal dialogue group to discuss the issue during your lunch breaks. Provide support for one another, and create an action plan.

Use incidents to teach tolerance. Advocate for staff training about sexism in the office; provide trainers with real-life examples from your office.

WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT MEETING MISSTEPS?

‘STEREOTYPING IS STEREOTYPING’

- × Two co-workers, one of whom is deaf, are asked to meet with an executive from another firm. They go to the other man’s office, and a sign-language interpreter accompanies them. The executive chooses to face the interpreter, speaking to him, not looking at or acknowledging the employee who is deaf.
- × An African American woman, in a staff meeting about budget issues, hears a white co-worker suggest cost-cutting measures for landscaping: “Why don’t we just get the Mexicans to do it?”
- × A woman writes, “A good-hearted liberal co-worker makes comments at staff meetings like, ‘All Republicans are stupid,’ or, ‘All Republicans are this,’ or ‘All Republicans are that.’ I’m a Democrat who agrees with her politics, but I think those comments are as offensive as someone saying ‘All immigrants are lazy’ or ‘All Irish people are drunks.’ Stereotyping is stereotyping. Short of saying, ‘Some of my best friends are Republicans,’ what can I do?”

SPEAKING UP

Meetings often involve people from different parts of a company or with different roles within a company. When those differences dissolve into bigoted exchanges, both the work and workplace relations suffer. Try these responses:

Seize the moment. With the interpreter, the colleague said, “I hate to interrupt, but just as a matter of practice, you should look at the person you’re talking to, not the interpreter.” In the meeting, an observer might say, “What do you mean by that? What are you saying about Mexicans?”

Address the issue privately. Take the coworker aside and gently explain what you find offensive: “You know, you’re giving Democrats a bad name when you make sweeping generalizations about Republicans.”

Check in with the meeting leader. If you are uncomfortable dealing with the speaker directly, consider speaking with the person who called the meeting. Set expectations or ground rules prior to the next meeting.





WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT **THE BOSS BIAS?**

‘YOU’RE NOT LIKE THE OTHER MEXICANS’

× From an Arizona man: “I’m a Mexican American, and I worked for a time, a long time ago, in construction. One day (the supervisor) took me aside to deliver what he must have thought was a compliment. He told me, ‘You’re a good worker. You’re not like the other Mexicans.’ I just nodded and went back to work because I wanted to keep my job. But I wish I would have said something to him, set him straight that stuff like that isn’t a compliment.”

× A woman works at a company where a male co-worker comes in one day with a newly pierced ear. Their manager sees the earring and laughingly calls him a “faggot.”

SPEAKING UP

When bias comes from the boss, it’s easy to assume nothing can be done. The boss has all the power, right? Regardless of a company’s size, nothing gets done without the workers; your power rests in this simple fact. Try these response techniques:

Focus on the company’s people. “A lot of different kinds of people work for you, and for this company. We come to work every day and give you our best. What you just said, does it really honor me and the other people here?”

Tie tolerance to the bottom line. Remind your supervisor that when people feel valued and respected, a healthy and productive work environment emerges. “Is ‘faggot’ really a word we should be throwing around? We don’t know who’s gay and who’s straight, who has gay relatives and who doesn’t. I think that comment could really upset some people — and distract them from their work.”

Go up the ladder. Consider your options, based on your supervisor’s temperament and the office environment. If you’re uncomfortable confronting the boss directly, consult your company’s human resources department to find out what harassment policies are in place and whether they apply.

WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT **MY OWN BIAS?**

‘I SAID NOTHING’

A Southern white woman is an event coordinator working with an African American minister. They end up talking about a mutual acquaintance who is known to be persistent and driven.

“Without thinking,” the woman writes, “I uttered a phrase I grew up hearing — ‘Yeah, he’s a real slave driver.’ As soon as it was out of my mouth, I realized for the first time the source and meaning of the word. I was ashamed and bewildered and wanted to apologize.”

But before she can say anything, the minister, looking her in the eye, quickly replies, “Yes, he’s a real taskmaster.”

She agrees and later thanks him for “his kindness and subtle but important education.”

The result: “I haven’t used the term ‘slave driver’ since.”

SPEAKING UP

When a colleague tells you that you've said or done something that offends or hurts them, try not to be defensive, even if the statement's impact was unintentional. Consider these approaches:

Be open to feedback. Ask clarifying questions, if need be. "Please help me understand. How have I offended you?" Be gracious, and consider the moment a learning opportunity. Thank the person for pointing it out, and ask for continued feedback.

