

Building Links with Syngenta – Inclusive communication

Bias

- An **aversion** or **affinity** to a person or group of persons based on **identity** or **inherent characteristics**.
- Affinity: a more challenging concept but, while meaning well, this can result in leaving people out with whom you are less familiar.

Microaggressions

- Actions or brief snubs, comments that remind people from underrepresented groups that they're different
- They happen casually, frequently, and often without intending harm
- Can be devastating in how they normalize bias

Identity and inherent characteristics

- Gender, gender identity
- Age
- Race, ethnicity
- Sexual orientation
- Religion
- Class, socioeconomic status
- Native language
- Disability status
- Citizenship

Context impacts communication

Connectivity gaps: With the loss of connection, we can rely on stereotypes and imperfect information

Uncertainty: Our colleagues might be more or less productive and more anxious, creating communication challenges

Sheltering in place: Our colleagues might not have the optimal/preferred conditions for working from home

What if it's you? Don't beat yourself up.

1. Try not to be defensive, remember it was unintentional: take the opportunity to learn from it
2. Acknowledge the hurt or harm and apologize
3. Expose yourself to different experiences and points of view

How to interrupt bias and microaggressions as a bystander or target:

- Consider: Is it appropriate to 'Call-out' or 'Call-In'?
- Call attention to the behavior not the intention
- Use "feel" words to describe the impact it had
- If you aren't sure, ask a follow up question – you can always revisit, later
- If it happens again or there is a pattern, report it elsewhere

Tips for having tough conversations at work:

1. Check in with yourself: How prepared are you?
2. Gauge your relationship, acknowledge the power dynamic
3. Space out the conversation over time
4. Agree on the purpose of each conversation (e.g., learning, syncing)
5. Don't expect resolution
6. Check your own biases and different communications styles

Fostering healthier communication norms

- **Share** your communication needs/preferences with others up front
- **Center** impact but recognize intention
- **Actively listen** to understand, not to respond
- **Invite** feedback after conversations or collaborations
- **Check-in** on understanding and alignment
- **Focus** on harm repair

Effective leadership & inclusive communication

- Genuine, visible commitments to equity, diversity & inclusion
- Humility + awareness of bias
- Curiosity about others + cultural intelligence
- Model effective collaboration



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with syngenta.