



Microaggressions

Microaggressions are everyday, subtle, intentional — and oftentimes unintentional — interactions or behaviors that communicate some sort of bias toward historically marginalized groups.

- They make people feel like outsiders.
- They reinforce harmful and hurtful stereotypes.
- They can lead to hostile work environments.

Studies show that hostile work environments lead to poor work performance, more absenteeism and burnout.

Reducing microaggressions will help everyone feel respected and able to do their best work at URM.



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TIPS TO GET STARTED



- Keep interactions respectful and keep the goal of educating, not shaming, in mind.
- Is the conversation best had in private or at a later time?
- Start by talking about why you avoid using that term. *“I’ve stopped using that term because people can find it hurtful.”*

INTERRUPT: Stop the flow of conversation to allow the microaggression to be discussed.

- *“Hang on. Something was said and I’d like to talk about it.”*
- *“Just a moment, can we please talk about what just happened...”*

QUESTION: Clarify what was meant by the comment or action.

- *What made you say/do that? What does that mean?*
- *Do you know why I don’t say that anymore?*

EDUCATE: Explain in respectful terms why you consider the comment or action problematic.

- *“I try not to say that because it’s a stereotype and it’s harmful/hurtful.”*
- *“I don’t think you meant to hurt anybody, but jokes like that spread misinformation and are disrespectful.”*

ECHO: If someone is speaking up, support them.

- *“I see it that way, too.”*
- *“Thanks for saying something. We all want everyone to feel welcome here.”*