Civility, You and Mizzou
Facilitator’s Guide
civility.missouri.edu/civility-you-mizzou
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Facilitator’s Guide

Part of the intent of the online module (civility.missouri.edu/civility-you-mizzou) was to spark some conversations among colleagues and peers in the various working and learning contexts at MU. This facilitation guide is meant to offer some suggestions for these conversations.

It is suggested that everyone complete the online module prior to coming together as a group. When everyone is together, it would be helpful to provide handouts of the online module (included in this guide) for people to refer back to.

Starting off on the right foot

Before you begin discussing the module, it may be helpful to say something like: “We are here to have a conversation about civility and what it means to us in our daily work lives. Let’s assume that we want to have a civil conversation about civility. What are some things we should do, some guidelines we should agree upon, in order to have this kind of conversation?” Elicit responses from the group and write them on a flip chart. If they don’t offer any, you can start it off by making some suggestions (no interrupting, no eye rolling, share the floor, pay attention, be aware of your body language, listen to others and really try to understand what they mean, etc.).

Warm-up questions

Depending on the group dynamics, it might be better to have people answer these questions first in pairs or small groups and then share out in the full group. Depending on how much time you have, you may want to allow 10–15 minutes for the small groups and 15–20 minutes for the full group discussion.

- How did your ideas about civility and/or incivility change after doing the module?
- What was your takeaway from doing the module? What stuck with you?
- What did you think about the “Civility Myths”? Did you guess correctly? Did anything surprise you? Did you disagree with any of the myths?

Debriefing the scenarios

As you may recall, the scenarios did not provide any commentary/guidance on which approach would be the ‘best.’ In pairs or small groups, have each group pick (or assign them) one of the scenarios and discuss the following questions. Then hear back from each group in the full group.

- Which approach of the four do you think would be the most effective? Why?
- Do you think another approach (not listed) would be more effective? Why?
- Which of the approaches would you like to do, but don’t feel that you actually would do it? Why?
Civility in our department/work unit

Make sure you have a flip chart and markers handy for this part of the discussion. Either you or a volunteer should write down all of the responses. These can later be typed up and handed around and/or the flip charts can be posted in the break room. Or perhaps your group can think of another creative way to keep these ideas in sight as reminders.

- Go around the room and ask each person to commit to doing one thing (on a regular basis) that will increase civility. It might be helpful to start with the supervisor, manager, department chair, etc.
- Go around again and ask each person to commit to doing (or not doing) one thing that will help decrease incivility. Again, it might be helpful to start with the supervisor, manager, department chair, etc.

Next steps

Now that the conversation has been started, what does your group/team need next? Here are some ways to approach this question:

- “Okay, so we’ve started this conversation. What do you think we should do as a next step?”
- “Now that everyone has made a commitment, how will we hold each other accountable? Can you come up with some ideas for how to keep track?”
- “Are there any obstacles that we (as a team or as individuals) need to overcome in order to keep the commitments that we just made? If so, how might we do that?”

Feedback

Since many people do not feel comfortable speaking up in groups, provide an anonymous (optional) feedback mechanism such as an online form or a ‘suggestion box’ for people to submit paper responses.

Thank you for your efforts at enhancing civility at MU!

For more information on Mizzou’s Show Me Respect campaign, please visit the website at civility.missouri.edu.

If you have questions about this guide or the education module, please contact:
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CREDITS: This learning module and facilitation guide was developed by Marlo Goldstein Hode and Niki Stanley on behalf of the Chancellor’s Diversity Initiative and with the support of the Show Me Respect Civility Committee.