

## **INTERRUPTING INDIVIDUAL BIAS**

The following tips have been compiled to give some guidance on how to begin interrupting others' individual bias.

### **Steps for thinking about interrupting others' bias:**

- ☐ **Deep Breath:** Things can get emotional very quickly; take a deep breath before diving in.
- ☐ **Identify the problem:** What is really happening here? Take a moment to gather as much information about the situation before jumping in.
- ☐ **Assume responsibility:** Everyone will assume responsibility differently, based on job titles, identities, etc. Think about what taking responsibility might look for you.
- ☐ **Think it through:** Where are all parties coming from? What unconscious biases might people be holding? (hint: if you're not sure how to answer some of these questions, that might be a great place to start the conversation!)
- ☐ **Take action:** And follow through! This may mean following up with folks days and weeks after the initial incident. The four ways you can take action are:
  - Direct
  - Distract
  - Delay
  - Delegate
- ☐ **Outcomes:** Be clear about what you hope to get out of the intervention. What change in behavior, awareness, mindset, etc are you hoping for?

### **Things to keep in mind:**

- ☐ **Your identity:** Each person may interrupt bias differently in different situations, based on their identity. There is no one way to do this!
- ☐ **Support:** Think about who needs support and when. The person or group who were the target of the incident may need immediate support, but the perpetrator may also need support in understanding how they can improve.
- ☐ **Time:** Getting this incident resolved may take time! You may have to circle back to the incident or facilitate a few conversations with different people for all parties to feel like they can move forwards.
- ☐ **Use tactics wisely:** Most likely, you will use a combination of the tactics (direct, distract, delay, delegate) while interrupting bias. Be sure to use them intentionally and productively, rather than just using the one that feels the most comfortable in the moment.
- ☐ **Failure is ok:** Even if you don't get through to the person who said or did the exclusive thing, you have set a precedent that your program/organization does not condone exclusive actions or behaviors.

### **Helpful phrases:**

- ☐ What you said just made me bristle a little. Can you tell me more about what you meant?
- ☐ “What makes you ask that question/say that \_\_\_\_\_?”
- ☐ “It sounds like you’re really passionate about this issue. Can you tell me why?”
- ☐ “I was really upset when you said \_\_\_\_\_ and was unable to hear the rest of what you said. Can we go back and discuss it?”
- ☐ “Ouch! I am really shocked by that statement. Can you give me a minute to think?”
- ☐ “I do not find the joke you just told funny because \_\_\_\_\_”
- ☐ “I feel that what you just said breaches our (mission statement, D&I statement, group norms, etc).”
- ☐ “Yesterday someone said \_\_\_\_\_. It made me uncomfortable and we need to talk about before we can move forward with our (trip/work/relationship).”

