



An Allies' 10 Step Guide: Anti-Racism in the Workplace

This guide has been written by anti-racist allies for all those who want to begin their journey. It's been shaped by the many in our Collective that have experienced racism, however we've not relied on the labour of racially oppressed groups to create it.

As a white person who has never experienced racism; talking and writing about antiracism used to be something I felt wasn't my place. However, the more I worked alongside the incredible anti-racists in our Collective who also experience racism, the more I was challenged out of that belief.

An important step in my anti-racism journey was to find the places that my voice and actions are needed - not always welcome necessarily - but needed.

Today, when talking about anti-racism I am frequently met with suspicion - both from people who experience racism - and those who don't. Frankly, with all the performative allyship and profiteering from the oppression of others that is going on today, I would be worried if this didn't happen. As a future anti-racism ally; it's important to understand that suspicion, questioning and at times, criticism are to be expected - for good reason.

As a future anti-racist, know that you won't be able to stand up under any kind of scrutiny unless you have been on a deep, at times painful, journey. You'll unpack all of your biases, assumptions, prejudices, things you take for granted and all the things you feel about race and racism.

At a point this will all come together into **the part you have personally played in racism.**

If, like me, you've spent your life fiercely believing that you are 'not racist', this is an important and horrifying moment that will change you forever. You have seen what so many haven't seen - or refuse to see - and you won't be able to unsee it. Once you have reached this point, you will see the world through new eyes and it will look ugly, everywhere you turn. It could take days, weeks, months or years for you to reach this point, but until you have reached it, you must keep going. Pick the book up again, re-watch the video, re-read the post, and listen to the podcast again and again until you get there.

I say 'moment' and 'point' but coming to terms with the part you have personally played in racism can last for a long time. It's likely you'll walk around, in stark realisation, reeling for days, weeks, months even. Process those feelings, let the waves come.

You'll know that any pain you feel is nothing compared to the pain of having the racism you experience every day ignored, minimised and denied by many, over and over again. Also know that sharing your feelings during this stage with people who experience racism may not be met with understanding and patience; I would expect the phrase "What the hell took you so long?" may be the first feeling they'd get.

"What damage have you caused whilst you were resting in privilege?" will be playing vividly on your own mind during this stage - but likely on the minds of those who experience racism too. Don't seek reassurance and comfort from those who have been hurt by racism, but do find some support. It could be a group, a paid educator or coach, or it could be a solitary journey you choose, relying on antiracist educators in books and online.

In a world where racism hurts and kills every day, meeting a self-proclaimed ally who has done minimal work and stopped at the point of discomfort, hurts people deeply.

Anti-racism has no place for allies who are in it for themselves.

Keep going every day, keep reading, keep being courageous and please, no matter how hard it gets at times, never give up.

A Note About Terms

In this playbook we use various terms to describe groups that have historically (and currently) been marginalised because of their race or ethnicity. Some of the terms we use, whether speaking as the GEC or in quotes, such as BAME (Black and Minority Ethnic), POC (People of Colour), BIPOC (Black and Indigenous People of Colour), Minority Ethnic and Black Community can all cause offence.

Regardless of how widely terms are used - it's important to understand that every individual has their own preferences for terms. Always aim to explain your use of terms and ask, wherever possible, for an individual's own personal preference.

Be open to being corrected, say thank you, and keep learning.

1. Understanding the Movement

Anti-racism activists, like most activists, are angry and frustrated about injustice, and the terms used can feel provocative.

Terms like 'white privilege', 'white supremacy', 'white fragility' and 'racist' can jar, especially if you are at the stage of your journey where you are not ready to hear these terms applied to you, personally.

The terms used in anti-racism are *designed* to be provocative because the people using them are trying to start a dialogue about an issue they feel is not getting the attention it deserves. It's crucial that you don't let certain terms turn you away from trying to understand the wider points being made.

Entering the world of anti-racism can be confronting. The first challenge is to understand your place, what you should (and shouldn't) do, say or talk about. The second is where to begin seeking education, and the third challenge is educating yourself.

