

COACHING GUIDE: RESOURCE 2

Conditions for Equitable Voice: What to Say and Do

Building culture is a complex task, especially with the goal of creating a more equitable learning environment.

Establishing conditions for equitable voice means actively interrupting tendencies to put people down, and instead reinforce interactions that validate diverse contributions and help everyone fully participate and be powerful. It is important to reflect on your own perceptions and assumptions about people in the room and be open-minded. Perceptions shape our words and our actions, which are also essential to setting a tone for equity right from the beginning.

What to Say...	What to Do...
Frame your hopes for a positive, inclusive experience for everyone.	Co-determine norms and how people should treat each other.
Communicate care and support.	Be consistently fair and model the interactions you want.
Give examples of how people can be themselves.	Start with a wide range of activities.
Say specifically how you hope people should participate and contribute (not just that they should participate).	Establish easy points of entry.
Mention ways you hope people will take charge of the culture over time (i.e. planning activities for everyone, decorating the space, mentoring each other, taking on leadership roles).	Balance structure with freedom.
Validate early contributions from as many people as possible.	Start getting to know people and deepen this knowledge over time.
Ask questions that make people add onto or reflect on the statements of others	Assign groupings and change them often
Suggest ways to get started with participation.	Interrupt negative talk, but forgive easily.
Don't wait too long to check-in with questions and encouragement.	Know when to leave people alone and let them be -- revisit later.
Gradually say less over time, except to guide and reinforce positive culture.	Observe responses over time and make adjustments.

