



ANSWERING YOUR QUESTIONS:
HOW TO TALK ABOUT
RACISM IN
THE
WORKPLACE



WELCOME TO THE WEBINAR

Welcome to the Webinar

- We have taken the questions you have submitted in advance and organized them into common themes that we will address today.
- You can submit questions during the webinar using the Q&A feature at the bottom of your screen and time permitting, we will address your question(s).
- Next week you will receive a copy of this recorded webinar, the PowerPoint slides and any additional resources we discussed today via email.

Moderator



Marie Gallanar
Parker, Smith & Feek
Principal
Property & Casualty

Q&A Facilitator



Morgan Matz
Parker, Smith & Feek
Account Executive,
Employee Benefits

Introductions – Today’s Panelists

LueRachelle Brim-Atkins

Founder, Brim-Donahoe & Associates



Christopher “CJ” Gross

D&I Consultant, Ascension Worldwide



Karen Lee

CEO, Pioneer Human Services



Today's Discussion

Agenda

- Institutionalized Racism vs. Individual Racism
- The Current Environment
- Communication
- Action Planning
- Diversity & Inclusion
- Resources

Defining Institutionalized Racism

with LueRachelle Brim-Atkins

The ways in which institutional policies and practices create different outcomes for different racial groups.

- These policies may never mention any racial group, but their effect is to create advantages for whites and oppression and disadvantage for People of Color (POC).

Examples where the rules change for whites & POC:

- A criminal justice system that penalizes POC more harshly for committing the same crimes as whites.
- Legacy admissions for whites while Affirmative Action for POC dismissed as "reverse racism".
- POC drug use as a crime; white drug use as a health issue needing rehabilitation.
- "Red lining" that restricted the ability of POC to get home loans.
- A child welfare system that intervenes more often in the lives of families of color.

How do you keep political views out of the conversation about racism in the workplace?

with CJ Gross

- Know what you stand for and share that with our employees.
- Set the agenda for the conversation.
- Focus on developing a plan moving forward with actionable initiatives and a timeline.

Should our company make a statement?

with CJ Gross

- **Think about WHY you are making a statement.**
- **If you make a statement, it needs to come from the CEO/Board of Directors with deliverables:**
 - Make a change, make impact
 - Form a committee, create accountability
- **Don't make a "template" statement**

How do we create an action plan to address racism in the workplace?

- **Recruiting & Hiring Policies**
 - Dress codes (“professional”), hair policies (can’t discriminate against natural hairstyles in CA), etc.
- **How to evaluate your policies**
 - If we were to change this policy, what do we really want to see happen?
 - Who do we consult about the impact of the policy?
 - What are some negative consequences if we change it?
What are some negative consequences if we don’t change it?

How do we call out racism in the workplace?

- Train employees on how to identify racist statements, behaviors, policies, practices and procedures and hold them accountable.
- If you have policies in place you can more easily address issues when they arise.

- **Consider hiring an expert**
- **Start with addressing unconscious bias**
 - Everyone has some bias about another group
- **Small group discussions**
- **Acknowledge the uncomfortable conversations**
- **Establish ground rules or norms during training**
 - For example; no shaming or blaming

- **Start at the top**
- **Assess your data**
 - Review your climate surveys.
 - Is it disaggregated by race and does it ask penetrating questions?
 - If you have a Diversity & Inclusion committee, what have they recommended?
 - How are African Americans represented in your workforce?

- If you don't have one, create a committee/taskforce.
- Develop a plan with measurable goals and timelines.
- Provide employees with a safe place to voice their concerns.
- Enforced by CEO and Board of Directors.

How do we create an inclusive work environment?

with CJ Gross



Invest in Training

- **Diversity AND Race & Social Justice Training**
 - Start with leadership.
 - Why diversity leads to innovation and inclusion to higher employee retention.
 - Modeling “inclusive behavior” in meetings and daily interactions.
 - Every employee can be part of the solution.
- **Create Employee Resource Groups**

How do we develop a more diverse workforce?

with Karen Lee

- Focus diversity efforts on those furthest from opportunity.
- Consistently convene focus groups.
- Assess your current demographics with a climate survey.
- Evaluate your hiring practices for disparate impacts.

Key takeaways and starting the conversation?



Entrepreneur.com Article

- Ask your employees what the company could do better to address racism in the workplace, in the local community and in the USA.
- Ask your employees what experiences they have had within the company, if any, that made them feel that race was a factor.
- Ask your employees if they feel leadership within the company — however “leadership” is defined — has exhibited racist behaviors. If so, how?
- Ask your employees if there are any business practices — HR, operations, philanthropic, logistical, etc. — the company does that they think contributes to or enforces racist behavior or attitudes.
- Ask your employees if they think discussing race is a “safe” topic at work. ¹

. Bernard Boudreaux is the deputy director of Georgetown’s Business for Impact program, these are the five questions he suggests you ask employees as reported in a June 5th article by staff writer Francis Dodd in an article entitled, “How Should You Be Talking With Employees About Racism?”

What resources are available to develop
a long-lasting plan?

Resources Continued

- Thinking Fast and Thinking Slow by Daniel Kahneman
- Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking by Malcolm Gladwell
- Training on Unconscious Bias/Brain Science: Implicit Association Test (IAT)
<https://implicit.harvard.edu/>
- The New York Times 1619 Project:
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/14/magazine/1619-america-slavery.html>
- National Museum of African American History & Culture - Talking About Race:
<https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race>
- How to be Anti-Racist:
<https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/topics/being-antiracist>
- Bias: <https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/topics/bias>
- Creating an Inclusive Workplace: <https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/hr-magazine/0418/pages/6-steps-for-building-an-inclusive-workplace.aspx>

Resources Continued

- Entrepreneur: How Should You Be Talking With Employees About Racism?
<https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/351522>
- Get Uncomfortable: How Leaders Can Discuss Racism in the Workplace:
<https://www.bizjournals.com/orlando/news/2020/06/08/how-leaders-can-discuss-racism-in-the-workplace.html>
- Check with your Employee Assistance Program – many of them have resources available for trainings.

Contact the Consultants

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Thank you!



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