

Verbal Safety Training

A training designed to be practical and highly-participatory, supporting colleagues to apply communication theory to real-life situations, develop their own message and practice assertive communication techniques. The training reflects on the importance of combatting discrimination and harassment and examines individual roles in doing that. Looking at real-life situations and through practical exercises, teams will learn theory relating to verbal communication and body language.

WHY EMBRACE DIVERSITY?



Diverse teams perform better!

WHY CALL OUT INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOURS?

- As a witness, failure to speak up is enabling harassment and/or discrimination.
- All of us have a duty to demonstrate zero tolerance, by speaking up so assertive action can be taken.
- There is no such thing as a neutral response to these incidents.

WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS TO SPEAKING UP?

- Feeling isolated - speaking up is easier when you know others in the room have the same expectations as you.
- Lack of response - knowing what you want to say but not how to say it.
- Fear of retaliation - it is important to be clear in your response to avoid escalation of a volatile situation.

Defining Communication Types

PASSIVE COMMUNICATION

Ignoring your own rights.

- Not expressing feelings or needs;
- Deferring to others for decision making to avoid tension or conflict
- Can lead to misunderstanding, built up anger, or resentment.

“I’m really sorry to bring this up, I know you don’t mean any harm. I don’t want to come across as over-sensitive, but would it be OK to use a different word?”

AGRESSIVE COMMUNICATION

Ignoring others’ rights.

- Expressing feelings, needs, and ideas at the expense of others;
- Defensive or hostile when confronted by others
- Can alienate and hurt others

“How dare you use that word?! Do you not know how offensive it is? That is totally unacceptable. Don’t ever let me hear you say anything like that again.”

PASSIVE-AGRESSIVE COMMUNICATION

Lacking or masking honesty.

- Appearing passive on the surface, but subtly acting out anger
- Exerting control by using sarcasm and indirect communication, or avoiding the conversation

“Wow! I’m not even going to bother asking you to use a different word, it’s not like you’re going to change anytime soon. I guess I’ll just have to put up with it.”

ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION

Equal respect for rights.

- Direct, honest communication of thoughts and feelings
- Respecting the needs of others while also asserting your own
- Usually, most effective

“I’ve heard you use that word before. I find it hurtful and other colleagues might be hurt by it too. Please stop using it, so we can work better together.”

Conducting an Employee Training

1

When to speak out?

Defining appropriate responses to difficult situations.

2

Barriers to speaking up.

Exploring the why colleagues may not speak out.

3

Speaking out effectively.

Understanding different communication styles.

4

Developing your message.

Creating a script based on assertive communication.

5

Practice!

Applying your message to example scenarios.

“The external trainer was brilliant, very engaging and understood the problem.”

“Really liked the feeling of the workshop, very safe and encouraging atmosphere - Very engaging & informative session. Should be part of all employee on-boardings.”

“Great opportunity to practice a simple method in situations that felt 'real' for our industry.”

“It should be compulsory for everyone.”

“Open discussion to understand the best way to approach certain situations.”

“Great workshop, run in a safe space so that it doesn't feel like being dictated to on difficult topics.”

Interested in hosting your own Verbal Safety Training?

This material was kindly produced and delivered by Charlie Dalrymple for ABInBev UK Ltd.