Focus on the work relationship. Strive to reconnect and ensure that the moment doesn't sidetrack your ongoing ability to work together. "I know this has been awkward for both of us. Is there anything I should do, or that we should do, as a next step? I really want us to keep working well together."

Change your behavior. Don't wait for someone to be offended by what you say. Listen closely to the phrases and terms you use; are some of them "acceptable" only because the targeted group is not present? Bigotry is bigotry no matter who hears it; strive to model respect and tolerance wherever you are.





WHAT CAN I DO IN PUBLIC?

FOR SOME PEOPLE, SPEAKING UP IN PUBLIC FEELS MORE DIFFICULT THAN any other setting. For others, speaking up in public — to strangers who have no power or ties to one’s home or work life — feels easier. Gauge your own comfort level in these situations, and always consider personal safety when choosing to speak up in public.

Allies can be vital in such settings, as can understanding the price of silence. If you don’t speak up to that store clerk, that flight attendant or that security guard, who else will? When two — or three or four or more — people come together, as strangers, to speak in concert against everyday bigotry, pressure for change emerges.

Whether the encounter is with a waiter, a police officer or a cab driver, consider two things: power and policy. Who holds power over the offending person? And are there policies in place that might support your complaint? If so, be vigilant about moving your complaint through proper channels. If not, ask why such policies don’t exist — and keep asking, all the way up the ladder.



“How do you confront a stranger in public? Or do you? I’ll never forget the shock and anger I felt.”



WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT BIASED CUSTOMER SERVICE?

‘I JUST STOOD NEXT TO HIM’

- × In Washington state, a white woman is in a doctor’s waiting room when she notices a Russian-speaking immigrant being treated poorly by the receptionist at the front counter. The woman stands up and joins the man at the counter: “I just stood next to him and wouldn’t leave until the receptionist finally helped him.”
- × An African American man in the grocery store notices a cashier treating a non-English-speaking woman badly. After checking to see if the woman wants help, the man confronts the manager: “These people live in our community, this person spends money in your store, and your store has a responsibility to be part of this community.”
- × A Colorado woman uses a wheelchair. She is boarding a plane with her husband when the flight attendant says, to the husband, “Will she need help being seated?”

SPEAKING UP

It’s all too common: front-line employees who are ill-trained to deal with diverse clientele. Most of us don’t relish the thought of causing a scene, but interrupting biased customer service can send a clear message to the employees — and to other customers. When bias affects customer service, consider the following:

Speak for yourself. If you’re the target of rude customer service, let the person know: “I deserve to be treated with respect in an establishment where I spend money.” Or, “Please ask me, not my husband, what I need.”

Make eye contact. Look at other people witnessing this exchange. Use body language to appeal for their assistance and support.

Step up. Don’t allow someone to be mistreated when you have the power to help. Don’t stick solely to “your” issues. Speak up against bigotry wherever it happens, whoever is involved. As the man in the grocery store said, “Your problem is my problem. We’re in this together.”

WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT BIGOTED CORPORATE POLICY?

‘I DON’T WANT TO GET IN TROUBLE’

A Latino family stops at a fast-food restaurant where a Latina employee greets them at the counter. The husband orders, “Dos del numero uno y dos del numero cuatro, por favor.”

The clerk responds, “Can you repeat that in English, please?”

The husband repeats the order in English, then adds, “But you speak Spanish; you have an accent just like mine.”

The clerk looks over her shoulder and says, “Yes, I do, but I’m not supposed to speak Spanish here; I could get in trouble with my supervisor.”

On the drive home, the man’s 4-year-old daughter is crying.

They pull over to see what’s wrong, and the little girl whispers in her mother’s ear, in Spanish, “I don’t know how to speak a lot of English, and I don’t want to get in trouble.”

SPEAKING UP

When companies support or create policies that are exclusionary, customers (and employees) often feel marginalized. Because managers or corporate headquarters — not the company representative you’re talking to — often put such biased policies in place, it can be hard to know what to do, in the moment. Consider these steps:

Discuss, don’t blame. Discuss the policy with front-line employees, asking for more information about what lies behind the policy. “What’s the problem if we want to speak Spanish? We don’t harm anyone. Do you know why they have this rule? What is behind it?”

Move up the ladder. Ask to speak to the on-site manager, then ask that person to explain the policy further and describe why it exists. Request contact information for the owner or corporate headquarters. Also ask what the formal complaint procedure is, then use it.