The overarching challenge is to *stick with it* until you have changed yourself to become anti-racist.

Becoming anti-racist involves pushing through the discomfort and confronting yourself.

Anti-racism is *active*, not passive.

It's not what you think - it's what you *do*.

It's about acting to stop, dismantle, disrupt, question, challenge, educate, explain, reach out, refuse... These things take courage and understanding - neither of which will come overnight. If you reach a point where you're missing the courage or understanding to act, dig into it, work through it until you get there.

Ultimately, becoming anti-racist requires you to get to a place where you can place yourself personally somewhere on the journey towards anti racism, and then begin to *act against* racism. This action begins with educating yourself and getting to a place of understanding systemic racism - and the part you have played in it.

2. Understanding Institutional or Systemic Racism

Systemic racism is a western world that has been set up for white people, without also centering the other races and ethnicities that live in it.

The western world has been set up by white people, for white people.

Historically and even today, white people were at the centre of the design of the majority of our systems (government, healthcare, education, infrastructure, housing...).

If white people are at the centre of our systemic design - and other races or ethnicities are *not* at the centre - then they are in the margins. This is what the term 'marginalised' refers to.

The consequences of marginalisation in the UK means living in a country whose core social systems and infrastructure have been built with someone else in mind. As a result of marginalisation, minority ethnic groups are suffering, losing out, missing out, being overlooked and being forgotten about, omitted and passed over at every turn.

Their histories are being ignored in our classrooms and re-written in our text-books.

Their past and present struggles are minimised or dismissed.

They are either underrepresented, misrepresented or stereotyped by our country's media.

They are being killed and are dying at a disproportionate rate, their children are being killed and are dying at a disproportionate rate.

Their data is incomplete, or missing.

This is systemic racism.

Here are 10 examples of racism in some of our UK systems:

1. Black women in the UK are [five times](#) more likely than white women to die during childbirth. Asian women are [twice](#) as likely to die during childbirth.
2. The latest [MBRACE report](#) shows that whilst the rate of newborn baby deaths in the UK shows an overall steady decline of 10%, newborn baby deaths have *increased* for Black or Black British and Asian or Asian British babies over the same period.
3. Over [70%](#) of ethnic minority workers say that they have experienced racial harassment at work in the last five years. [28%](#) of participants who reported experiencing racism at work reported having to take a period of sick leave.
4. Over 40% of those who reported a racist incident said they were either ignored, or that they had subsequently been identified as a 'trouble maker'.
5. [Over half](#) of Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Black African children in the UK are growing up in poverty.
6. A [sizable number](#) of universities give statistically significantly fewer offers to black applicants and applicants from the most disadvantaged areas.
7. Government [research](#) highlights that there's systemic racism at play with predicted grades, which may affect university offers;
"the least accurate predictions were for Black applicants where only 39.13% of grades were predicted accurately."

8. In 2018-19 in the UK, Black people were more than [nine times](#) as likely to be stopped and searched by police as white people. Black people were more than [five times](#) as likely to have force used against them by police as white people.
9. [A quarter](#) of the prison population comes from BAME backgrounds, despite representing just 14% of the population. In [young offenders institutions](#), this increases to 50%.
10. Of course, some people argue that this must be because Black and minority ethnic people commit more crimes. Former Met Chief Superintendent Victor Olisa puts it plainly;

“There is a growing practice of officers handcuffing young black boys who have not been arrested and are not resisting or showing any signs of aggression, before they start searching them.

This is a worrying development of a practice that seems to reinforce the stereotype that conflates blackness with dangerousness: black boys are considered ‘dangerous’ and so have to be restrained in a way that is humiliating and degrading, without a rational justification.

Black boys are treated as police ‘property’ whilst their white friends that are with them are treated very differently, with courtesy and respect.

Former Met Chief Superintendent Victor Olisa in [The Guardian](#)

Flip any of the above examples so that white people are on the marginalised side. Now imagine the level of urgent action that would be taken if this data about *white* people surfaced.

