



'Spotlight on...' equality, diversity and inclusion

Equipping leaders to have conversations about race

Leader's behaviours and actions set the culture of an organisation and are the key to creating an inclusive workplace where everyone can perform at their best. To be an inclusive leader understanding different people's perspectives and experiences is vital.

To enable Skanska's leaders to do this, they designed and implemented an 'equipping leaders to have conversations about race' workshop. The focus was to help them understand the complex issues surrounding race inequality, how to proactively be anti-racist and how to overcome the fear of saying the wrong thing. By providing a safe space for leaders to learn and ask open questions has enabled them to be role models when it comes to having conversations about race and help them lead more diverse teams.

The themes covered in the workshop included:

- **Understanding the right language and terminology** - delving into the detail as to how language has evolved, the difference between intention and impact and why, phrases that used to be ok that are no-longer acceptable and better alternatives that can be used.
- **Context of everyday racism** – real life examples of microaggressions, harmful stereotyping and systemic racism.
- **How to be anti-racist** - practical advice on how to role model being anti-racist and hold others accountable.

With over 100+ workshop participants reached so far and having started right at the top of the organisation, with C-Suite executives, followed by Managing Directors and their teams, the participants have rated the workshop 4.69 out of 5 stars.

The second phase of this workshop is bringing this to the construction sites. Project Directors are actively role modelling by being upskilled to co-deliver the workshop to their site teams with support from the Inclusion and Diversity team.

We have also gathered feedback after the sessions, below are some of the quotes received:

"It's important to talk about race and our different perspectives. Just taking time in having the conversation was so important. It's also important to understand race from the point of view of the person on the receiving end of communication and behaviours".

"The fear, learning and growth zone. I think all of us are somewhere across the zonal circles and the more we talk about race the more comfortable we are. This needs to be at the forefront of our minds and conversation as leaders".

Case Study: Skanska



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"You made the subject real, in a manner that I can associate with and have made me think by introducing me to the term anti-racist, this is the biggest take away for me, whilst I have never been a racist, I can now talk and think and behave as 'anti-racist'".

The success of this workshop has led to a further programme of Inclusion & Diversity workshops to provide insight into the lived experience and practical guidance around allyship for those from LGBT+ community and for people with disabilities.