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Suggestions for Using “Common Ways Stereotypes Surface and Are Perpetuated”

Objectives:

- Raise awareness about the specific behaviors that perpetuate stereotypes
- Assess the degree of stereotyping in a work environment
- Generate ways to stop the perpetuation of stereotypes

Intended Audience:

- Managers of diverse staff
- Members of hiring and promotion panels
- Staff who work with diverse customers and co-workers

Processing the Activity:

- Give a short explanation of the eight ways stereotypes are perpetuated, giving and soliciting examples from the group.
- Ask participants to circle the number of any of the behaviors they have engaged in, experienced, or observed in the past year.
- Next, ask them to write more productive comments or responses for those they've checked.
- Take a total-group tally, charting the number of hands raised for each.
- Have participants share responses in small groups, generating more productive behaviors.
- Lead a total-group discussion of the experience focusing on insights gained.

Questions for Discussion:

- What questions does this raise?
- What is the impact of these behaviors in the workplace?
- What feelings do they elicit?
- What are some productive ways to respond or change this dynamic?
- What is one action you can take to address these comments?

Caveats, Considerations, and Variations:

- Comments illustrating each of the eight behaviors can be written on index cards and distributed to groups. Each group determines which of the eight kinds of behaviors the comment typifies, then, on the back, they write a more productive comment or response.
- In small groups, participants can respond to these comments using role play.