

What are micro-aggressions?

Everyday verbal, non-verbal and environmental slights, snubs or insults (intentional or not) that communicate derogatory, hostile, or negative messages to a target group based on marginalized membership.**

Examples:

“What are you?” | “Those people are...”
Calling something you find strange “gay”
“Where are you really from?”

Strategies:

Assume good intent & explain impact.

•

Ask questions to start a discussion.

•

Use direct communication.

•

State that you are uncomfortable.

•

Offer support to those directly affected.

•

Be a consistent champion of change.

Combat Implicit Bias & Micro-aggressions



Strategy

Assume Good Intentions
and Explain Impact

Example

“I think she may be too old to
understand the technology.”

Response

- Acknowledge the person’s positive intentions, “I know you mean well, but that hurts...”
- Describe the negative results, “You are not seeing the individual for her own skills and capabilities.”

Become An Upstander



Combat Implicit Bias & Micro-aggressions

Become An Upstander

Strategy

Ask a Question

Example

“I am not sure Janelle is right for the position. She is not a good fit.”

Response

“What do you mean by not a good fit?”

“Can you be more specific?”





Become An *Upstander*

*Combat
Implicit Bias
&
Micro-aggressions*

Strategy

Use Direct Communication

Example

An attending physician and a student of color enter a patient's room to obtain the history and perform an initial physical exam. The patient states, "I don't want her (the student) taking care of me."

Response

The attending physician can act as an Upstander by stating, "I understand it may be overwhelming meeting multiple members of the medical team, but I can assure you that all members of the team are excellent, qualified and critical to the care you will receive."

Combat Implicit Bias & Micro-aggressions

Strategy

State that you feel uncomfortable

Example

“We shouldn’t sacrifice quality
for diversity..”

Response

“Ouch! That hurts! Let me tell you
what your words mean to me.
When I hear that remark, it offends me
because I feel that it disregards
an entire group of people.”

Become An
Upstander



Combat Implicit Bias & Micro-aggressions

Strategy

Offer Support to Those Directly Affected

Example

“There are very few of us
[persons of color] in the program.
Yet, our colleagues that have worked with
us for over a year constantly confuse
us with each other.”

Response

Reflect and validate.

“This is extremely frustrating and
disrespectful. I commit to speaking up
whenever I hear this. ”

Become An Upstander



Combat Implicit Bias & Micro-aggressions

Strategy

Be a Consistent Champion

Example

A woman of color talking
to her white male colleague.

“It is hard going into this environment
where I feel like I don’t belong; where
I feel as if I’m invisible to the people
I work with.”

Response

White male colleague’s response,
“I know I can’t feel the oppression you
feel, but I am here for you and will listen.
I will also speak up when I witness the
hurtful behavior.”

Become An
Upstander

