

Six Techniques for Speaking Up: Calling people “In” not “Out”



Assume Good Intent and Explain Impact

- Respond with the perspective that the person did not mean any harm.

“I know you mean well but...”

- Explain the impact of the comment.

“For me, that means...” OR “When I hear that it hurts because...”



Ask a Question

- Asking a question allows the other person to think about what they have said and provides space for increased understanding.

“What do you mean?”



Interrupt and Redirect (AND Return)

- Sometimes it’s effective to simply stop the conversation and redirect it to a more positive subject...and return to the topic offline or at a more appropriate time.

“Hey, let’s not go down that path! Let’s get back to the task at hand.” Return: “Can we find a time to talk later this week?”



Broaden to Universal Human Behavior

- Encouraging the person to see that the behavior or characteristic is common among most people and not just one group. This helps discourage stereotyping.

“I don’t think it’s a gay thing, I think that is true for most people.”



Make It Individual

- Encouraging the person to see that the behavior or characteristic is not true for all people in a particular group helps discourage stereotyping.

“Are you speaking about all managers, or someone in particular?”



Say OUCH!

- At times we are caught off guard, or do not have the energy to explain the impact of a comment. However, it is important to say **something** to let the person know that what was said was hurtful. Ouch is a simple, easy way to speak up!

“OUCH!”