3. What is White Privilege?

As humans, because something happens a certain way for us, we can automatically presume that it happens the same for everyone else.

Things white people take for granted can be barriers for people of a different race or ethnicity. Without meaning any harm, people can wrongly presume that everyone has the same opportunities and access.

Privilege has got a lot to do with the fact that what’s normal, every-day or unremarkable to a white person, may not be so to a person of a different race or ethnicity.

Some of the things white people take for granted are struggles or barriers for people without the advantages white people gain, simply because of the colour of their skin.

Here are 5 statements:

1. I can put my name on my CV or application without worrying whether it will count against me.
2. I can get in my car and attend an interview without being stopped on the way, or use public transport to attend an interview without people avoiding the seats next to me.
3. I can get access to my floor in my building to get to my interview without being excessively scrutinised and /or accompanied by security.
4. I can expect to see someone similar to me on the interview panel.
5. I can represent my skills and abilities adequately through a traditional interview process without wondering whether my skin colour was the deciding factor from the moment I stepped in.

Which of these statements were you able to say “yes” to?

Most white people take the 5 things above for granted - without even noticing them as privileges - but not everyone can.

The simple every-day advantages white people have due to not being judged or limited because of their race or ethnicity, is described as white privilege.

You may not think of it as privilege because to you it may feel like “just going about normal life”. But to a person without it, it is very much an advantage - it’s a privilege that they simply do not have.

To be clear, white privilege does not mean “rich”. Nor does it mean you have never had struggles in life - it means that the colour of your skin has not been one of them.

One of the first places to begin your anti-racism journey is understanding your own privilege. If you are white or white-passing, once you can get to a place where you can say “I have white privilege” you have taken an important step towards being able to tackle racism in the workplace and beyond.

If society were equal, we would all be equally privileged, but let’s assume for the moment that this will take a while; what can you do about your privilege? The answer is that you can become conscious of it.

4. Conscious Privilege

Consider these seven examples of white privilege adapted for the workplace from [White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack](#) Peggy McIntosh:

1. Taking it for granted that when you're entering a place of work, you will be granted access without a fuss and won't be followed.
2. Knowing that if you ask to speak to a client, a customer or the manager, you'll probably be facing someone of your own race.
3. Being able to attend professional functions and events without wondering whether you will be the only person of your razor ethnicity in attendance.
4. Assuming that if you accept a job, your colleagues, clients and customers will be accepting, inclusive or neutral toward you.
5. Being able to do well in a challenging situation without being called a credit to my race.
6. Never being asked to speak for all the people of my racial group.
7. Being able to consume [news](#), [movies](#) and [TV](#) which is biased towards my own race.

- Do you benefit from any of these privileges?
- Did you think of them as privileges before?
- Will you think of them as privileges now?

Conscious privilege is simply being aware that some of the things which you take for granted, place you at a starting advantage over others.

It's understanding that not everybody has the same privileges as you, and being aware of this as you go about everyday life.

Cultivating a mindset of conscious privilege means letting go of assumptions, actively seeking education, familiarising yourself with the disadvantages that people of different races and ethnicities face in everyday life, and being much more aware of race in your daily dealings.

5. What is White Supremacy?

To most white people, white supremacy conjures up horrifying associations: the KKK, the far right, the lynching and beating of Black people, hooligans with swastika tattoos...

Some activists like Layla F Saad, author of [Me and White Supremacy](#), refer to the outcome of white privilege and systemic racism as white supremacy. This accusation is levelled at you, if you are white and not acting to stop it. It's levelled at all white people if they are not acting to stop it. Even if they would never act to harm a person of colour, that is not the problem activists today are describing. The problem they are trying to bring to light is **people passively benefitting from a system which is fundamentally unfair**. White people passively doing nothing is the problem now. The point being made is that whilst they might not act to directly

harm a person of colour, would they act to stop further harm? *Are they acting right now to stop further harm?*

White people (as a whole) are the beneficiaries of the unequal world we live in and accept. Not acting means reaping the benefits from a world where Black and minority ethnic people are oppressed and “losing” and white people are supreme and “winning”.

