



IMPROVING CULTURAL RELEVANCE AND INCLUSIVITY OF YOUR ORGANIZATION

AN ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION ENVIRONMENTAL
JUSTICE TRAINING RESOURCE

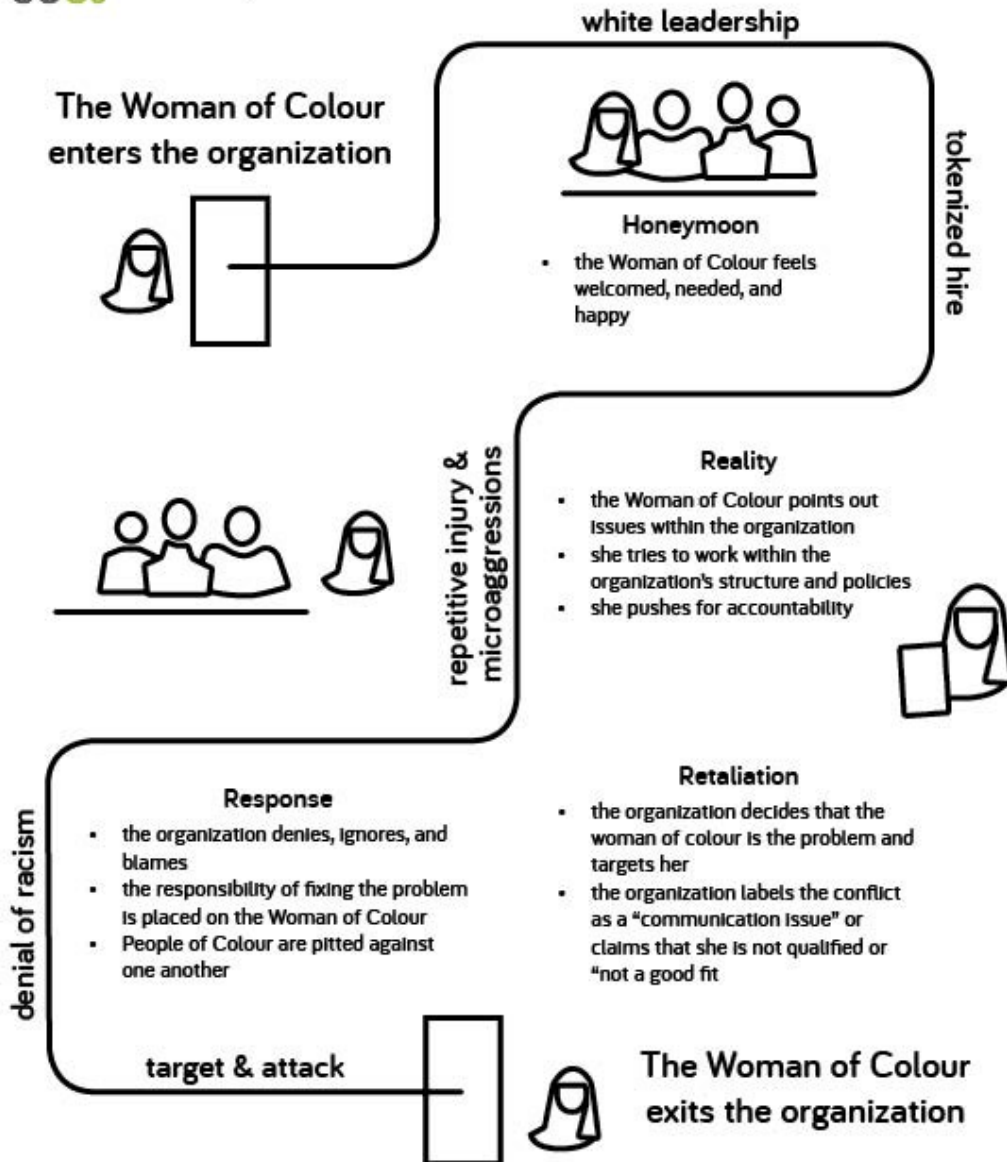
COUNTERACTING “TOKENISM”

Tokenism is “the practice of doing something (such as hiring a person who belongs to a minority group) only to prevent criticism and give the appearance that people are being treated fairly.”¹

This practice undermines the ability of organizations to achieve an inclusive culture, and to attract, retain, and promote people from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds. This practice is depicted in the diagram below, The “Problem” Woman of Colour in the Workplace.



The “Problem” Woman of Colour in the Workplace



Adapted from “The Chronicle of the Problem Woman of Color In a Non-Profit” by the Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence
www.coco-net.org



STEPS FOR COMPLETING THE WORKSHEET:

1. Review the characteristics of white supremacy culture and its antidotes below and here.
2. Reflect on and note how these characteristics show up in your work and your organization's culture.



Artwork by Leahjo Carnine



Artwork by Katherine Valde

3. Next, watch this video on tokenism and how to counteract it: <https://youtu.be/ncAKS86K2y4>

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIES DOES (OR COULD) YOUR ORGANIZATION IMPLEMENT TO AVOID TOKENISM? HOW ARE THEY IMPLEMENTED? CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.

- ☐ Shifting our idea of what a “leader” is, and what credentials (or skills) we note in job advertisements (are they inclusive or exclusionary?)
 - ☐ Empower people from underrepresented backgrounds within the organization to provide ideas on job descriptions.
- ☐ Review applications without identifying information (e.g. names of candidates)
- ☐ Have staff from diverse backgrounds participate in the hiring process
- ☐ Build relationships with community members and groups
 - ☐ Reduce barriers for staff to build relationships of affinity with community leaders
 - ☐ Mutually support community organizations and partners (e.g. cohort of fellows)
 - ☐ Find ways to connect with organizations that allow you to become more inclusive (e.g. [Black Girls Trekkin'](#), [Pride Outside](#))
- ☐ Accommodate individuals who may feel isolated by asking them what practices would help them feel more included and valued.
 - ☐ Implement tips from this [Inclusive On-boarding Checklist](#)
- ☐ Create a sense of belonging for people and re-evaluate how meetings are held
 - ☐ Help people improve when mistakes are made (e.g. [“Calling In”](#) vs. [“Calling Out”](#))
- ☐ Hire a consultant to create an internal audit of your DEI practices and policies
- ☐ Have a dedicated committee with different people and different voices to develop inclusivity policies
- ☐ Other strategies? Please describe:



THE ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION AND FAIR FORESTS CONSULTING

At the Arbor Day Foundation, we believe everyone should have access to the powerful benefits of trees. To help strengthen our focus on communities that need trees most, we partner with experts like Dr. Christine Carmichael from Fair Forests Consulting. This resource, crafted by Dr. Carmichael, is part of our ongoing commitment to empowering our partners to grow their environmental justice work in urban forestry.

Alliance for Community Tree members have access to our full environmental justice training series in the ACT Member Resource Center. Learn about this network and how to join at arborday.org/ACT.