Get it in writing. Ask to see written store policy, either from the on-site manager or from the owner or corporate headquarters. Ask who ultimately determines the policy, then pursue changes through that person.

Appeal to the media. When companies are unresponsive to your inquiries, take the issue to your local paper or to the national press. Seek out journalists who write about race relations or community diversity. Explain what has happened, and provide documentation.

WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT A STRANGER’S REMARKS?

‘I WAS SHOCKED’

- × A gay man in Oregon writes about walking down a street the day after a local Gay Pride event. On the sidewalk, he passes a man who tells a female companion, loudly, “There were fags all over the place. I felt like killing them.”
- × A lesbian who at the time was dating a transgender woman shares a similar story of being called “dykes” by someone from across the street. A gay man tells of routinely being called “faggot” while walking down city streets.
- × A California woman is apartment-hunting with her mother. They are in a restaurant, making friendly conversation with people at another table. Her mother asks which neighborhoods are good for students. The man at the





other table says, “Pretty much all of the neighborhoods in town are fine; we try to keep the niggers and Mexicans out of the city limits.”

She says, “I was shocked and didn’t know what to do. How do you confront a stranger in a restaurant? Or do you? I’ll never forget the shock and anger I felt at that moment.”

SPEAKING UP

When people we don’t know dish out bigotry, it can leave us at a loss for words — and challenge our sense of safety. Try taking these steps:

Assess your surroundings. A heated exchange with a stranger can escalate into physical violence; assess the situation before you respond. Is the speaker with a group of people? Is the space deserted? Are you alone? Are children present? Consider such things before responding.

Say nothing. A questioning glance may be an effective and non-confrontational response in a situation in which you feel unsafe speaking directly. Keep moving.

Say something. If you choose to raise the issue, state your beliefs clearly:

“I find that language very bigoted. It offends me.” Or, “I think it’s wrong to stereotype people.”

Speak to the proprietor. If the incident happens in a business, leave. But before you walk out, let the managers know why you’re leaving: “The man at the table next to mine kept using the N-word. It made me lose my appetite. Perhaps you should speak to him so you don’t lose more business.”

Report the incident to an advocacy group. Local advocacy groups, like gay and lesbian centers and local minority alliances, often keep check on the pulse of a community. Call them; let them know what you heard, when and where. They may see patterns you don’t and can work with local government to address ongoing concerns.

WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT RETAIL RACISM?

‘I THOUGHT THOSE DECADES WERE GONE’

× An 18-year-old Hispanic woman goes to a Florida craft store to spend her birthday money. A manager follows her and asks repeatedly what she is looking for. Other customers, all white, are browsing without being asked such questions. When she protests, she is asked to leave. “I thought those decades were gone, when they could throw you out of a store just because you’re Hispanic.”

× A white woman in Indiana notices store clerks shadowing two African American shoppers, taking items out of the shoppers’ hands and replacing them on the racks, then standing by the dressing room door when one of the women tries on a garment.

× A Latina woman is shopping in a major department store in Iowa. A young sales clerk follows her closely but doesn’t speak to her. When she moves, he moves; when she stands still, he stands still. The woman considers confronting him but notices him returning to speak to his manager, an older man.

SPEAKING UP

When you shop, you may get something besides the items you were looking for: retail racism, in the form of racial or ethnic profiling; teens and

other young people also often are targeted. When store security or other personnel shadow your every move, or when you see them tailing another customer, interrupt the behavior. Try this:

Find the source. The clerk may simply be following store policy. Ask why the clerk or security officer is following you (or someone else). Ask to see the written policies on discrimination. Share your experience and observations with company officials.

Stage a personal public protest. Go to the customer service desk or check-out counter. Cancel your store credit card on the spot, and say why you're doing so — loud enough for others to hear. Ask for the manager and tell that person the store has lost your business.

Tell others. Let friends and family know what you observed or experienced. Encourage them to refrain from shopping at a store that practices racial profiling or to contact the store to ask about such policies and practices.

WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT RACIAL PROFILING?

'DRIVING WHILE BLACK'

- × An African American government employee is stopped four times in a single month while driving home. One of the stops involves at least four police cars. His “infraction”? An alleged illegal lane change. He asks, “Would a white man in my same position accept this as normal? Why should I have to accept it as normal?”
- × An African American night security guard, the frequent target of such traffic stops, says, “I live a simple life. I go to work, and I come home. I don't drink or do drugs or sell drugs. I don't like being harassed. I didn't do anything wrong. What really is the problem? This is happening for no other reason than the color of my skin.”
- × An African American minister is pulled over while driving home from Sunday service, in full view of many of his parishioners. He is forced to complete a field sobriety test. When he asks why he has been pulled over, he is told simply, “You swerved.”

