

COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS

TIP SHEET

Courageous Conversations are about engaging in an open dialogue on topics that can be difficult to broach, such as discrimination and inequalities.

Courageous Conversations are a powerful practice to help everyone feel included. These conversations break down barriers and build bridges across differences, and help us understand others' views and behaviour. These conversations can increase our understanding and empathy, and lead to healthier, more productive relationships. Importantly, the onus should not fall on the less empowered person to initiate a courageous conversation.

Courageous Conversations don't necessarily require an agenda, a problem to be solved, or an explicit goal. Their purpose can be as simple as getting to know someone better. Regardless of the context, consider the following guidelines before entering into a courageous conversation.

Tips on Having Courageous Conversations



Assess the situation – Does it warrant a discussion? What obstacles may arise?



Address real or perceived obstacles.



Be aware of emotions – Listen with empathy and share feedback calmly.



Assume positive intent – Put judgement aside.



Focus on dialogue – Do not enter a debate.



Demonstrate personal and cultural humility.



Be vulnerable, transparent and willing to admit mistakes.



Create a trusting, safe space.



Expect and accept lack of closure.



Fully commit to the conversation by embracing differences.

Content from A Curated Research Report by The Centre for Women and Business at Bentley University
[Intersectionality in the Workplace: Broadening the Lens of Inclusion](#)