Boiling it down, going along with those advantages that you are afforded due to your white skin is benefitting from white supremacy.

The narrative in the anti-racism community today is “if you are not with us, you are against us”.

This association of you with white supremacy is provocative - it's supposed to be. It makes most white people want to jump up and shout “that's not me!” - that's good - that's the point anti-racism activists are trying to make with this evocative positioning of you alongside white supremacy. The outcome needed is for you to jump up and move as far away from that association as you can.

In the past, there used to be other places to run, for example the “I'm not racist” camp. The “I'm not racist” camp has gone now. If you try to run from anti-racists by proclaiming “I'm not racist” you are exposing yourself as being uneducated in the anti-racism of today.

The only remaining escape from the accusation of racism now is to run to the only remaining camp; Anti Racist.

6. Anti-Racism

Today activism has moved on and there are only two choices left:

Racist

Anti-racist

The point being that if you are *not* a white supremacist, if you are *not* racist, get up and run to another camp; there's only one.

Anti-racism is not “not being racist”.

In the past many (white) people considered racism an active thing - a racist actively hates, a racist thinks or says bad things, a racist acts to exclude, discriminate, defame.

Today the tables have turned, the movement has moved on; racism is now passive.

Today's racism is doing nothing. By doing nothing today, you can be seen as happily reaping the benefits of an oppressive, racist system. Many today see that as standing resolutely in the racist camp.

But there's a level worse, doing nothing is marginally better than denying white privilege - or lessening white privilege (by claiming that other factors make you just as oppressed).

So what sort of things can you do to become Anti-racist?

It starts with tuning in your senses to racism, both active and passive.

Once you have understood the role you have played in systemic racism, find the language you need to speak up - and be ready for some difficult conversations.

Be ready to take on the role of educator where you need to. Pick up the baton from people of colour and take the conversation forward as an ally where it's needed.

Speak up for people who experience racism when they are not around, especially asking *why* they are not around; on panels, in meetings, in CV piles, in rooms where decisions are being made.

Speaking up as an ally when people who experience racism are not around is much more useful than piling in when they are already speaking up for themselves.

WATCH

[Coming to Terms With Racism's Inertia: Ancestral Accountability](#) Rachel Cargle

[Let's get to the root of racial injustice](#) Megan Ming Francis

7. What is White Fragility and Centering?

When you hear the term white fragility, just like white supremacy, it can feel jarring. The use of the word "white" is used as a huge generalisation, to lump you in with "all the others", and calling you fragile...what's that about?

It can feel instinctive to jump up and defend yourself and shout “not me!”. Well, that’s white fragility.

Essentially white fragility boils down to being in denial and getting angry and acting defensively when faced with information and facts about the current racial inequality of the western world.

White fragility is responding to a protest about the injustices of the world causing disproportionate deaths of Black people with “all lives matter”.

It’s responding to the highlighting of systematic racism in the country we all share by saying “I’m not racist” and walking off in a huff.

I’m no longer engaging with white people on the topic of race. Not all white people, just the vast majority who refuse to accept the legitimacy of structural racism and its symptoms. I can no longer engage with the gulf of an emotional disconnect that white people display when a person of colour articulates their experience. You can see their eyes shut down and harden. It’s like treacle is poured into their ears, blocking up their ear canals. It’s like they can no longer hear us.

From [Why I’m No Longer Talking to White People about Race](#) Reni Eddo-Lodge

All lives matter

White lives matter. Black lives matter. All lives matter. Of course they do, but can you see why saying “all lives matter” at a time where racial imbalance is the topic of conversation, comes across as uninformed, or worse, racist?

Imagine it like this - you have 2 kids, one has been given a single piece of popcorn whilst the other has a large tub. The kid with the single piece complains (rightly) that it’s not fair. Upon hearing this complaint, the one with the large tub jumps up and makes just as much fuss as the one with hardly any. The way you would deal with that situation is to ask the kid with the large tub to look around and ask themselves what they are complaining about - they have lots whilst the other has very little, it’s not fair. Your actions would likely be to find a way to even it out; either by sharing the large tub equally or getting the other kid their own large tub.