SPEAKING UP

It's so common it has a well-known nickname: driving while black. But, that term is too limiting: Latinos, Arab Americans and others also shared



similar stories, tales of racial and ethnic profiling tied to overzealous traffic stops for relatively minor “infractions.”

Confront the bias, later. Police officers hold a lot of power, and arguing with them in the moment generally won't serve you well. While anger and frustration are normal and reasonable responses to racial profiling, strive for calmness.

Inquire and document. Ask why you've been stopped. Ask for the officer's badge number. Note the identification numbers on the police car. Write down every detail you can immediately after the incident.

Lodge a formal complaint. Each time an unnecessary stop occurs, use official procedures to file a grievance. Community relations divisions inside police departments often are the best place to start.

Create an alliance. Reach out to friends and family who also experience racial profiling. Ask them to commit to filing complaints at each offense, too. Keep records of everyone's experiences. Also seek help from supportive community groups.

Raise awareness. Contact the media and ask for coverage of the issue.



Provide names and contact information of people willing to talk about their experiences.

WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT **MY OWN BIAS?**

‘I FOUND MYSELF MAKING CHOICES’

A woman is in a crowded movie theater. Unable to find enough side-by-side seats for her entire group, she finds herself looking for a seat alone:

“I found myself making choices of rejecting a seat based on who might be on either side of me — choices made about skin color, ethnicity, age, gender and so on. At some point, I realized what I was doing and made a conscious decision to choose my seat based on its distance from and orientation to the screen rather than on who I might be sitting next to.”

SPEAKING UP

As you watch for moments of everyday bigotry, don’t overlook yourself. Try these steps:

Be self-critical. Save someone else the trouble of confronting you. Pay attention to your everyday actions; be conscious of how bias is affecting what you do — and what you don’t do.

Change your behavior. When you catch yourself in a biased action, change course immediately, and learn the lesson for good.

Share your experiences. Be open with others about biased behavior. Let others hear what you’ve learned.



SIX STEPS TO SPEAKING UP AGAINST EVERYDAY BIGOTRY



Whatever situation you're in, remember these six steps to help you speak up against everyday bigotry. In any situation, however, assess your safety, both physical and emotional. There is a risk, and that must be acknowledged as you make your own choice to *Speak Up!*

BE READY

You know another moment like this will happen, so prepare yourself for it. Think of yourself as the one who will speak up. Promise yourself not to remain silent.

“Summon your courage, whatever it takes to get that courage, wherever that source of courage is for you,” said Dr. Marsha Houston, chair of the Communication Studies Department at the University of Alabama.

To bolster that courage, have something to say in mind before an incident



happens. Open-ended questions often are a good response. “Why do you say that?” “How did you develop that belief?”

IDENTIFY THE BEHAVIOR

Sometimes, pointing out the behavior candidly helps someone hear what they’re really saying: “Janice, what I hear you saying is that all Mexicans are lazy” (or whatever the slur happens to be). Or, “Janice, you’re classifying an entire ethnicity in a derogatory way. Is that what I hear you saying?”

When identifying behavior, however, avoid labeling, name-calling or the use of loaded terms. Describe the behavior; don’t label the person.

“If your goal is to communicate, loaded terms get you nowhere,” said Dr. K.E. Supriya, associate professor of communications at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, and an expert in the role of gender and cultural identity in communication. “If you simply call someone a racist, a wall goes up.”

APPEAL TO PRINCIPLES

If the speaker is someone you have a relationship with — a sister, friend or

co-worker, for example — call on their higher principles: “Bob, I’ve always thought of you as a fair-minded person, so it shocks me when I hear you say something that sounds so bigoted.”

“Appeal to their better instincts,” Houston said. “Remember that people are complex. What they say in one moment is not necessarily an indication of everything they think.”

SET LIMITS

You cannot control another person, but you can say, “Don’t tell racist jokes in my presence anymore. If you do, I will leave.” Or, “My workspace is not a place I allow bigoted remarks to be made. I can’t control what you say outside of this space, but here I ask that you respect my wishes.” Then follow through.

