Helpful Tactics

1. Gather more information
➢ Help me understand more about what you mean?
➢ I'm curious when you first heard that term or phrase?

2. Clarify what you "heard"
➢ I want to make sure I understand your point…you think that…
➢ Are you saying that…
➢ So you feel…
➢ You believe that…

3. Ask the person to walk you through their thought process so you can better understand how they came to their assumptions and conclusions
➢ Can you help me understand how you came to that conclusion?
➢ What has been your experience that led you to that conclusion?
➢ What assumptions are underneath your conclusion?

4. Focus the discussion on the PROCESS of the discussion
➢ I noticed that we tend to spend more time talking about these issues, and far less time talking about these other ones…
➢ I'm noticing that the only time we talk about ____ is when I bring it up…
➢ It seems that whenever we start talking about ____, someone changes the topic back to something else.
➢ I've noticed that when we are discussing _____, a number of folks look down, start writing notes…I'm curious what others have noticed?

5. Name the group's process or dynamic and shift the focus to be more inclusive
➢ We've talked about how this policy could impact people of color and white women….I'm wondering how it may impact GLBT employees across gender and race?
➢ I'm noticing that whenever we talk about race, whites turn and ask a question of one of the people of color. I'd like to hear from some of the whites in the room: What do you notice that whites, as a group, tend to say, do, and feel around issues of race in the workplace?
➢ This has been a great discussion about the chilly climate for women and men of color. I don't want to move off this too soon, and I also want to make sure we have time to have a similar conversation related to dynamics of age and length of service in the organization…

6. Give the "benefit of the doubt"
➢ You probably already thought of this… You probably noticed that…
➢ An unintended outcome of that idea could be that…
➢ I know you didn't intend this, but when you have a side conversation while I'm speaking….

7. If you think someone misunderstood or is misrepresenting what you said

> I believe I said something different than that…What I said was…

8. Recognize comments and behaviors that help create greater inclusion before you give further feedback

> I appreciate the several best practices you've gathered for us to review, and I was wondering if there also were some that more specifically address…

> I appreciate your working to be inclusive in your language…and I understand the term "GLBT" to be more inclusive and current than "homosexuals"

9. Acknowledge the accumulative impact of what you are experiencing

> I know I'm having a strong reaction to what you said….and this is only one of many times I have heard similar comments recently….OR .and, as you know, this seems to be a pattern we keep running into that creates an obstacle…

10. Ask questions to raise their awareness

> When did you decide/choose to be heterosexual?

> What are some of the ways that Christianity is embedded in the way we interact and in the policies and practices of our nation? Organization?

11. Invite others to get engaged in the dialogue

> I'm curious what others are thinking? What other ideas do people have?

> Name your reaction and test to see where others are: I'm feeling unsettled about this possibility, is anyone else?

> Ask if others feel differently than what is being proposed: This is one way we could proceed. Does anyone have a different suggestion?

> Ask others to take the "pulse" of the situation and reflect on the process: I'm curious what people are noticing about our group dynamics?

> Ask if others have heard and experienced the situation as you did: That scene in the video hit me as Islamaphobic…What do others think?

12. How to Confront Repeated Inappropriate Behaviors… 1st, 2nd, 3rd time…

1st time:
- Describe the behavior you observed
- State what you want to be different: I'd appreciate it if you'd…

 2nd time:
- Describe the behavior: I believe this is the 2nd time we've talked about this…
- Be clear about the impact: This is the IMPACT when you do that…
- State what you need to change: I need you to change your behavior….

3rd time:
- Give clear consequences if they continue this behavior:
  This is the 3rd time I've asked you to… If you do this again…

13. Questions to explore possible and unintended (hopefully) exclusionary practices and attitudes in planning and decision-making discussions:

- Do we have the full breadth of social identity groups and perspectives at the table? Involved in the process?
- Does our process seriously consider the input and perspectives of a broad range of group memberships?
- How might our unconscious attitudes and assumptions about _____ be playing out in this decision?
- What could be the impact of this on students, staff, and faculty from various and multiple dominant and subordinated groups?
- How might this inadvertently advantage some and disadvantage others?
- How can we make this inclusive for members of various and multiple group memberships?

14. Partial List of Social Identity Groups

ableness/disability	geographic region	religion/spiritual practice
age	gender identity/expression	sexual orientation
athleticism	hierarchical level	skin color; physical features
biological sex	job function	size/appearance
citizenship status	marital/relational status	use of English (fluency, accents)
economic class	national origin	veteran status
educational level	parental status	years of experience
ethnicity/culture	race	

15. Diagnosing Dominant and Subordinated Group Dynamics
Use the following prompts to diagnose the potential privileged and marginalized group dynamics as you analyze a recent situation, case study, etc.

