

# Courageous Conversations

## Ground Rules

**Respect** one another's ideas and comments. Be open. We are all here to learn and many of us are coming from very different experiences.

**Engage** It is important that you are actively engaged, listening and thinking about our discussions and how they impact you and your colleagues. Participate as comfortable.

**Own It** if something rubs you the wrong way or hurts your feelings. Acknowledge the possibility that something you say may offend someone.

**Embrace** the discomfort. See this as an opportunity to learn other perspectives without judgement.

## Prompts

Is racism everyone's issue?

Have you ever been targeted because of your race by someone in a position of power?

Have you ever been personally impacted by witnessing racism?

How have you been able to manage the changes associated with the pandemic, racial tensions, and performing at work?

Psychological safety involves being able to show one's self without fear of negative consequences. How can we support each other while promoting psychological safety at work?

## Courageous Conversations Facilitator Guide

### Introductory Language:

Welcome and thank you for joining us for this courageous conversation. For centuries, racism has been a polarizing issue in our culture. In fact, these conversations are “courageous” for that very reason. In this space, we will confront topics that may make us uncomfortable.

As we all know, racism often evokes feelings of anger, fear, guilt, exhaustion, anxiety, and sadness. While acknowledging the enormity of facing these emotions, it is important that we validate our feelings because each of us brings our experiences and perspectives to work each day.

### Ground Rules:

As we move through today’s discussion, we ask that you keep the following in mind:

**Respect** one another’s ideas and comments. Be open. We are all here to learn and many of us are coming from very different experiences.

**Engage** It is important that you are actively engaged, listening and thinking about our discussions and how they impact you and your colleagues. Participate as comfortable. **We encourage everyone to keep their cameras on, as we try our best to replicate the engagement of an in-person conversation. Also, as we move through the discussion, we encourage you to raise your hand to indicate you’d like to share. This helps streamline the flow of the conversation. Lastly, also in the spirit of replicating an in-person conversation, keep the discussion happening verbally, as opposed to within the chat bar.**

**Own It** if something rubs you the wrong way or hurts your feelings. Acknowledge the possibility that something you say may offend someone.

**Embrace** the discomfort. See this as an opportunity to learn other perspectives without judgement.

### Prompt Language:

*It is recommended that the following paragraph (not including the prompts) be sent to participants prior to the session, in order to provide insight into the types of questions they will be asked.*

Thank you for expressing interest in joining the upcoming Courageous Conversations session. We will be discussing issues such as being targeted because of your race, witnessing acts of racism, managing your emotions at work while dealing with the pandemic and racial tensions, and how we can best support each other.

1. Is racism everyone’s issue?
2. Have you ever been targeted because of your race by someone in a position of power?
3. Have you ever been personally impacted by witnessing racism?

4. How have you been able to manage the changes associated with the pandemic, racial tensions, and performing at work?
5. Psychological safety involves being able to show one's self without fear of negative consequences. How can we support each other while promoting psychological safety at work?

#### Closing Language:

As we leave today's discussion it is important that we take the principles of respect and willingness to listen with us. We cannot deny the prevalence of race in our society. To pretend that we are "colorblind" or to deny that race plays an integral role in the lives of Americans is to deny perspectives, experiences, and identities. We must be keenly aware of the importance of race in order to create and maintain inclusivity and the psychological safety of our colleagues. Thank you all for your candor and your willingness to participate in today's discussion.

#### Facilitator Tips:

- Do not be afraid to mute participants when they are not speaking. Muting participants helps to eliminate distracting feedback, background noise, and echoes. If one facilitator is speaking, the other can be in charge of muting participants who forgot to do so.
- Many participants will forget to lower their hands after they finish speaking. Lower the participants' hands for them, after they finish speaking, by clicking on the three dots next to their name in the participant bar. This will ensure that those waiting to speak move up to the top of the queue.
- If a participant has their camera off, a facilitator may choose to message them privately to ask if they have a camera, and if so, if they would be willing to turn it on.
- You do not have to explicitly ask every prompt. Often, the conversation will organically grow as participants feed off each other. One question may take the entire session. If possible, tie the conversation back to the additional topic prompts as they arise.
- You may start to run out of time while participants still have their hands raised. Once you have decided you only have time for a few more questions/comments, try to choose someone who has not yet spoken, if possible. Say something like, "we are running out of time but before we end, I want to make sure to call on John, as he hasn't had an opportunity to participate yet."
- Once you have decided to call on your last person, indicate to the group that this person will be the last to speak. Say something like, "we are out of time so our last comment will come from Devon."