



dynastihunt
San Francisco, California



1/8

5 DO'S AND DON'TS FOR WHITE LEADERS AND COLLEAGUES DISCUSSING RACISM AT WORK TODAY

**(AND A NOTE TO BLACK COLLEAGUES AND
COLLEAGUES OF COLOR)**

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01

BE MINDFUL OF OPENING UP MEETINGS AND INTERACTIONS WITH QUESTIONS LIKE " HOW ARE YOU?" OR "HOW WAS YOUR WEEKEND?"

Recognize that by doing so, you can potentially be re-triggering what your Black colleagues are experiencing or dismissing their experience by pretending all is normal. It's not and hasn't been for a long time.

02

DO ACKNOWLEDGE WHAT IS HAPPENING AND SHARE YOUR EMPATHY.

This is an important one because to fail to acknowledge what is happening sends a message that it does not matter nor do Black people's emotions matter. There are too many organizations who are planning to say nothing today. Do not let that be yours.

03

DO ASK BLACK COLLEAGUES IF THEY WOULD LIKE TO MAKE SPACE TO DISCUSS FIRST BEFORE MAKING SPACE.

In organization-wide meetings, team meetings, and even individual conversations, once you've acknowledged what's happening, don't just leap into discussion. It is important that you ask if Black people (not white people) if they would like further discussion space or not as not everyone is comfortable, ready, or simply wants to discuss at work. Plus, think of it this way: if you are a Black person who has 8 meetings in a day and every meeting automatically opens with discussion, think about how exhausting and burdensome that can be.

04

IF BLACK COLLEAGUES SAY YES TO WANTING TO MAKE SPACE, A QUICK LIST OF DO'S AND DON'T'S FOR THE DISCUSSION (MAINLY DON'TS):

- Do listen.
- Don't keep saying I'm sorry and putting the burden on Black colleagues to respond.
- Don't ask to be educated on racism, why something is, or their opinion on x that is happening. In fact, don't ask to be educated at all.
- Don't take up the space with how you are now "burdened" or "feel helpless". It is not your time.
- Don't ask if you have done anything racist or take space attempting whether or not you are one of the "good ones".
- Don't force us to share if we don't want to. Not every Black person speaks for every other Black person. Some may want to share and others may not. Don't force them to or look for them to do so.

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05

WHITE CEOS AND EXECUTIVE LEADERS: IF YOU ARE SENDING AN INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL RESPONSE OUT, ASK BLACK COLLEAGUES IN YOUR ORGANIZATION IF THEY WOULD BE WILLING TO ENGAGE IN WHAT IS SHARED

I want to name this as it is critical to begin including Black voices and perspectives in these conversations from the very beginning and truly listening, not debating, what a response should look like.

Be prepared if:

1. Black Colleagues decline if they are feeling burdened. They are not required to be or become your token voice,
1. If and when the response conversation turns to a question of "What's Next?" Because it should. It will. And it **should** happen.

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Black Leaders and Colleagues: A Few Do's and Don'ts for You

- Do remember self-care first in these moments.
- Do take all of the space or none of the space that you need.
- Don't feel pressured to speak.
- Don't feel pressured to carry the black voice at work.
- Don't take more burden on than you can carry.

People of Color Leaders and
Colleagues:
A Few Do's and Don'ts for You

- Do remember that sharing acknowledgement and empathy is critical.
- Don't equate your experience to the Black American experience. Acknowledgment is also acknowledging that it is different.
- Don't become the " Black voice" for your team if you work in an organization where there are no black colleagues or leaders.

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