The kid with the single piece of popcorn is the Black community standing up about the disproportionately high rate of deaths amongst their ethnic group, and the generalised systemic racial inequity of the western world in which they live. The kid with the big tub is a white person waving a white lives matter banner at the Black lives matter rally when the western world is already set up with white lives front and centre.

1. How would *you* explain, in your own words, why “All lives Matter” and “white lives matter” are not appropriate topics of discussion at a time where “Black Lives Matter” is at the forefront of the conversation?
2. Have you seen examples of white fragility during this recent period? How did it make you feel?

The alternative to white fragility is listening, absorbing, reflecting, educating yourself and seeking to understand the points being made.

WATCH

[Dr. Robin DiAngelo discusses 'White Fragility'](#)

[Robin DiAngelo on "White Fragility"](#) Amanpour and Company

READ

[Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People about Race](#) Reni Eddo-Lodge

[Me and White Supremacy](#) Layla F Saad

[White Fragility](#) Robin DiAngelo

8. Unconscious Bias

As human beings, we are all biased to some extent. Mental shortcuts and assumptions help us to make sense of our world. Biases are preferences. Unconscious biases are simply those preferences we are not consciously aware of, and as a result of this, we often act on them unintentionally. It's when these biases are applied to people that we can run into problems.

Our biases act as social filters, which our brains use to make immediate assessments and judgements about the world around us. It is a perfectly natural human process to develop mental shortcuts, they help us to act quickly and learn. But unconscious biases can get in the way when it comes to opening up to diversity.

If you have unconsciously categorised certain groups of people into negative buckets, it can be hard to overcome - because you are probably not consciously aware of it.

Assessing your own biases is the first step to addressing them. Until you become aware of your unconscious biases, you will continue to risk unconsciously acting on them.

[Take an unconscious bias test for race](#)

Your brain is programmed to protect you from the unfamiliar; our society has evolved much faster than our human brains, and as a result, we've still got a bit of primitive brain within us.

Human brains think they're helping us to fight for our survival by protecting us from people who are "not like us" or who we are unfamiliar with. The more humans familiarise themselves with groups and people outside of the groups they have been exposed to growing up, the less they will unconsciously avoid them.

REFLECTION

- How can you as an individual spend more time with people of many different races and ethnicities?
- Where can you look, and who can you ask for help?
- How can you ensure your organisation as a whole becomes more aware of their own unconscious biases around race?

WATCH

[Implicit Bias -- how it affects us and how we push through](#) Melanie Funchess

[How to Outsmart Your Own Unconscious Bias](#) Valerie Alexander

[I Am Not Your Asian Stereotype](#) Canwen Xu

[What does my headscarf mean to you?](#) Yassmin Abdel-Magied

[Microaggressions in Everyday Life](#) Wiley

READ

[What you need to know about Unconscious Bias](#) THE GEC

TOOLS

[Take an unconscious bias test for race](#) Project Implicit

9. Anti-Racism in Recruitment

READ

[Anti-racism toolkit](#) Centre for Ethnicity and Racism Studies

Be aware of your language

Wes, a Graphic Designer told us:

I am always put off when I see an organisation searching for “the best of the best” or the “cream of the crop”. When I read that I immediately think “according to whose judgement?”. In my imagination of those jobs, there’s a white guy who went to a private school, reading the CVs looking for white guys who went to private school. It may not be true - but I have never got one of those jobs. The jobs I go for now are the ones who are looking for “creative thinkers” “disruptors” or “people who think outside the box”. That tells me they’re actively searching for different perspectives than theirs.

Enlist the help of a team in creating job specifications and adverts. Ensure that the team is as diverse as possible and get them to help you make sure your specifications have a wide appeal. Something like job specs may seem trivial, but this is such an important step in the process of gaining diversity in your workforce. You could be turning whole groups away without even realising it.

