

Speak up for a work environment free of racism

Overview

Being subjected to racism could just be another day at the office for some people. And even though we all know how wrong that statement sounds, it doesn't mean it isn't true. It's no secret that racism exists, in the workplace and elsewhere, but not all forms are obvious. Some of us might be guilty of certain types of prejudice without even realizing it—that's often how racism is experienced at work. Which is why, in order to change our behaviour, we first need to recognize it. Learning to speak up when we witness or experience acts of racial discrimination can help create an environment where everyone feels comfortable going to work.



Insights

- Studies have shown that a large number of people have, at some point, experienced racism at work
- Often those who witness racism fail to speak up for fear of consequences or because they don't feel it is their place
- Subtle forms of racism can easily go unnoticed with many bystanders failing to recognize certain behaviours or terms as being offensive
- Workers have reported instances of being excluded or treated differently because of their race, thus creating a sense of [disconnect from co-workers](#)



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Discussion

What is your personal experience with this topic?

- Have you ever witnessed this behaviour? Did you do anything in the moment?
- Do you think people are becoming more aware of the negative impact this has on a workplace environment or community?
- Have you ever questioned certain behaviours in your own mind but decided there was too much risk to your own reputation to speak up?
- Are you ever afraid to offend someone so you avoid conversations on the topic altogether?



Strategies to stop racism in its tracks

- Talk about it. Identifying racist behaviours through open discussion can help to eradicate them
- Start stepping in where you know you can make a difference. Studies show that those who are not the subject of bias have [the greatest influence](#)
- Encourage inclusion by creating a culture where [differences are valued](#)

To learn more, visit [the RBC Inclusion Learning Centre](#)



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