

Actions of a Diversity Change Agent

Time: 30-60 Minutes

Purpose: To apply the behaviors of a Diversity Change Agent to daily experiences.

Materials: Prepare index cards or a worksheet similar to page 2 with these or other situations that could happen or have happened in your workplace.

ACTIVITY

Instructions:

This is designed as a “drill” and “practice.” Set up a safe environment for individuals to make mistakes and get good feedback from others.

1. Write the situations on the sample worksheet on separate index cards.
2. Pass cards with situations to each *individual* one at a time or have each participant draw a card from a deck of situations.
3. *Individuals* are to give an immediate response as to what they would do as a Diversity Change Agent. (Often Diversity Change Agents have little time to think when they are in the midst of a situation.) If they begin, “I would say,” stop them and have them practice the words. Perhaps set up a role-play.
4. Use the others in the group to give feedback and coaching. Remind the group that the silence of inaction and avoidance often supports inappropriate actions and does not contribute to creating a respectful environment.

Use situations as *small-group* role-plays.

Debrief:

Ask:

What does it take to be a Diversity Change Agent (courage, risk taking, respect, honesty)?

What are some of the behaviors? Make a list and post. (Address the situation, ask to learn about the other person's perspective, provide empathy, act as a role model, make suggestions.)

What do we need to do in this work group to support these behaviors? What if we don't?

What's the payoff for you of encouraging Diversity Change Agent behavior? For the work group? For the organization?

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How will you act as a Diversity Change Agent when you see these things happening?

- Your coworker tells an inappropriate joke to you.
- You are planning a social event with food for your entire team. It has been suggested that you have burgers and hot dogs.
- Your coworker has complained to you about the “prayer breaks” of your new Muslim employee.
- Your manager is not aware that his sexist comments have offended several women in your group.
- You, two other coworkers, and a client are having lunch together and one of them tells an inappropriate joke at the table.
- At the last minute, you realize that the team that is making the company’s presentation to the committee of a potential urban client is composed of all white males.
- Your Jewish coworker has mentioned that he won’t be attending the Christmas party on Friday evening.
- You are on the hiring team for a new position and your manager says she wants to see a diverse group of candidates. The list of potentials from HR is not diverse, but there are two outstanding candidates.
- Your coworker who is Gay has told you that he thinks it’s time for him to “come out” to his work group.
- A patient lets you know that he doesn’t want the nurse who is assigned to him because he “doesn’t like that kind.”
- Your company’s dress code does not allow for hats. You have a coworker who is Hindu and wears a turban. Your coworkers say this “isn’t fair.”
- The newest member on your team has just signed up for a marathon and must leave right at 4:00 p.m. every day to train for the race.
- ADD YOUR OWN . . .