

What I Should Have Said: Calling Out and Calling In

Definitions (adapted from Rodriguez-Cayro, 2018)

Calling out: Publicly giving feedback to someone about their potentially problematic or oppressive behavior, performative in nature.

Calling in: Talking with someone privately about their problematic or oppressive behavior. Considered less reactionary than “calling out.”

Part I: Ask participants to independently free-write about a time in which they encountered bias in a personal (nonwork) setting. They should respond to the following prompts:

1. Describe the context. Where were you? Who was there? When did this happen?

2. What happened?

3. How did you respond?

4. How could you have “called out” the person enacting bias or oppression?

5. How could you have “called in” the person enacting bias or oppression?

Part II: Ask participants to form groups of four to five. In their groups, they will do the following:

1. Discuss the experience that they wrote about.
2. Choose one of the experiences to act out.
3. Create a skit with a narrator and actors. The skit will have three parts: 1) the event, 2) What I said, 3) a reenactment of the event in which the main character “calls out” the offender, 4) a reenactment of the event in which the main character “calls in” the offender.

Part III: Each group will perform all four acts of their skit in front of the larger group. Each will be followed by a discussion using the following prompt:

Which of the three endings would have been most likely to end in positive change?

Part IV: First in the same small groups from the skits and then in a large group, discuss the following questions:

1. What is the result of “calling out”? What is the value in “calling out”?
2. What is the result of “calling in”? What is the value in “calling in”?
3. How can we decide when to do which?
4. How can we overcome the tendency to remain silent?
5. What impact does this have on our students?