



Interpersonal Confrontation: A Strategy for Curbing Bias and Fostering Inclusive Environments

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Speaking up against stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination is an essential catalyst for a positive change (see the chapter by Goodwin, Culpepper, & Mallett, this volume). For instance, bias was confronted through major social movements in the USA between the 1950s and 1980s concerning women, Black people, and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) community, which led to changes in legislation, policies, and publicly expressed attitudes. More contemporary examples of large-scale efforts to confront bias are evident in the #MeToo and Black Lives Matter movements. These historical and contemporary movements conjure images of courageous and influential leaders, protests, strategic advocacy, and collective action in the fight for civil liberties and equality (see the chapter by González, Carvacho, Alvarez, & Smith, this volume).

Confrontation of bias can take an interpersonal form as well, occurring in everyday situations as people navigate interactions with

strangers, peers, coworkers, and close others. Interpersonal confrontation involves one person calling out another person's biased statements or actions. A salesclerk may assist a White man ahead of a Black woman, a family member may use a racial slur, and a friend may make a stereotypic comment about old people. In each of these instances, another person may point out the bias to the perpetrator to make its problematic nature clear.

This chapter focuses on interpersonal confrontation. We first address why interpersonal confrontation is important for promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) by discussing the benefits of confrontation. Next, we review the current state of the literature and theory on interpersonal confrontation, with particular attention to bias reduction following confrontation, the social costs of confrontation, and when people do versus do not confront bias. Finally, we integrate research and theory to provide practical guidance on topics to address when preparing people to confront bias.

WHY INTERPERSONAL CONFRONTATION IS IMPORTANT FOR PROMOTING DEI

Interpersonal confrontation outcomes can be conceptualized in terms of three spheres of influence, each having important implications for promoting DEI (Monteith, Noland, & Li, 2025). First, as we will review in greater detail below, confrontation is a robust strategy for reducing perpetrator bias (e.g., Czopp, Monteith, & Mark, 2006). Sometimes perpetrators are aware they have done something biased, and confrontation alerts them that it is objectionable. In such cases, confrontation makes norms against bias salient, and perpetrators may reduce their bias given the powerful influence of norms on behavior (Cialdini, Reno, & Kallgren, 1990). Other times perpetrators are not entirely aware or willing to admit that they have done something biased, as with implicit and subtle biases (Gawronski, Ledgerwood, & Eastwick, 2022; Greenland, West, & van Laar, 2022). In this case, confrontation brings the biased response into conscious focus, which can instigate self-regulatory processes that help perpetrators to detect, control, and inhibit bias in the future (Monteith, Ashburn-Nardo, Voils, & Czopp, 2002; Monteith, Mallett, & Hildebrand, 2022).

A second sphere of confrontation's influence concerns the impact on targets of bias. Aside from reducing bias that targets may encounter, confrontation can provide a positive strategy for targets when coping with discrimination. A few studies have revealed positive correlations between targets' self-reported confrontation and autonomy and psychological well-being (Foster, 2013; Gervais, Hillard, & Vescio, 2010; Sanchez, Himmelstein, Young, Albuja, & Garcia, 2016). In addition, ally confrontation is beneficial to targets. Imagine a social get-together with lively conversation among acquaintances. At one point, someone makes a comment that East Asian people have poor interpersonal skills. Research suggests that

if an East Asian person overhears this comment, they will experience lower belonging, safety, and desire to be a part of the group (i.e., identity-safety) (Hildebrand, Jusuf, & Monteith, 2020). However, just as certain environmental cues signal to target group members that they are devalued, threatening their identity-safety (e.g., Murphy, Steele, & Gross, 2007), ally confrontation can serve as a positive cue and boost targets' identity-safety. Specifically, studies revealed that individuals who initially observed someone make a biased comment about their social identity reported greater identity-safety if the biased comment was confronted and affirmed by others in the group, compared to when the biased comment was not confronted (Hildebrand et al., 2020).

At the third and broadest sphere of influence, confrontation can restore local anti-bias norms in the wake of bias. When bias occurs in a particular environment (e.g., a work meeting or a social event), people infer that local social norms support biased behavior (Koudenburg, Kannegieter, Postmes, & Kashima, 2021; Li, Noland, & Monteith, 2024). Specifically, the occurrence of bias leads people to perceive descriptive (i.e., people do biased things here) and injunctive (i.e., bias is condoned here) social norms (Cialdini et al., 1990). However, following confrontation, antibias descriptive norms were perceived to be significantly stronger than when bias was not confronted, and antibias injunctive norms were restored to levels observed when no bias occurred in the first place (Li et al., 2024). Because injunctive norms are especially powerful, having trans-situational influence and guiding behavior even in the face of conflicting descriptive norms, these findings have encouraging implications for the social control of bias (Cialdini et al., 1990; Kalkstein, Hook, Hard, & Walton, 2023). Furthermore, both target and nontarget group members perceive stronger antibias norms following confrontation, which in turn is associated with enhanced identity-safety (Li et al., 2024).

