

HOW TO BE AN UPSTANDER

Before completing this sheet, watch the video that introduces this topic. You can watch it [here](#). After watching the video, return to this sheet to review how to be an upstander and complete the exercise on the following page.



What is an upstander?

An upstander is someone who speaks or acts to support an individual or cause, particularly someone who intervenes on behalf of a person being attacked or bullied (Facing History & Ourselves, n.d.).

Why is being an upstander important in the workplace?

1 Upstanders play a crucial role in creating a safer and more inclusive environment. When individuals stand up against wrongdoing, they send a message that harmful behaviors are unacceptable.



2 Bad behavior won't get better on its own. If you allow the behavior to happen, it opens the floodgate for more of the same or worse behavior in the workplace.

SEE
SOMETHING

SAY
SOMETHING

DO
SOMETHING

Sharpen your skills and understand that...

Small actions can significantly impact stopping or preventing harm. There is always something that can be done.

Learn the 5 D's for Upstander Intervention

THE 5 D'S OF UPSTANDER INTERVENTION

In every conflict you always have a choice in how you engage. The 5 D's are upstander tactics that can be adopted to address inappropriate behavior. The 5 D's are the choices one always has if they are in a position to be an upstander.

1 DIRECT

2 DISTRACT

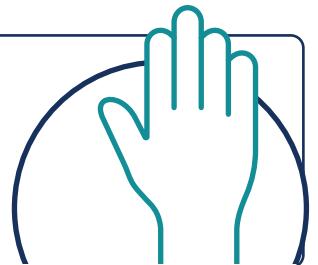
3 DELEGATE

4 DELAY

5 DOCUMENT

UPSTANDER TIP

As upstanders, we might naturally gravitate towards a default intervention method among the 5 D's (Direct, Distract, Delegate, Delay, Document). It's important to remember that it's not just about what feels comfortable or familiar; it's about what's most effective and appropriate in the moment. Try to reflect on and practice all 5 D's and step out of your comfort zones.



References:

American Psychological Association. *Bystander intervention tip sheet*. Retrieved December 24, 2023 from <https://www.apa.org/pi/health-equity/bystander-intervention>.
Facing History & Ourselves. *Upstander*. Retrieved December 24, 2023, from www.facinghistory.org/upstander.
Sue, D.W., et al. (2021). *Microintervention strategies: What you can do to disarm and dismantle individual and systemic racism and bias*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
Upstander Project. *Are you an upstander?* Retrieved December 24, 2023, from <http://upstanderproject.org>

THE 5 D'S OF UPSTANDER INTERVENTION

D

1 DIRECT

Take immediate action to confront the situation head-on when it is safe to do so. *The DIRECT method involves a straightforward confrontation, and the approach should be assertive and respectful.*

D

2 DISTRACT

Shift the focus away from the targeted person to help disengage or de-escalate the situation. *The DISTRACT method focuses on defusing or re-directing attention. The approach can be subtle but should be casual and non-confrontational.*

D

3 DELEGATE

Identify an individual in a position of authority who can better handle the situation. *The DELEGATE approach communicates the issue to the delegate, ensuring they understand the severity. This approach collaboratively communicates all relevant information.*

D

4 DELAY

Implement when immediate intervention is not possible, safe, or effective. *The DELAY approach addresses the issue in a supportive and considerate way with the affected person at a more suitable time. This approach is characterized by empathy and understanding.*

D

5 DOCUMENT

Record or capture information about incidents of bullying, harassment, and discrimination.

The DOCUMENT approach is crucial for accountability and instrumental in future interventions or legal proceedings. Documentation should be objective and thorough.

When employing any of the 5 D's of upstander training (Direct, Distract, Delegate, Delay, Document), remember that "Document" should be a constant component, regardless of the initial approach chosen. Think of it as a safety net that captures the essence of your intervention efforts, providing a factual basis for future reference, learning, and accountability. By documenting the situation, actions taken, and outcomes, you ensure that every step towards addressing injustice is anchored in a record that can guide subsequent actions, support future interventions, and contribute to a culture of transparency and responsibility. This practice reinforces the impact of your immediate actions and sets the foundation for a sustained commitment to upstander behavior.

Analyzing the 5 D's in action

Examine the scenario below that depicts a situation requiring intervention. Read the scenario carefully and discuss as a team. Identify the problem depicted in this scenario and consider the factors that might influence the choice of intervention.

SCENARIO 1

It is a typical busy day in the veterinary clinic. Dr. Sandel overhears a heated conversation between Alex, a senior veterinary technician, and Max, a relatively new and younger team member. Alex openly criticizes Max's approach to treating a reactive cat, using an unprofessional tone bordering on harassment. The exchange is within earshot of other staff and a few pet owners in the waiting area, creating a tense atmosphere.

DIRECT and DOCUMENT*

Dr. Sandel steps in immediately, asking to speak with Max privately. In a calm and firm tone, she addresses the behavior she witnessed, explaining why it is unacceptable and how it contradicts the clinic's values of teamwork and respect. She emphasizes the importance of constructive feedback and offers to facilitate a more productive conversation between Alex and Max.

DISTRACT and DOCUMENT*

Dr. Sandel interrupts the conversation by asking Alex for assistance with an urgent matter, effectively diffusing the immediate tension and removing Max from the situation.

DELEGATE and DOCUMENT*

Recognizing the need for a more systemic approach, Dr. Sandel uses the Delegate strategy by involving the clinic's HR department or leadership team. She reports the incident and asks for their expertise in handling the situation, ensuring that proper protocols are followed and that both parties receive appropriate guidance and support.

DELAY and DOCUMENT*

When Dr. Sandel cannot intervene directly due to being in the middle of a critical procedure, she chooses the delay approach. She makes a mental note to check in with Max later, providing support and discussing how to address the incident.

***DOCUMENT**—The documentation provides a clear record that can be referred to in future training, policy updates, or if further incidents occur. It also serves as a basis for constructive feedback during performance evaluations, contributing to personal and professional growth.

Analyzing the 5 D's in action

Examine the scenario below that depicts a situation requiring intervention. Read the scenario carefully and discuss as a team. Identify the problem depicted in this scenario and consider the factors that might influence the choice of intervention.

SCENARIO 2

One afternoon, a well-respected veterinarian, Dr. Green, notices a tense situation in the reception area at a small community veterinary clinic. A long-time client, Mr. Davis, is raising his voice at Michael, a new receptionist, over a billing misunderstanding. The situation is uncomfortable, and other clients in the waiting area are starting to take notice.

What would you do?

DIRECT and DOCUMENT* _____

DISTRACT and DOCUMENT* _____

DELEGATE and DOCUMENT* _____

DELAY and DOCUMENT* _____

***DOCUMENT**—The documentation provides a clear record that can be referred to in future training, policy updates, or if further incidents occur. It also serves as a basis for constructive feedback during performance evaluations, contributing to personal and professional growth.