

BIPOC Key Concepts & Terminology Workplace Guide



PURPOSE

This guide aims to highlight various terminology and key concepts relevant to common topics and challenges that are in connection to BIPOC experiences in a workplace context. These concepts are heavily informed through the lens of experiences common to Black employees but also can be experienced by other individuals who identify as BIPOC or from other historically excluded groups.

TERMINOLOGY & KEY CONCEPTS GUIDE

Core Terminology in Race Discussions Rooted in Social Justice Movements

Term	Definition & Resource
Anti-Black Racism	<p>Definition: The specific structural, individual, and systemic barriers rooted in the discrimination and oppression of Black people.</p> <p>Resources: Anti-Black Racism Resources Anti-Racism Company Sample Statement Sourcing Candidates Through Anti-Racist Lens</p>
BIPOC	<p>Definition: A term used to describe an individual who is non-white and stands for Black, Indigenous, or Person of Colour. Both Black and Indigenous are emphasized specifically as two identity groups that have historically experienced more marginalization and oppression within society.</p> <p>Resources: BIPOC Further Defined Resources to Support BIPOC Women Additional Readings on Experiences of BIPOC Women at Work</p>
Black Lives Matter (BLM)	<p>Definition: A global social justice movement focused on correcting systemic barriers in relation to fighting anti-Black racism and police brutality.</p> <p>Resources: Black Lives Matter Resources Racial Equity Principals</p>
Intersectionality	<p>Definition: A framework used to explain the unique experiences individuals face based on overlapping identities. It was first coined in 1989 by Dr. Kimberlé Crenshaw in a General Motors case to highlight the unique discrimination that Black women faced in comparison to the experiences of Black men and white women.</p> <p>Resources: Intersectionality Tips Intersectionality Further Defined</p>

Oppression	<p>Definition: The unjust treatment and exercise of power over individuals from historically excluded backgrounds that is rooted in structural and systemic barriers.</p> <p>Resources: Books Focused on Systemic Racism Anti-Oppression Resources</p>
Privilege	<p>Definition: The unearned advantages that some individuals receive based on their belonging to certain social groups. These individuals are usually currently or historically been part of the dominant group or culture within a social setting.</p> <p>Resources: Systems of Oppression & Privilege Talking About Privilege at Work</p>
Race	<p>Definition: A social construct created to divide humans into groups based on physical characteristics and social qualities that have been historically used to rank superiority within a given society.</p> <p>Resources: Evolving Terminology on Race Canada Specific Race Related Resources Myths About White Supremacy</p>
Systemic Barriers	<p>Definition: The discriminatory and historical challenges faced by members of marginalized communities when navigating various contexts of society in terms of receiving unequal access, support and treatment.</p> <p>Resources: (See Anti-Black Racism)</p>

Key Concepts Related to Stereotypes, Bias, Prejudice and Discrimination at Work

Term	Definition & Resource
Angry Black Woman Trope	<p>Definition: A stereotype that depicts Black women as more aggressive, hostile, illogical and quick tempered than other individuals in similar contexts.</p> <p>Resources: Combating the Angry Black Woman Trope Harmful Stereotypes & Black Women</p>
Bias	<p>Definition: Our conscious or unconscious behaviours and actions that cause you to act in favour or against a particular individuals, groups, beliefs or causes.</p> <p>Resources: Harvard Implicit Bias Test Common Workplace Biases Reducing Bias in Hiring Tips</p>
Colourism	<p>Definition: When racial bias and discrimination is amplified in correlation with how dark an individual's skin tone is. The darker the skin tone, the greater the discrimination.</p> <p>Resources: Colourism and Women at Work Colourism at Work</p>

