



## Direct Action: Challenging Workplace Discrimination

Speaking up against discriminatory behaviour can feel daunting, but with the right tools and language, you can make a real difference. This resource provides practical strategies using the Direct Action technique from Active Bystander Intervention training.

### 10 Practical Strategies for Direct Action

Action	Description	Example
<b>1. Reference company values</b>	Link your response to organisational values to ground your intervention in shared principles.	"Our company promotes respect and inclusion, that comment doesn't reflect that."
<b>2. Use policies as a reminder</b>	Refer to workplace policies or training to remove the personal element and focus on collective agreements.	"We all agreed to use inclusive language; that phrase goes against it."
<b>3. Reinforce organisational culture</b>	Remind others of your shared goals and frame the intervention as protecting something everyone values.	"That doesn't fit with the culture we're trying to build here."
<b>4. Speak from your experience</b>	If safe to do so, express how the behaviour affects you or others using "I" statements to humanise the impact.	"I felt uncomfortable when that was said."
<b>5. Focus on impact, not intent</b>	Highlight the effect of the behaviour and name it rather than debating intent. This keeps conversations constructive and avoids defensive reactions.	"When you said/did XXX, it made me feel XXX."
<b>6. Ask clarifying questions</b>	Questions invite reflection without causing confrontation and often help people recognise their own bias.	"What do you mean by that?" or "Could you explain that?"

# BWYS Active Bystander Resource



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<b>7. Reference company values</b>	Link your response to organisational values to ground your intervention in shared principles.	"Our company promotes respect and inclusion, that comment doesn't reflect that."
<b>8. Be clear and direct</b>	When appropriate, name the behaviour and set a clear boundary using calm, assertive language.	"That comment is not acceptable."
<b>9. Reinforce organisational culture</b>	Only confront if you feel safe. You can still act later through organisational routes or by offering private support to those affected. Being an active bystander doesn't mean putting yourself at risk.	
<b>10. Follow up and model inclusion</b>	After taking action, check in with those affected, share resources, and model inclusive behaviour. Ongoing engagement shows that allyship is active, not occasional.	

**Remember: Direct Action** is one of five Active Bystander approaches. You don't need to be perfect -you just need to be willing to speak up. Every intervention, no matter how small, contributes to building a more inclusive and respectful workplace culture.