“The point is to draw a line, to say, ‘I don’t want you to use that language when I’m around,’” Bob Carolla, spokesman for the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill. “Even if attitudes don’t change, by shutting off bad behavior, you are limiting its contagion. Fewer people hear it or experience it.”

FIND AN ALLY/BE AN ALLY

When frustrated in your own campaign against everyday bigotry, seek out like-minded people and ask them to support you in whatever ways they can.

And don’t forget to return the favor: If you aren’t the first voice to speak up against everyday bigotry, be the next voice.

“Always speak up, and never be silenced out of fear,” said Shane Windmeyer, founder and coordinator of Campus PrideNet and the Lambda 10 Project. “To be an ally, we must lead by example and inspire others to do the same.”

BE VIGILANT

Remember: Change happens slowly. People make small steps, typically, not large ones. Stay prepared, and keep speaking up. Don’t risk silence.

“There’s a sense of personal disappointment in having not said something when you felt you should have,” said Ron Schlittler, acting executive director of the national office of Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays.

Carolla put it this way: “If you don’t speak up, you’re surrendering part of yourself. You’re letting bigotry win.”

WITH THAT IN MIND, CONSIDER TAKING THE SPEAK UP! PLEDGE ...



THE SPEAK UP! PLEDGE

Commit to respond to everyday bias and bigotry. Sign and place this pledge card in your wallet, book bag or desk drawer, or post it on your wall. Also use these pledge cards as a part of a campaign in your workplace or school, making as many photocopies as you need. Post the pledge in public places, encouraging others to join.

Because what we say matters.

I PLEDGE TO SPEAK UP!

In pledging to respond to everyday bigotry, I will:

- ✗ Speak up when I hear or see bigotry;
- ✗ Question and identify bias when I see it;
- ✗ Be mindful of my own behaviors;
- ✗ Promote and appeal to higher principles;
- ✗ Set limits on what is said or done around me;
- ✗ Seek help and help others to work against bigotry; and
- ✗ Remain vigilant and persistent.

Name _____

Date _____

Signature _____



WHY CREATE A CAMPAIGN TO DETER EVERYDAY BIGOTRY?

At Work: Offensive speech in workplaces hinders employee productivity, can create a legally hostile work environment, undermines employee safety and damages customer experiences.

APPENDIX ONE

SPEAK UP! AS A CAMPAIGN

Although this guidebook is designed for individuals who want to challenge everyday bigotry, *Speak Up!* also can be used to launch collective campaigns aimed at curbing bias.

HOW TO LAUNCH A CAMPAIGN

Organize. Create a planning committee. Recruit volunteers from all levels of the organization; aim for diversity of perspective, skills and experience. State the overarching goal of the committee: “We want to deter the use of biased language in our organization,” for example.

Learn more. Conduct a survey or convene informal focus groups to understand how people in your organization experience everyday bigotry. What are the most common problems? How do people currently respond, if at all? What reasons do people give for remaining silent in the face of biased behavior?

Get creative. Based on what you learned about the nature and scope of problems in your organization, create campaign materials. Use “Speak Up!” or another organizationally appropriate slogan, and build from it. Develop promotional materials (posters and fliers) and program resources (fact sheets, for example). Ask people outside the planning committee for feedback on the materials, and revise them as necessary.

Reveal. Launch the campaign at an organization-wide event, such as an assembly, rally or all-staff meeting. Make it fun, perhaps providing food and music. Give attendees free campaign take-aways, like buttons or magnets, for workspaces or lockers as ongoing reminders. For free, downloadable *Speak Up!* stickers, visit www.tolerance.org/speakup.

Assess. Periodically assess the campaign’s impact. What’s working well? What’s not working as well? Revise campaign materials as needed.

Renew. Keep the campaign fresh — and on people’s minds. Promote it on your website or in the organization’s newspaper; put the campaign slogan on pay stubs or report cards. Hold events, with food and fun, to update people on the campaign’s impact and success.



APPENDIX TWO

SPEAK UP! AS A TRAINING TOOL

Trained facilitators can use Speak Up! as part of workshops to help individuals learn ways to respond to everyday bigotry. A sample workshop design appears below.

