



How to Talk About Race with Your Employees

Social justice and racial equality are more than just hot topics on social media. Employees are talking about these issues in the workplace, and employers can bolster their diversity, equity and inclusion efforts by providing a safe space for workers to have respectful and honest conversations.

The Society for Human Resource Management's (SHRM's) recent report, *The Journey to Equity and Inclusion*, found a need for more awareness in the workplace about racial inequality. Significantly, almost half of Black HR professionals (47 percent) said they do not feel safe voicing their opinions about racial justice issues in the workplace, while only a little more than one-quarter of white HR professionals (28 percent) say the same. Black and white workers generally agreed, however, that discussions about race can be uncomfortable.

"But by thoughtfully cultivating these discussions and implementing what is learned, HR and other business leaders can guide our workplaces into a new era of honesty, respect, understanding and inclusion," said SHRM President and Chief Executive Officer Johnny C. Taylor, Jr., SHRM-SCP, in the report's foreword.

Read the rest of the article:

[Creating a Safe Space at Work for Discussing Social Justice Topics \(www.shrm.org/ResourcesAndTools/legal-and-compliance/employment-law/Pages/Creating-a-Safe-Space-at-Work-for-Discussing-Social-Justice-Topics.aspx\)](http://www.shrm.org/ResourcesAndTools/legal-and-compliance/employment-law/Pages/Creating-a-Safe-Space-at-Work-for-Discussing-Social-Justice-Topics.aspx)

SHRM | Aug 2020

[Companies Try a New Approach to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Honest Conversations \(www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/hr-news/Pages/a-new-approach-to-diversity-equity-and-inclusion.aspx\)](http://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/hr-news/Pages/a-new-approach-to-diversity-equity-and-inclusion.aspx)

[Addressing Racism Starts with Having Hard, Respectful Conversations \(www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/behavioral-competencies/global-and-cultural-effectiveness/pages/addressing-racism-starts-with-having-hard-respectful-conversations.aspx\)](http://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/behavioral-competencies/global-and-cultural-effectiveness/pages/addressing-racism-starts-with-having-hard-respectful-conversations.aspx)

[It's Time to Talk About Race \(www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/employee-relations/humanity-into-hr/pages/it-is-time-to-talk-about-race.aspx\)](http://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/employee-relations/humanity-into-hr/pages/it-is-time-to-talk-about-race.aspx)

[Don't Be Silent: Expert Tips to Defuse Workplace Tensions \(www.shrm.org/ResourcesAndTools/hr-topics/employee-relations/Pages/Dont-Be-Silent-Expert-Tips-to-Defuse-Workplace-Tensions.aspx\)](http://www.shrm.org/ResourcesAndTools/hr-topics/employee-relations/Pages/Dont-Be-Silent-Expert-Tips-to-Defuse-Workplace-Tensions.aspx)

Tips for Discussing Racial Injustice in the Workplace (www.shrm.org/ResourcesAndTools/hr-topics/behavioral-competencies/global-and-cultural-effectiveness/Pages/Tips-for-Discussing-Racial-Injustice-in-the-Workplace.aspx)
SHRM | Summer 2020

Please complete the brief survey near the bottom of this page.

“Understanding race and race equity is a process,” says Lisa Brown Alexander, president and CEO of Nonprofit HR. “Most people are socialized around certain beliefs and perceptions, and it's not easy to unpack those overnight. So admitting that you're at the beginning is the first step. Admitting you don't know something is hard, but the kind of tenacity that you need to build your business is the same kind of tenacity you need for understanding race and race equity in today's climate.”

How Should You Be Talking With Employees About Racism? (<https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/351522>)
Entrepreneur | Jun 2020

It's easy to speculate about how you will lead and respond during a crisis. It's easy to talk about how you'll rise to the moment because a theoretical crisis—or a hypothetical one—is easier. But we are not in a theoretical time. This is not a moment of hypotheticals. The crisis is here, and your leadership moment is now. If you deem yourself a leader, you know this moment of global protests and the fight for equality doesn't exist in some vacuum outside your organization or outside your area of influence. You know you must lean in and own your power to lead now.

George Floyd And Racism: 5 Conversations Credible Leaders Must Have In This Moment (<https://www.forbes.com/sites/terinaallen/2020/06/04/george-floyd-and-racism-5-conversations-credible-leaders-must-have-in-this-moment/#38b43e8f686c>)
Forbes | Jun 2020

No matter your racial, political, or other identity, these events are almost impossible to escape. In particular, millions of Black people and their allies are hurting. And these issues are not ones that organizations or their leaders — from CEOs at the top of the hierarchy to team managers on the frontline — can ignore.

U.S. Businesses Must Take Meaningful Action Against Racism (<https://hbr.org/2020/06/u-s-businesses-must-take-meaningful-action-against-racism>)
Harvard Business Review | Jun 2020

it's important to address the current events. Use this moment to reiterate company values, and to take a stand against racism and police violence. Make it clear that you are committed to making changes that promote equality, justice and fair treatment for all.

What managers should—and shouldn't—do to address this moment of racial reckoning (<https://www.cnbc.com/2020/06/03/what-managers-should-and-should-not-do-to-address-moment-of-racial-reckoning.html>)
CNBC | Jun 2020

Be prepared to understand how your own experience, because of your race and background, will shape what you bring to and take from the conversation.

Talking about racial inequality at work is difficult—here are tips to do it thoughtfully (<https://www.cnbc.com/2020/06/05/how-to-thoughtfully-talk-about-racial-inequality-with-your-coworkers.html>)

CNBC | Jun 2020

World-wide protests against racism and police brutality, sparked by the death of George Floyd, have shown the consequences and high cost of a workplace culture that lacks accountability. Creating a culture of accountability requires leadership that is ready to listen. Without a "listen-up" culture that protects employees from retaliation, organizations can't expect their employees to speak-up.

3 Steps to Create a "Listen-Up" Culture of Accountability (<https://www.navexglobal.com/blog/article/three-steps-to-create-a-listen-up-culture-of-accountability/>)

Navex Global | Jun 2020

Educate Yourself

The National Museum of African American History & Culture today released Talking About Race, a web portal designed to provide free educational resources and tools from scholars, activists, historians, and more with the goal of teaching everyone how to have conversations about race and racism.

The African American History Museum Wants to Help You Talk About Race and Racism (<https://www.washingtonian.com/2020/06/01/nmaahc-african-american-history-museum-talking-about-race-web-portal/>)

Washingtonian | Jun 2020

Several Antiracist Books Are Selling Out. Here's What Else Black Booksellers and Publishers Say You Should Read (<https://time.com/5846732/books-to-read-about-anti-racism/>)

Time | Jun 2020

Social Justice and Liberation Centered Books, Websites and Articles (<https://www.inclusivetherapists.com/resources>)
Inclusive Therapists

8 anti-racist classes and workshops to take (<https://www.wellandgood.com/good-advice/anti-racism-workshops-classes/>)

Well + Good | Jun 2020

Get conversation starters around racial equity and inclusion to help you take action in your workplace at Together Forward @Work (<https://togetherforwardatwork.shrm.org/>).

Index of COVID-19 Express Requests

Reopening Your Workplace

Reopening Your Workplace: Overviews (<https://shrm.org/ResourcesAndTools/tools-and-samples/exreq/Pages/Details.aspx?Erid=1580>)