

I Didn't Know What to Say!

Directions:

Often participants will tell us that they are uncomfortable with addressing microaggressions when they occur because they don't know what to say. Our next activity will give you the opportunity to practice what to say when you are a victim or witness to microaggression.

There are three (3) roles: speaker, disrupter, and coach. The speaker is responsible for choosing a scenario (or making one up) and setting up and then saying the remark that is a microaggression. The disrupter is given the challenge of responding to the remark in a way that reduces the likelihood of future microaggressions.

Once the speaker and responder have concluded their interaction, the coaches should critique the response and provide candid feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of the response.

The roles should be rotated for another practice round with a new speaker and responder.

SCENARIO 1

Background:

New Member Orientation meeting where the UniServ Director has been asked to speak. You observe the membership chair ask a potential member the question.

Speaker 1:

Union Membership Chairperson - Comment made: "What are you? Where are you really from?"

Disrupter:

UniServ Director – How do you respond? What do you say?

SCENARIO 2

Background:

Public high school and a comment is overheard during after-school study hall.

Speaker 1:

A high school student - Comment made: "You must be good in math; can you help me with this problem."

Disrupter:

Study Hall Monitor - How do you respond? What do you say?

SCENARIO 3

Background:

A group of friends are at a Margarita Monday event. The comment is made by a friend of a friend at happy hour.

Speaker 1:

Your best friend's co-worker - Comment made: "How do Black people feel about affirmative action?"

Disrupter:

A white bystander- How do you respond? What do you say?

SCENARIO 4

Background:

A group of colleagues are sitting together eating lunch. The comment is made during lunch time period with several people at the table.

Speaker 1:

A fellow colleague// Comment: "Of course she'll get the promotion, she's a minority."

Disrupter:

UniServ director on the job for 5 years - - How do you respond? What do you say?

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SCENARIO 5

Background:

Union member approaches officer at the end of general membership meeting. There are about a dozen members still hanging around after the meeting.

Speaker 1:

Union member - Comment made: "You speak English so well, like it is your first language."

Disrupter:

Union President - How do you respond? What do you say?

SCENARIO 6

Background:

Slightly busy hotel lobby with several people in line waiting to check in at the counter.

Speaker 1:

A middle-aged white woman - Comment made: "Will you help me with my bags and where is the valet?"

Disrupter:

Black woman being mistaken for someone in a service role - How do you respond? What do you say?

Disrupter:

Bystander - How do you respond? What do you say?

SCENARIO 7

Background:

Comment was made during a family dinner in which the conversation turned to the topic of LGBTQ+ rights.

Speaker 1:

A middle-aged uncle - Comment made: "All that lesbians need is a good-looking man to convert them."

Disrupter:

A family member - How do you respond? What do you say?