FACTSHEET

How to start the conversation around racial bullying and harassment

The Race at Work Charter has five calls to action. This factsheet supports action three - Commit at Board level to zero tolerance of harassment and bullying.

The Race at Work Survey revealed that 25% of ethnic minority employees reported that they had witnessed or experienced racial harassment or bullying from managers. Racism is all too often dismissed as 'banter', which is a key barrier to creating inclusive workplaces where ethnic-minority employees feel safe and empowered to bring their whole selves to work.

To tackle the topic of racial bullying and harassment, it's important that managers raise the issue at team meetings and one-to-ones to increase awareness, stress the organisation's zero-tolerance policy, and upskill team members on how to call out bad behaviours. Business in the Community has created a series of short videos to get the conversation around racism in the workplace started.

Using storytelling to create impact: hearing it from first-hand experience

Based on the voices of 24,457 individuals in our Race At Work 2015 survey, we created a series of short videos that showcase real-life experiences of ethnic-minority employees. The stories in the videos are surprising, shocking, eyebrow-raising and thought provoking. Topics covered are:

- 'Racism at work in one word'
- 'Racism: Is the customer always right?'
- 'Racist banter is no laughing matter'
- 'Racism is not water off a duck's back'
- 'Racism: How it affects the workplace'

Click here to access the video series.

Royal Founding Patron: HRH The Prince of Wales
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Discussion points for team meetings

We recommend playing one to two videos in team meetings, followed by a facilitated discussion with attendees. Please ensure you explain the context for showing the videos, why it's important that we're listening to those stories, and that your organisation is committed to zero-tolerance policy to protect employees.

Questions to discuss with team members include:

- How did the video make you feel? What stood out for you?

- These examples happen to many ethnic-minority employees every day. Can you guess how many colleagues actually report those incidents? (Answer: three out of ten (30%) – Race At Work survey 2015)

- Who here knows how to report a bullying or harassment incident at our organisation? (Confirm the correct process and signpost to other useful resources including EAP and employee networks)

- Do you feel empowered to call out banter/bullying/harassment in our team if you witness it? What do we need to do to help you call it out?

- How do we want to shape our team culture to ensure banter doesn't impact individuals?

Further resources

- See also our 'Tackling racial harassment and bullying – a toolkit for employers' as a checklist to ensure there is a clear and transparent process to promote early resolution if possible and ensure that employees are supported should such incidents occur.

- Plus, get the conversation about race started with our handy 'Let's Talk About Race' pocket guide.