Little Things Mean A Lot™

From Micro-inequities to Micro-affirmations

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DON'T SWEAT THE SMALL STUFF...
and It's All Small Stuff

Simple Ways To Keep The Little Things From Taking Over Your Life

Read By The Author

Richard Carlson, Ph.D.
Introductions

Introduce yourself to your tablemates and briefly discuss:

- Give your name
- One thing about yourself we would not know by looking at you
Why Little Things Do Mean A Lot

This program addresses the daily messages we send one another at work that cause us to feel

• included or excluded
• engaged or discouraged
• valued or overlooked

It’s A Wake Up Call

• Because these messages are so often subtle, they’ve been largely overlooked by corporate organizations. Yet their impact is enormous.

It’s An Opportunity

• The insights you get will improve your relationships at work, home, and in your community. It will also show you how to make significant breakthroughs in your organization - by learning to engage and value people.
Workshop Objectives

• Recognize that the way we treat each other at work—the little things we do—has a **big impact**.

• Define micro-messages, microinequities, and micro-affirmations.

• Learn to respond effectively to negative messages (microinequities) that can undermine our success.

• Equip you with simple tools and strategies you can use to encourage others and make the workplace more inclusive.
How We’ll Treat One Another Here

Confidentiality:

• “What goes on in here, stays in here”

• During the program
  feel free to share your own experiences with one another
  if you draw upon other people’s examples, don’t use names
Defining the “Small Stuff”

**Micro-messages:** Signals we send to one another through our behavior. They are called “micro” because the behaviors are small, although their impact can be enormous.

**Micro-inequities:** Micro-messages we send other people that cause them to feel devalued, slighted, discouraged or excluded.

**Micro-affirmations:** Micro-messages that cause people to feel valued, included, or encouraged.
Discussion in pairs

1. Share an example of a micro-inequity you’ve experienced that bothered you.

2. What did you do in response to the micro-inequity (i.e., Did you speak about it directly to the person, stay silent, complain to others....)?
What Are Microinequities?

- Subtle messages that build up and have a big impact. Micro-inequities break connection.
  - Tiny, pervasive, cumulative, discouraging
  - Often semi-conscious
  - Lurking just below the surface
  - Built into an organization’s culture
  - Lead to damaged self-esteem, withdrawal
  - Discourage creativity and risk-taking
Microinequities: A Diversity Challenge

• We tend to value the similar and reject the different.
  
  — This is a pervasive human tendency
  — Recent research finds that it’s “hard wired”
  — It’s even reflected in the English language: “like” means appreciate but also means “similar”

• As we create policies, procedures, and initiatives to encourage diversity and inclusion, people continue to use daily micro-inequities to wall out differences.
People Use Microinequities to Exclude All Kinds of Differences

- Ethnicity
- Rank/Position
- Education
- Accent
- Politics
- Region/Country
- Sexual Orientation
- Function
- Style
- Appearance
- Culture
- Race
- Age
- Disability
- Performance
- Religion
- Chemistry
- Gender
- Appearance
- Style
- Function
- Sexual Orientation
- Politics
- Region/Country
- Education
- Accent
- Ethnicity
- Rank/Position
- Disability
- Performance
- Religion
- Chemistry
- Gender
Microinequities: Bricks in the Wall
Team Meeting Characters

CHARLIE
(Team Leader)

SALLY

MARGARET

ANDRE

BOB

SCOTT
A Team Meeting

• Observe micro-inequities
• Notice impact on performance
• Prepare to coach the characters
Promoting An Inclusive Climate

• Charlie’s lessons toward changing the culture:
  – Accountability
  – Transparency
  – Inclusive
  – Supportive
Promoting An Inclusive Climate

• Notice your reactions…
  – When am I listening
  – When am I shutting people out?
  – Who am I including and excluding?
  – Who am I encouraging and praising?
  – Whose contributions am I taking for granted?
  – Who do I consistently overlook?
Promoting An Inclusive Climate

- Ask your colleagues, customers and clients...
  - Do you feel…included…respected…valued?
  - What behaviors wall people out?
  - What behaviors encourage contribution?
  - What can I do differently?
  - What can the team do differently?
Taking It Home: Personal Commitments

ACTION PLAN

• Identify
  — One thing you will start
  — One thing you will stop

“Weaving a Web of Inclusion” CARD
Thank you for your time and participation!