Using diversity focussed recruiters is crucial. Sticking to the same recruiters who have brought you great people in the past is fine - *if* they are bringing you a great, diverse mix of people. With so many recruiters placing such an emphasis on recruiting for diversity there’s not really an excuse for any recruiters not to be focussing on it, and there’s no excuse for not using one who has great DEI creds.

Insist on Diverse Interview Panels

Walk your talk - if you want to hire a more diverse staff, make sure your commitment to diversity is represented during your interview process.

Diverse candidates are much more likely to join a company when they can interact with similar people who are already there, and can testify to a company’s commitment to diversity. [Experts say](#) one of the biggest deciding factors on whether or not a female candidate accepts a job is if there was a woman on the interview panel. Extrapolating this out to all diverse characteristics from parental status to skin colour is extremely important. Seeing yourself represented at the company can be a huge deciding factor in recruitment.

If you've successfully attracted diverse candidates to apply for a position, their first opportunity to get a real feel for the workplace culture is at interview. However, interviews are subjective; people tend to hire candidates like themselves, so falling into the trap of poor diversity is particularly easy if a panel is one-dimensional.

Advertise Diversity & Inclusion as an Important Part of your Corporate Culture

Diversity is so important that creating and maintaining it shouldn't be a side task or an afterthought, especially in large organisations. Place all of your relevant policies in a prominent position on your website, and refer to them when advertising for roles. If true, state clearly that diversity and inclusion is an important part of your organisation's culture, and clearly explain why.

Create and Nurture Employee Diversity / Affiliation Networks

Employee networks can be a force for effecting real change within organisations. Encouraging employees to come together into groups to champion diversity at a grassroots level is how companies are empowering employees to effect change.

As well as creating a strong sense of empowerment and a feeling of inclusion and belonging in employees, networks can provide employers with invaluable insight into problems and gaps they might not have identified otherwise.

Head to our dedicated resource on this topic to read the GEC Collective's top tips on [How to Set up Diversity and Inclusion Groups for Success](#).

Model Diversity From the Top Down

Organisations need to aim for diversity at the very top of the company. In achieving this they will experience, first hand, what is needed to make diversity happen; from finding and recruiting diverse candidates to creating an environment suitable to retaining and engaging a diverse team. They will also directly experience the benefits a diverse team can bring to an organisation.

Even if the most senior team is not yet as diverse as it could be, they can (and should) still model policies aimed at encouraging diversity. Seeing the most senior members of an organisation exemplifying all the policies they have put in place is the most effective way of embedding them.

An employee is far more likely to take advantage of the flexible work arrangements on offer if they see the executive directors doing it openly and proudly, and talking about it regularly.

10. Inclusion

READ

[What you need to know about Diversity and Inclusion](#) The GEC

Educate yourself

It's likely that you will feel pushback if you ask people hurting from a problem to educate you on why they are hurting. Whilst that may seem counterintuitive to you as a person who is ready to learn, it makes sense for many reasons. Firstly racial inclusion, the history of racism and antiracism are huge topics. It's impossible to adequately get all of the key points as well as all the context across sufficiently in a conversation.

Talking about these topics when you have been personally affected by them is hard enough, but having to debate them with people is plain exhausting. There is so much education available; books, videos, podcasts, essays and articles - it shouldn't need to fall to your employees who experience racism to educate you.

Finally, your education is personal. Every person who properly educates themselves on their part in racism and white supremacy, needs time to react, reflect and process what they have learnt. Going through this in front of the very people who have been directly affected by racism isn't helpful. From the initial resistance and defensiveness to the resulting guilt and shame, it should be done away from the victims of racism. Colleagues and employees who experience racism should be brought into your education, only when you are past the point of accepting the part you have played in racism and are at the stage when you are ready to act.

We recommend that you begin your education with [Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People about Race](#) by Reni Eddo-Lodge and progress to [Me and White Supremacy](#) by Layla F Saad.

