

## **The Process of Bystander Intervention**

### **1. Recognize the bias or microaggression.**

While overtly biased words and actions can be fairly self-evident, the more common implicit biases and microaggressions can be subtle and therefore harder to recognize.

### **2. Determine whether and how to act**

In deciding what to do, consider the needs and wishes of the victim and the costs and benefits of taking action in the moment versus later.

### **3. Act:**

#### **A. Name the behavior you are observing.**

Make explicit what the concern is.

#### **B. Provide your appraisal.**

Use “I” expressions rather than “you” expressions, e.g., “I believe that comment was not appropriate” versus “You shouldn’t have said that.”

#### **C. Express what you’d like to have happen.**

Provide a clear idea of what is needed to resolve the issue. Remember that the goal is to change problematic behavior.

#### **D. Acknowledge intent versus effect**

People make mistakes—the person may have spoken hastily or not be aware of how their words or actions are biased. However, the effect on the victim is what ultimately needs to be addressed.

#### **E. Call people “in” rather than “out”.**

Rather than put the person on the defensive, invite them to work with you to resolve the issue.

#### **F. Save face.**

Offer choices that give room for the person to acknowledge and correct their error without shaming them. “Let’s try something different. Here are a couple of options. How might we proceed?”

#### **G. Reflect on the outcome.**

Consider how effective the intervention was and how others were impacted by it. What worked and what would you do differently next time?

Adapted from Florida International University’s Bystander Leadership Training  
<https://advance.fiu.edu/our-programs/bystander-leadership/index.html>