



## Facilitator's Guide: Rebuttal and Redirection Strategies for Race Based Conversations

### **When comments are off topic:**

"Thank you for your comments you mention great points but that is a conversation that deserves more time to unpack. Let's table it for another time."

"I appreciate your input although you made some interesting points it seems we are a tad off topic. We are focusing on \_\_\_\_\_ specifically, your point is too broad to for this conversation."

"Your input in this space is valuable and appreciated however we are discussing equity in a broader sense, focusing on systems rather than individual experiences. In order to make the most of our time together, lets discuss your points further in the session or at a later time."

### **When becoming short on time**

Remember Step Up, Step Back

"Thank you for sharing. I do not mean to interrupt but we are short on time and have a few more points on our agenda to get to. Let's move to the next question."

"I appreciate you sharing. We will be discussing that topic more in depth later in the conversation, lets come back to it."

Before asking the question to remind the group of time restrictions.

"We are running out of time but have a few more points to discuss I'm inviting you to keep comments as short and concise as possible to make space for everyone who wants to share."

### **When a person stumbles over their words (discomfort or they feel attacked)**

"I appreciate you being vulnerable, we recognize that this is a space for learning, so you do not have to have the exact words. So, in the best way that you can, could you rephrase your concerns?"

"What I'm hearing from you is... (explain what it sounds like they are saying) ...is that accurate?"

### **When someone says "ouch" after a harmful statement**

"I am sorry that my (or their) word choice made you uncomfortable. If you are willing, could you share what you found harmful about the comment? Thank you for sharing I will be sure to do better moving forward. Is there anyone else who felt this way? How could we do better in the future?"

### **When someone says things like "I am not a racist, or this is reverse racism!" and begins deterring the conversation.**

"Please know that in this space we are not assigning labels to anyone. Concerns were raised because of the statement you made not who you are as a person. Challenging racist ideas is not based on how nice a person is, it's



about the ways in which racist tropes, stereotypes, or biases are reinforced at an individual and systemic level. The comments you made reinforced those racist ideas.”

“In this space we challenge those ideas as they perpetuate harm. We are in the process of learning how to better communicate with each other regarding bias. If you are open to the conversation, we would like to offer more appropriate and respectful ways to address those concerns. If you are not open to a conversation on how to share your thoughts in a less harmful way then this is not the space for you as we value respect for human dignity, equity, and social inclusion your language is not reflective of those values.”

### **When there is silence (lack of participation)**

“I recognize that this conversation topic can be challenging. I'd like to remind you all that this is a space for learning. No one is expected to have all the answers, but we hope that you would lean into discomfort, take a risk, and offer your input because without it this conversation will be very difficult to have.”

Try sharing as the facilitator first!

Count to six seconds in your head to give audience time to sit and silence and decide to speak.

“The majority of our time together will be spent having dialogue. A dialogue is an exchange of ideas rather than an attempt to persuade beliefs or prove someone wrong. Please know that in this space we welcome all ideas, even the ideas that you may not feel are completely thought out. We can process through together.”

### **Called out as a Facilitator? Model accountability.**

Acknowledge your harm.

“Please accept my sincerest apologies, I did not intend to cause you harm or make you feel uncomfortable. I appreciate you sharing how my comments made you feel. Thank you for seeing me as someone worth having the conversation with.”

Share how you will do better moving forward.

“I will be sure not to use that language moving forward.”

“I will be sure to better educate myself on the topic.”

Don't get defensive. Instead seek understanding through:

Asking clarifying questions.

“If you are open to it, could you share how I could do better? I want to be more accountable.”

“Thank you, if I made anyone else feel this way, please let me know.”

Avoid blaming others, instead gather input from the group.

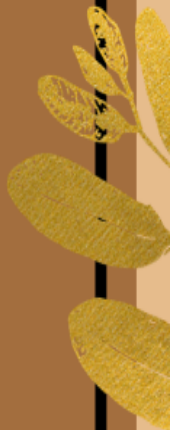


# TRAINING

FACILITATION GUIDE NOTES



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# TRAINING

Creating Equality

FACILITATION GUIDE NOTES



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