It's important to note that simply reading the words in these books is not the outcome that's needed. Read in order to deeply reflect and aim to get to a place of understanding - where you no longer feel defensive about the topic of race and racism, and your position within it.

Workshops/training won't work without foundations

Workshops are brilliant for certain things, building consensus, solving problems, generating ideas, but for anti-racism, a workshop is of little use without firm foundations. Has everyone reached a similar base level of education? Does everyone understand the fundamentals of racism? What are your aims and desired outcomes of running a workshop? What do you hope it will achieve?

Every person who experiences racism is not an expert in educating others. Being born into an minoritised ethnic group doesn't automatically mean you are able to open minds and transform organisational cultures.

Implicitly or explicitly loading the responsibility of bringing the organisation up to speed on such a huge and intensely personal topic as racism, just isn't fair.

There are many many Black and racially minoritised people who can - and want to - educate your organisation on racism and anti-racism however it's important to note that this can't be done in one short training session or workshop. It requires commitment, for it to be the start of an ongoing program of work, and for you to have given yourselves a foundation education first.

No more covering

Inclusion is a sense of belonging. It's a sense of being able to be your whole, true self at work and not only being accepted for it, but *celebrated* and valued for it.

Inclusion is a feeling of adding value, of being able to speak up and put forth ideas without any fear. It's about being remembered, invited, asked for your opinion, consulted, considered and not left out. It's knowing someone has thought about your needs, considered your feelings before acting, asked for your point of view before deciding and viewed your input as important.

Feeling included is not having to "cover" or be less than - or different to - how you would be outside of work. It's not changing the way you speak, dress or do your hair to "fit in".

Belonging is not hiding your sexuality or your relationship, gender, religion, heritage or any other part of your identity.

Belonging is being able to talk about what's important to you, whether that's your family, friends, hobbies or interests. It's being valued and recognised for your contribution, regardless of your differences.

An inclusive culture doesn't happen overnight and requires careful planning, thought and cultivation, but in order to get the best out of your talent, it's crucial that all employees feel included.

Not being the spokesperson

Inclusion does not mean asking a person - or people with a certain characteristic - to speak for everyone in that group. Yes, they will likely feel passionate about the topics of racism and anti-racism but that doesn't mean it is their job to solve racism and create an anti-racist

workplace. That job is everyone's and it's crucial that the initiative has full leadership sponsorship and buy-in.

By all means, asking a group what would make them feel included is great, better still, ask the whole workforce, but be able to disaggregate your data by demographic, so that a certain group doesn't feel singled out and under pressure to "solve" racism.

An individual can only really speak for themselves and asking them to represent their whole group could be seen as unfair, or worse, dodging responsibility. Own the responsibility for creating an anti-racist workplace at leadership level and leave your employees free to contribute if they want, but also leave them free to be included in the rest of the workforce if that's what they choose. Asking a group to be the spokespeople for their race could actually lead to them feeling singled out, "othered" and less included.

Reading List

Essays & Articles

[How White Feminists Oppress Black Women: When Feminism Functions as White Supremacy](#)
Monnica T. Williams, Ph.D., ABPP

[Why I'm No Longer Talking To White People About Race](#) Renni Eddo Lodge in The Guardian

Books to start with

[Me and White Supremacy](#) by Layla F Saad

[Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People about Race](#) by Reni Eddo-Lodge

[White Fragility](#) by Robin DiAngelo

[The Clapback](#) by Elijah Lawal

[So You Want to Talk About Race](#) by Ijeoma Oluo

[How to Be an Antiracist](#) by Ibram X. Kendi

[We Should All Be Feminists](#) by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

[Women, Race, & Class](#) by Angela Davis

[Have Black Lives Ever Mattered?](#) by Mumia Abu-Jamal

People & Organisations to Follow

People to Follow

[Andréa Ranae](#)

[Desiree Adaway](#)

[Rachel Cargle](#)

[Austin Channing Brown](#)

[The Conscious Kid](#)

[Ibram X. Kendi](#)

[Rachel Ricketts](#)

[Layla F. Saad](#)

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