Just one person speaking up can inspire others to do the same.

**OUCH! That Stereotype Hurts**

Communicating Respectfully in a Diverse World

**Participant Handout**

Based on the book by Leslie C. Aguilar

Produced and Distributed by Joel Leskowitz, SunShower Learning

© 2007, International Training and Development, LLC

Your voice will make a difference.
OUCH! That Stereotype Hurts

Goal

Explore communication skills for promoting inclusion and respect in the workplace.

Objectives

■ Understand the impact of stereotypes and biased statements, even when casually said.
■ Identify the most common reasons people sit silent in the face of bias and stereotypes.
■ Enhance skills for speaking up against stereotypes without blame or guilt.
■ Establish effective ways to communicate.
■ How to move forward.

Definitions

Diversity

■ Used broadly to refer to many demographic variables, including, but not limited to race, religion, color, gender, national origin, disability, age, sexual-orientation, education, geographic origin & skill characteristics.

Stereotypes

■ An oversimplified image or statement applied to a whole group of people, without regard for the individual.

Bias

■ A predisposition to see events, people or items in a positive or negative way. Bias is an attitude or belief.

Silent Collusion

■ To go along with through silence.

Ally

■ Someone who speaks up on behalf of someone else.
Speaking Up Activity

**Directions:** You will see ten quick vignettes. Decide which technique or techniques each vignette demonstrates. Circle the technique(s) used.

1. "Look, I know you meant that to be funny, but it hurts."
   - Assume Good Intent and Explain Impact
   - Ask a Question
   - Interrupt and Redirect
   - Broaden to Universal Human Behavior
   - Make It Individual
   - Say Ouch!

2. "I'm not so sure that's a guy thing. I think that applies to both men and women."
   - Assume Good Intent and Explain Impact
   - Ask a Question
   - Interrupt and Redirect
   - Broaden to Universal Human Behavior
   - Make It Individual
   - Say Ouch!

3. "I'm not sure I caught that. What were you saying?"
   - Do you mean that?"
   - "Uh, what are you saying, man?"
   - Assume Good Intent and Explain Impact
   - Ask a Question
   - Interrupt and Redirect
   - Broaden to Universal Human Behavior
   - Make It Individual
   - Say Ouch!

4. "So, did you hear the one about the three bald men?"
   - Careful there, ladies, I resemble that remark."
   - Assume Good Intent and Explain Impact
   - Ask a Question
   - Interrupt and Redirect
   - Broaden to Universal Human Behavior
   - Make It Individual
   - Say Ouch!

5. "Those people don't even try to speak English."
   - You sound frustrated. What happened? Was there someone you couldn't understand?"
   - Assume Good Intent and Explain Impact
   - Ask a Question
   - Interrupt and Redirect
   - Broaden to Universal Human Behavior
   - Make It Individual
   - Say Ouch!

©2007, International Training and Development, LLC – All Rights Reserved
"I think she's great. I just don't want to put her in a situation where she can fail."

"I know you mean well, but now you're not giving her a chance at all."

"The baby boomers won't have the level of tech savvy we need. We need to recruit young kids right out of school."

"Well, let's not assume that all the young people will have the skills we need and others won't. Let's test everyone's skill and then make a decision based on the results."

"I think these kids just can't be trusted."

"I don't think that's an age thing. Do you know any people our age who aren't trustworthy?"

"So, about the holiday schedule."

"Let Jenny work the holiday shift. She's single; she doesn't have family."

"Ouch!"

"What do you mean?"

"I know that you're trying to help out the other employees, but is that fair to Jenny?"

"OK, that went really well. That wraps things up, is that right?"

"We really need someone who is young and energetic for this job."

"It sounds like you're saying an older person couldn't do this job. Is that what you mean?"

"Well, not necessarily, but they really have to have a lot of energy, deal with the public, lift heavy things."

"So what I'm hearing you say is we need someone who can lift heavy things, and who has a lot of energy to deal with the public."

"Exactly."

"OK, we'll look for those qualifications regardless of the person's age."

"Well, okay, yeah."
**Key Learning Points**

**Stereotypes** exist and are prevalent in our society. Stereotypes are oversimplified images and statements applied to a whole group of people, without regard for the individual.

**Bias** is a predisposition to see certain things, events or people in a positive or negative way.

**No one person or group owns bias or stereotyping.** The same person can be both recipient and sender of biased statements.

**Stereotypes touch every person** – we may send stereotypes, be the recipient or target of stereotypical statements, or we may be a bystander witnessing stereotypes. We either speak up or stay silent in the face of stereotypes and other biased statements.

There are many **reasons people remain silent** in the face of stereotypes or other biased statements, even if they’d like to speak up – embarrassment and discomfort, fear of social isolation or negative implications, or they don’t know what to say.

When we remain silent in the face of stereotypes and other disrespectful comments, others interpret this as agreement or support. This is called **silent collusion** – to go along with through silence.

There ARE ways to speak up without blaming or shaming the other person. The key is to **assume the other person is a decent human being** and did not intend harm.

**Anyone can speak up** in the face of demeaning or stereotypical comments. You don’t have to be the boss. A simple phrase or question on your part can turn a conversation from destructive to productive.

An **ally** is someone who speaks up on behalf of someone else. Sometimes as a bystander, you have more power to influence change than does the targeted person, who may not be present, may feel powerless to speak up, or may be stunned into silence.

One voice – **your voice** – can make a difference. So, go ahead, **speak up on behalf of respect:**

- **Assume Good Intent and Explain Impact**
- **Ask a Question**
- **Interrupt and Redirect**
- **Broaden to Universal Human Behavior**
- **Make It Individual**
- **Say Ouch!**

©2007, International Training and Development, LLC – All Rights Reserved

OUCH! That Stereotype Hurts