



RACE & SOCIAL JUSTICE
INITIATIVE

ADVANCE OPPORTUNITY.
ACHIEVE EQUITY.

Building Story

Creating effective narratives
to talk about race and racism

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GOVERNING FOR
RACIAL EQUITY



Goals for the Workshop

- Develop our own story to advance our work in racial equity.
- Use tools and tips to create a more effective narrative to talk about race and racism.



Introductions:

- Your name.
- What brought you to this conference.
- Your race / ethnicity – per EEO-1 reporting:
White, Black or African American,
American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian,
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander,
Hispanic or Latino.
- Your ancestry – how you self-identify in other ways.



Workshop Expectations:

- What are you expecting to take away from this session?



Strengths / Challenges:

- What are the strengths you bring to talking about race and racism?
- What are your personal challenges in talking about race and racism?
- *Directions:*
 - Share answers with one other person.
 - Join with another pair and share again.



My Story / My Message Discussion:

For People of Color:

- What might we want to include in our story?

For White People:

- What might we want to include in our story?



My Story / My Message Elevator Speech:

Directions:

- Form groups of three.
- Take 2-3 minutes individually to think about your story:
Address this question: “What is the impact of race and racism on me?”
- Share your story in your group.



Clarity of Message*

Directions:

- Form small groups.
- Take 3 minutes as a group to develop a story supported by the media headline that you've been handed.
- Share your story with the large group.

* Adapted from materials of Applied Research Center



Here are the media headlines for the groups to use:

- ***Rat bites baby in tenement***
- ***Mother fights to keep baby safe***
- ***Substandard housing: danger for families***
- ***City's housing policies create unsafe conditions***

[Note: This slide should NOT be shown to participants during the actual exercise. Participants should not see the other groups' headlines until the facilitators ask groups to share their stories.]



Clarity of Message – Shifting the Storyline*:

- Personal responsibility → Institutional accountability
- Race-silent → Race-explicit
- People of color as victims → Change agents
- Universal frame → Universal + Equity

* Source: Applied Research Center



Tools and Tips:

1. Find common ground.

Explain “shared fate” in racially-explicit terms.

2. Reframe victims and perpetrators. Take on the “race wedge.”



Tools and Tips:

- 3. Keep your message clear and consistent.**
- 4. Describe problems and solutions in emotional terms.**



Tools and Tips:

5. Focus on desired results.

6. Avoid moral superiority.

Don't be a “smarty pants.”



Applying Tools and Tips:

- Find a partner to work with.
- Take 3 minutes to work individually.
Use one of the tools and tips to write an opening for your conversation.
- Share your opening with your partner and ask for feedback.
- Be prepared to share what you learned.



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Next Steps:

“It is not our differences but our silence about our differences that separate us.”

Audrey Lord



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