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!”