
MEN AS ALLIES TO WOMEN: PRO-ACTIVE RESPONSES TO SEXUAL HARASSMENT

1. Educate yourself.
2. Ask specific and blunt questions. “How did that make you feel?”, “Do you want me to do something?”, “How would you like me to respond next time that happens?” Keep asking the questions recognizing that the victim may not want to talk about the incident immediately.
3. Be willing to hear anger.
4. Be aware of the potential for paternalism and overprotection.
5. Listen, listen, listen.
6. Prepare yourself in advance. Educate yourself on violence against women in your own culture as well as the culture where you now live.
7. Use your relationships with other men as having the potential to influence.
8. Recognize that you don’t understand. Don’t make comments like, “Well men get raped too”.
9. Confront the perpetrator so the victim doesn’t have to.
10. Live without something that your female colleagues/friends can’t have or do.
11. Build individual, institutional and global capacity to fight this problem.
12. Watch what kind of jokes you make. It is far too easy just to laugh and go along with things. While women may laugh and act flattered when you and others make jokes such as “Well I wonder how many cows you are worth”, realize that they may be doing that because they don’t know what else to do. And while it may be funny and flattering sometimes and even most of the time, it is not always so.
13. Confront inappropriate behavior.
14. Be strong enough to go against the accepted/expected behavior of your gender. Be willing to “be a wimp”.
15. Find ways to be empathetic.
16. Consider the impact of this kind of behavior or a specific act on someone close to you.
17. Normalize discussions on harassment at orientations and in the organization in general.
18. Recognize the magnitude of the problem.
19. Recognize and appreciate your privilege, that walking down the street can be quite a different experience for you than it is for someone else.
20. When you see a woman walking alone at night, cross over to the other side so that she doesn’t have to.
21. Remember how hard it might be for a woman to ask you to walk her home. Realize that it takes a lot of humility to admit to being powerless. Offer to walk with her instead of waiting to be asked.
22. Be alert to situations of harassment and discrimination.
23. Find an authority.
24. Be pro-active. Remember that non-action signifies compliance. The choice to sit passively by is granted to you by your position of power.