

Mistakes to Avoid

A DEIB Guide to Supporting Your Iranian Employees

01. Offering Unsolicited Advice



Avoid offering unsolicited advice such as these:

- “Don’t follow the news. When Trump won, I did that, and it helped a lot.”
- “Try not to think about it. Throw yourself into your work.”

These comments minimize or invalidate their experiences and emotions. People can’t just turn off the realities of their lives.

02. Trivializing Comparisons



Avoid making comparisons that trivialize the gravity of the situation in Iran. For example, avoid saying:

- “This is just like when the U.S. Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade.”
- “That’s horrible, but we’re not so far behind. I’m worried the United States will be just like Iran in a couple of years.”

03. Deflecting



Avoid deflecting or changing the topic even if you feel uncomfortable. For instance, avoid comments such as these:

- “That sucks. Did you watch the game last night?”
- “That sounds tough. Speaking of tough, how’s the new project going?”

04. Making Assumptions



Avoid making assumptions about what people from Iran want. For example, avoid saying:

- “Don’t expect us to help. The US can’t afford another war in the Middle East.”
- “I bet Iranians will exploit the mess to come to Canada as political refugees.”

These assumptions are misguided and insensitive.

05. Being Dismissive



Avoid dismissing the topic as not worth thinking or talking about. For example, avoid comments such as these:

- “Oh, well, that’s just how it is. What can we do? Better to just move on and live our own lives.”
- “Ah, it’s always something, isn’t it? Anyway, I’ve gotta go. See you around.”