1. What are the various group memberships of the people involved, and which privileged and marginalized group memberships seem central to this situation?
2. What are the probable perspectives and feelings of each party?
3. How might unconscious attitudes, assumptions, and bias be playing out in this situation?
4. What are the possible privileged and marginalized group behaviors and dynamics in the situation?
5. What organizational issues are relevant in this situation, such as formal and informal policies, norms, procedures, organizational practices, etc.
6. What are the probable outcomes if this situation is left unaddressed? For members of marginalized groups? Members of privileged groups? For the team? For the organization?
7. Given your diagnosis, what and/or who should be the focus of a response and why?
8. What might be some effective ways to respond? And by whom?
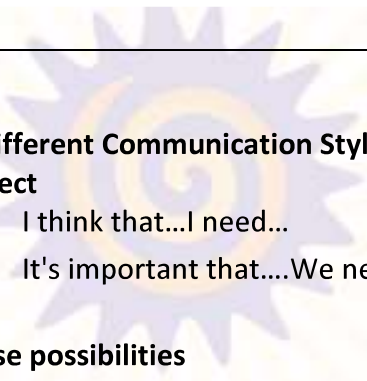
16. Different Communication Styles
a. Direct
  ➢ I think that…I need…
  ➢ It's important that….We need to…

b. Pose possibilities
  ➢ It might be useful…
  ➢ I'd suggest we consider…
  ➢ One way to proceed could be….

c. Competing style
  ➢ State your thought or opinion right after another person, no connection
  ➢ I think…Well I think….My idea is to…this is how we should proceed…

d. Debating style
  ➢ Reference the other person's ideas in order to negate them or disagree with them

e. Connecting style
  ➢ Acknowledge what was said by others
  ➢ Connect your comment to theirs
  ➢ Build on what has been said, i.e., Connected to what you're saying; Building on that
     thought; Similar to what she said, I think; I like your idea and another way to go   about
     this is…

f. Engaging style
  ➢ If a direct statement is made, ask a question to gather more information, deepen
     understanding, gain time to respond…
  ➢ Tell me more..
  ➢ Can you give me an example?
  ➢ What's your intended outcome? your intent behind that?
  ➢ How might that impact others?
  ➢ What's your thinking behind how that helps us meet our goal?

How to be an Ally: Things to Keep in Mind

A. Avoid Common Dialogue Pitfalls

1. PLEs ~ Perfectly Logical Explanations
2. Yea, but….
3. That happens to me/my group, too….
4. I know someone who… and they don't agree with you….
5. I don't see it that way; therefore, it doesn't really happen…
6. That doesn't happen to me... (so it doesn't exist)
7. Don't you think that…
8. You're overreacting… you're too sensitive…
9. He/she's a good person… they never meant to do that….
10. That was not my intent! You misunderstood me!

B. Be Aware of Cumulative Impact

This concept occurs when a subordinated group member experiences repeated negative oppressive incidents, either in a short period of time or over a long period. Their feelings of anger, fear, distrust, frustration, etc., may build up and then they might "over-react" and respond out of cumulative impact for a number of reasons, including:

- it is not safe for them to challenge the people who treated them negatively

- they are tired of intervening and trying to educate others

A good ally understands that many subordinated group members may be carrying the cumulative impact of a long series of negative treatment. If they seem irritated or unusually upset, the ally tries to not take it personally, but instead, tries to offer support to the subordinated group member by:

- acknowledging the degree of feelings the subordinated group member is experiencing

- offering to listen to stories of how the person has been negatively treated (without interrupting, arguing, justifying, or trying to "give advice" and "fix it")

- asking if there is anything they can do to be supportive

C. Recognize Intent AND Impact

When a member of a dominant group says/does something hurtful or inappropriate, their tendency is to want to EXPLAIN their INTENT (I didn't mean it! It was just a joke! I didn't do it on purpose...). However, the pain and hurt, the IMPACT, is still very real to the subordinated group members.

A good ALLY first acknowledges their impact, apologizes, and asks to hear more about how they have negatively impacted the subordinated group member. And then asks how they can help, be supportive, make amends, avoid similar transgressions in the future, etc.

D. Recognize Varying Levels of Differential Risk and Credibility

It is important that all people, subordinated and dominant group members, work to intervene and stop oppression wherever they see it. AND dominant group members are generally given more credibility, listened to more seriously, and have fewer risks when they intervene, as compared to members of subordinated groups. A good ally consistently recognizes opportunities to speak up and intervene, knowing that it is their responsibility to take action, regardless of the risks involved.

E. Recognize and Use your Discretionary Power

All people have some personal power, and possibly position power from which to speak up and intervene. They have the discretion/the choice of when or how or if to intervene. Dominant/dominant group members tend to have MORE discretionary power, given how often they are in positions of authority, and because of the greater credibility they have in society.

F. Distinguishing Behavior

Most dominant group members will be perceived as "just another man...white...administrator" UNTIL they show THROUGH THEIR ACTIONS that they are actively working as an ally against oppression. When dominant group members speak up and intervene, they DISTINGUISH themselves from the overall dominant group who generally both consciously and unconsciously perpetuate oppression.

G. Intervening in Oppressive Situations

Good allies take the initiative to try to STOP inappropriate behaviors and situations. They then look for ways to EDUCATE the person(s) who made the comment/took the action, in hopes that they may learn why what they did was harmful, and to not repeat it in the future. Allies also offer SUPPORT to the target of the negative treatment when possible.

Adapted from materials developed by Elsie Y. Cross Associates