



Active Allyship Toolkit



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Introduction

Allyship isn't about having all the answers. It's about showing up, listening, learning, and using your voice to support others, especially those from underrepresented or marginalised communities.

Without allies, the burden of change falls solely on those most affected by inequality. That's not fair, and it's not effective. When we act together, we create workplaces that are safer, more inclusive, and more innovative.

Importantly, allyship is not limited to those within a particular community. In fact, those outside a community often have the power to influence change by amplifying voices, challenging exclusionary practices, and advocating for equity. Allies can use their privilege to open doors, shift culture, and create space for others to succeed.

The Four C's of Active Allyship

1. Curiosity

What it means

Being willing to learn about others' lived experiences without centering yourself. It's about listening deeply, asking thoughtful and respectful questions, and seeking to understand systemic barriers.



Curiosity in Action

- Attend a panel or storytelling session featuring colleagues from underrepresented groups.
- Read or watch content created by people from communities you're unfamiliar with.
- Ask, "What don't I know about this person's experience?" before making assumptions.

Examples

- *A project lead invites a speaker with a disability to share their experience navigating construction sites, then reflects on how site layouts could be improved.*
- *A design engineer researches how gender-inclusive site facilities (like toilets and changing rooms) can be integrated into temporary works.*

2. Courage

What it means

Taking action even when it's uncomfortable. Courageous allies speak up against exclusion, challenge norms, and use their voice to advocate for others.



Courage in Action

- Interrupt a conversation when someone uses discriminatory language, even if it's "only banter" or "just a joke."
- Challenge decisions that exclude certain groups (e.g., inaccessible event venues, all-male panels).
- Share your own learning journey, including mistakes, to model vulnerability and growth.
- Support a colleague who's being dismissed or talked over in a meeting by redirecting attention to their point.

Examples

- *A site worker hears a colleague make a homophobic joke and calmly says, "That's not OK here — we're better than that."*
- *A senior leader questions why a woman on the team is always asked to take notes in meetings, suggesting the task be rotated.*

3. Commitment

What it means

Turning intention into action. Commitment is about using your influence to drive change, support others, and stay engaged, even when it's hard.



Commitment in Action

- Sponsor or mentor someone from an underrepresented group and advocate for their advancement.
- Push for inclusive policies like flexible working for caregivers or accessible site facilities.
- Join or support an employee resource group, even if you're not part of the community – your presence matters.
- Hold yourself and others accountable for progress, not just intentions.

Examples

- *A senior engineer mentors a young woman apprentice, advocating for her to be included in high-visibility projects.*
- *A procurement manager pushes for inclusive language and anti-discrimination clauses in contracts with subcontractors.*

4. Consistency

What it means

Allyship isn't a one-off gesture; it's a sustained practice. Consistency means showing up regularly, not just during awareness days or campaigns.



Consistency in Action

- Be a regular presence at diversity events, inclusion workshops, or awareness campaigns, even if you're not part of the community.
- Model inclusive behaviours in meetings, on site, and in informal settings e.g. using inclusive language, respecting pronouns, and ensuring everyone has a voice.
- Follow through on commitments – If you say you'll advocate for a more accessible space or flexible policy, keep it on your agenda until it's done.

Examples

- *A director wears a rainbow lanyard every day, not just during Pride Month, to demonstrate year-long support for the LGBTQ+ community.*
- *A project coordinator routinely checks that event venues, documents, and digital tools are accessible, not just when someone requests it.*