OBJECTIVES

- × Participants will understand the impact of everyday bigotry
- × Participants will explore barriers to responding to everyday bigotry
- × Participants will develop and practice ways to respond to everyday bigotry

MATERIALS

Index cards (4" x 6")

Pens/pencils

10 sheets of paper, numbered 1 to 10, taped the wall in sequential order

Copies of the Six Steps for Speaking Up Against Everyday Bigotry (pages 76-79)

Copies of the Speak Up! Pledge (page 81)

Space for working in small groups and pairs

Postcard stamps (optional)

FAST FACTS

- × Thirty percent of workers say they've heard colleagues use racial or ethnic slurs in the last 12 months. The same number report hearing sexist comments.
- × Twenty-one percent of workers say they've overheard age-related ridicule, and 20% of workers report hearing jabs aimed at sexual orientation.
- × One in 10 students say that someone at school has called them a derogatory word related to race, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexual orientation in the past six months.

STEP ONE: INTRODUCTION (5 MINUTES)

Tell a story about everyday bigotry — from your own life, or using one of the many stories included in *Speak Up*. Explain the scope of the problem. (See Fast Facts sidebar.) Review the objectives of the workshop with participants. Invite and answer any questions.

STEP TWO: THE IMPACT OF EVERYDAY BIGOTRY (15 MINUTES)

Ask participants to write down on an index card an experience they've had with everyday bigotry. Collect the cards and shuffle them up. (If time is a concern, facilitators can use pre-selected examples from the *Speak Up!* guidebook instead of participant examples.) Break into small groups, and give each small group one of the gathered index cards.

In their small groups, ask participants to discuss:

- × How might this incident affect the people directly involved — the target, the perpetrator and any witnesses?
- × How might this incident affect the health of the community (business, school, family, etc) where it happened?
- × What are the emotional, social, physical and financial costs of incidents like these?

Come back to the whole group, and ask each group to share key points from its discussion.

STEP THREE: BARRIERS TO INTERRUPTING EVERYDAY BIGOTRY (10 MINUTES)

Point out the numbered pieces of paper taped to the wall. Tell participants that 1 means “extremely uncomfortable responding” and 10 means “extremely comfortable responding.” Read two or three examples from the gathered index cards. As you read them, ask participants to move in front of the number that represents their comfort level in responding to each incident. Ask volunteers to share why they selected their “comfort number,” identifying the external and internal factors they considered.

Close this portion by saying: “Our comfort levels in responding to bias incidents often vary by location and by the people involved. Next, we’re going to learn some tools to help us be more comfortable in more settings.”

STEP FOUR: RESPONDING TO EVERYDAY BIGOTRY (15 MINUTES)

Pass out copies of *Six Steps for Speaking Up Against Everyday Bigotry*. Review the document with participants. Show participants how to apply



the steps, using one of the examples the group explored in Step Three.

Break the group into pairs, and provide each pair with two of the gathered index cards. Working as a team, each pair should apply the Six Steps to the provided examples, rehearsing language (verbal or body) they might use in each situation and brainstorming a list of potential allies.

STEP FIVE: CLOSING ACTIVITY (5 MINUTES)

To close the workshop, invite participants to sign the *Speak Up!* Pledge. Participants should take their signed pledge cards home with them, as a reminder to apply what they’ve learned.

An optional step: Ask participants to write their names and home addresses on one side of an index card, with one thing they will do in the next four weeks to respond to everyday bigotry on the other side. Collect these cards and mail them to participants three weeks after the workshop.

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RESOURCES

Teaching Tolerance offers a variety of online resources aimed at identifying and eliminating racist, sexist, biased and bigoted language and imagery from our lives.

Power of Words

www.tolerance.org/teach/web/power_of_words
A collection of lessons that encourage us to explore the words we use to label ethnic groups, women and sexual minorities.

Writing for Change

www.tolerance.org/teach/web/wfc
Exercises and lessons exploring how American English frequently both reflects and reinforces systems of oppression in U.S. society.

Parenting Columns

www.tolerance.org/parents/talktokids.jsp
A monthly exploration of how to address issues of tolerance and diversity with children.

Images in Action

www.tolerance.org/images_action
A gallery showing how images, not just words, perpetuate bias and stereotypes in our society.

Mix It Up

www.mixitup.org
Ideas for teens about breaking down social barriers and addressing bias and bigotry at school.

10 Ways to Fight Hate

www.tolerance.org/10_ways
A guide for community activists.

10 Ways to Fight Hate on Campus

www.tolerance.org/campus
A personal response guide for college activists.

Responding to Hate at School

www.tolerance.org/rthas
A guide for K-12 school communities.



“To remain
silent and
indifferent
is the greatest
sin of all.”

— Elie Wiesel



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