Not all microaggressions are verbal. Sometimes, it's a hostile environment or a person's body language that give away thinly veiled biases. For example, someone acting shocked to walk into a job interview and find that the CEO is a woman. Or, more blatantly, someone changing seats on the subway in an effort to avoid sitting next to someone of another race.

“I don’t see color. We’re all just people.” While this may be intended as a declaration of anti-racism, it dismisses the significance of someone's racial or ethnic identity and their unique experiences related to it.

“Where are you REALLY from?” This assumes that a person does not belong based on their appearance, reinforcing the idea that they are not a true member of their current community.

“That’s so gay.” This uses a person's sexual orientation as a derogatory term, perpetuates harmful stereotypes, and can create a hostile or unwelcoming environment for LGBTQ+ individuals.

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How can you help prevent microaggressions?

- **It starts with you:** Examine how your actions/words may impact others’ feelings. Be open to new ideas and be willing to ask questions that may help you understand other perspectives.

- **Recognition:** We can’t prevent or interrupt what we don’t see. Learn how to recognize microaggressions and ask yourself, “what is the intention of this question or comment?” Is it to build someone up or bring them down?

- **Don’t let it slide:** Confrontation can be intimidating, but if you hear someone else making a harmful remark it’s important to let that person know in a respectful manner their comment was inappropriate. If you hear someone else speaking up, be sure to voice your support as well.

- **Education:** Both a tool of prevention and a tool of change, education can keep microaggressions from occurring to begin with but can also be used as intervention after a microaggression has occurred. Explaining to someone why their comment or action was hurtful can help them to do better in the future.

- **Put yourself in other’s shoes:** Don’t make assumptions that people’s life experiences are the same as yours.
Remember, there is nothing micro about microaggressions.

As an ally, how might you help intervene in the instance that you overhear one coworker partaking in a microaggression aimed at another coworker?

If someone were to confront you for saying something harmful, how could you react in a way that is productive and not defensive?

What are some steps that you can take to recognize bias within yourself?

How might you make your workplace more inclusive, welcoming, and kind towards marginalized groups?

BE4ALL Toolbox Talk
Microaggressions
SURVEY
https://forms.microsoft.com/r/NhbVGb69FY