Glass Cliff	<p>Definition: A phenomenon that specifically has been more heavily connected to BIPOC women in which they are put into positions of leadership at a time when the organization is in greater turmoil in which they are more likely to fail. As a result, if they do fail there is an inherent bias and justification that they were not suited for the role to begin with rather than the context of the situation being taken into account.</p> <p>Resources: Glass Cliff and Women of Colour Explained Glass Cliff and Black Women</p>
Misogynoir	<p>Definition: Rooted in the words misogyny and noir to describe the unique discrimination Black women face from both a racist and sexist lens.</p> <p>Resources: 4 Tired Tropes that Describe Misogynoir Advice for HR on Misogynoir</p>
Pet to Threat Phenomenon	<p>Definition: A phenomenon coined by Dr. Keisha Thomas that highlights the experience women of colour, particularly Black women, have when they go from being mentored and supported to being seen as a challenge and threat to the status quo due to systemic bias.</p> <p>Resources: Pet to Threat Phenomenon Approaches The Bias of the Pet to Threat Phenomenon</p>
Tone Policing	<p>Definition: The act of criticizing and focusing on the manner of emotion behind what someone is expressing instead of focusing on the content of what they are saying, ultimately dismissing the actual ideas being presented. It's often used as a silencing tactic against people from marginalized or historically excluded backgrounds.</p> <p>Resources: Tone Policing & Silencing Tactics Tone Policing Against People of Colour</p>

Key Concepts Related to Growth, Development & Performance Management

Term	Definition & Resource
Advocacy	<p>Definition: Providing support for individuals or causes by uplifting members within impacted communities through mentorship, sponsorship and additional support or guidance.</p> <p>Resources: Mentorship vs Sponsorship How to Be An Advocate</p>
Allyship	<p>Definition: The act of using your own privilege to continuously uplift the voices of marginalized and oppressed groups by partaking in ongoing action, awareness and learning.</p> <p>Resources: Guide to Allyship 7 Examples of Allyship</p>
Codeswitching	<p>Definition: A specific form of covering in which an individual changes their speech and mannerisms in order to fit in with a more dominant group. It is mostly commonly associated with Black people switching their speech or mannerisms to appeal to a predominately white majority.</p>

	<p>Resources: What is Codeswitching? Codeswitching: How and Why It Happens?</p>
Covering	<p>Definition: When individuals feel the need to downplay parts of their identity to blend in with various social settings (also referred to as masking).</p> <p>Resources: Deloitte Covering at Work Research Deloitte Covering at Work Statistics</p>
Dominant & Non-Dominant Groups	<p>Definition: Dominant groups are majority groups that often are in current and historical position of power in relation to non-dominant or minority groups. Traditionally in a workplace setting the dominant group has been cisgender straight white men.</p> <p>Resources: Dominant & Non-Dominant Groups and DEI Dominant Workplace Culture and Bias</p>
Microaggressions	<p>Definition: A negative comment, behaviour or action made towards individuals from historically excluded groups that could both intentionally or subconsciously cause harm.</p> <p>Resources: Types of Microaggressions Resource Database of Various Microaggressions</p>
Power Dynamics	<p>Definition: The balance or imbalance in a relationship that occurs between individuals in an organization based on the relative power they have over one another within the social context of the relationship (i.e. manager to employee relationship).</p> <p>Resources: Navigating Power Dynamics and the 6 Types of Leadership Power Workplace Power Breakdown</p>
Stereotypes	<p>Definition: Stereotypes are preconceived, and usually implicit judgements made about someone. They often work in conjunction with microaggressions.</p> <p>Resources: Categories Workplace Stereotypes Fall Into Reducing Stereotyping and Bias</p>
Supertokenism	<p>Definition: A term coined by Dr. Dori Tunstall that describes tokenism at more extreme levels in leadership. It is when individuals who are the first and only person from a historically excluded background are brought into leadership for their high skills and then not supported once in these positions.</p> <p>Resources: Black Women and Supertokenism The Rise of Supertokenism</p>
Tokenism	<p>Definition: A performative action in which individuals from historically excluded or marginalized groups are given the illusion of being included without there being actual changes made to structures, processes and behaviours to be more inclusive.</p> <p>Resources: Tips to Avoid Tokenism Additional Tips to Avoid Tokenism</p>