In sum, interpersonal confrontation is crucial for promoting DEI because it reduces perpetrator bias, benefits targets as a coping strategy, and—when confrontation is observed—boosts identity-safety and fosters antibias norms. These confrontation consequences promote equitable treatment and environments where members of groups targeted by bias can feel welcomed and relatively safe, ultimately contributing to more inviting conditions for people from diverse backgrounds and social identities.

CURRENT STATE OF THE LITERATURE AND THEORY

Much research to date on interpersonal confrontation has addressed three issues about the extent to which and under what conditions (a) confrontation reduces perpetrator bias, (b) confrontation causes social costs (e.g., disliked, perceived as complainers) to be levied against confronters, and (c) people are willing to confront bias.

Bias Reduction

Studying whether confrontation causes bias reduction can be challenging because individuals must first engage in a biased response that is confronted, and there must be an opportunity for research to assess whether bias is reduced after confrontation. A useful and frequently used paradigm is the “stereotypic inference task” (Czopp et al., 2006; Monteith et al., 2002). Initially, participants see a photo of a person and a sentence, and their task is to generate a label. Critical trials are embedded among filler trials, where a sentence paired with a photo of a target group member could yield a stereotypic or nonstereotypic response. For instance, “This person can be found behind bars” paired with a photo of a Black person could yield “criminal” or “guard.” Most people provide

stereotypic responses on this task. After completing a first round of trials, participants are confronted for using stereotypes (e.g., by someone posing as another participant). Later, participants individually complete another stereotypic inference task but with new items. By comparing pre- to postconfrontation stereotypic responding and responses in a no confrontation condition, researchers determine whether confrontation reduced stereotypic responding.

Research using this paradigm consistently shows that confrontation reduces bias, regardless of a variety of moderators. Specifically, confrontation reduces bias to the same extent whether the confrontation (a) is more or less threatening (Czopp et al., 2006), (b) appeals to internal versus external motivations for not stereotyping (Burns & Monteith, 2019), (c) concerns the use of positive versus negative stereotypes (Burns & Granz, 2021), or (d) asserts that the perpetrator can versus likely cannot become less biased (i.e., growth versus fixed mindset; Rattan, Kroeper, Arnett, Brown, & Murphy, 2023). Participants’ preconfrontation attitudes toward the target group do not moderate the extent of bias reduction (e.g., Czopp et al., 2006). Finally, how much a perpetrator trusts a confronter is unrelated to bias reduction, whether trust varies naturally (i.e., confronted by a friend versus stranger) or is experimentally manipulated (Hildebrand, Monteith, & Arriaga, 2024).

An important question is whether these bias reduction effects reflect an internalized change or temporary compliance. The private conditions for assessing postconfrontation responding argue against mere compliance. Furthermore, reduced stereotyping is found when postconfrontation responses are assessed a week after the initial confrontation (Burns & Monteith, 2019; Chaney & Sanchez, 2018). Generalized effects have also been found such that confronted participants reduced stereotyping of groups not targeted in the initial confrontation (Chaney, Sanchez, Alt, & Shih, 2021) and reduced

bias on other measures (Czopp et al., 2006). Altogether, these results suggest more than mere compliance.

Research summarized thus far relied on the stereotypic inference task paradigm. To be sure, this task applies to situations in which people activate and apply stereotypes based on group memberships. However, bias manifests in other forms, such as prejudiced attitudes and judgments, evaluations, and behaviors. Although a smaller literature, confrontation using other paradigms also reveals bias reduction (Mallett & Wagner, 2011; Parker, Monteith, Moss-Racusin, & Van Camp, 2018). For instance, in a compelling, naturalistic study, White male Twitter users were confronted by an ostensible Twitter user, but the “confronter” account was actually controlled by the experimenter using bots (Munger, 2017). Twitter users confronted by a White male with a large following subsequently reduced their use of racist slurs, an effect that lasted across one month.

Why is confrontation so effective at reducing bias? A working theoretical framework for explaining confrontation’s powerful impact on bias reduction is called Validity and Impugnment as Determinants of Confrontee Consequences (VIDOCC; Monteith et al., 2022) (see Figure 22.1). According to VIDOCC, when perpetrators perceive a confrontation, their first consideration is whether their response is considered biased. In other words, is the confrontation valid? For instance, if Matthew is confronted after he “talks over” a woman colleague, he will ask himself, “Is my behavior considered gender biased?” If he answers “yes,” he will compare his behavior to his personal standards for responding to women. Incorporating prior research and the Self-Regulation of Prejudice model (Monteith et al., 2002, 2022), if Matthew believes his behavior is discrepant from his standards, several self-regulatory processes that facilitate the reduction and future control of bias will be activated.

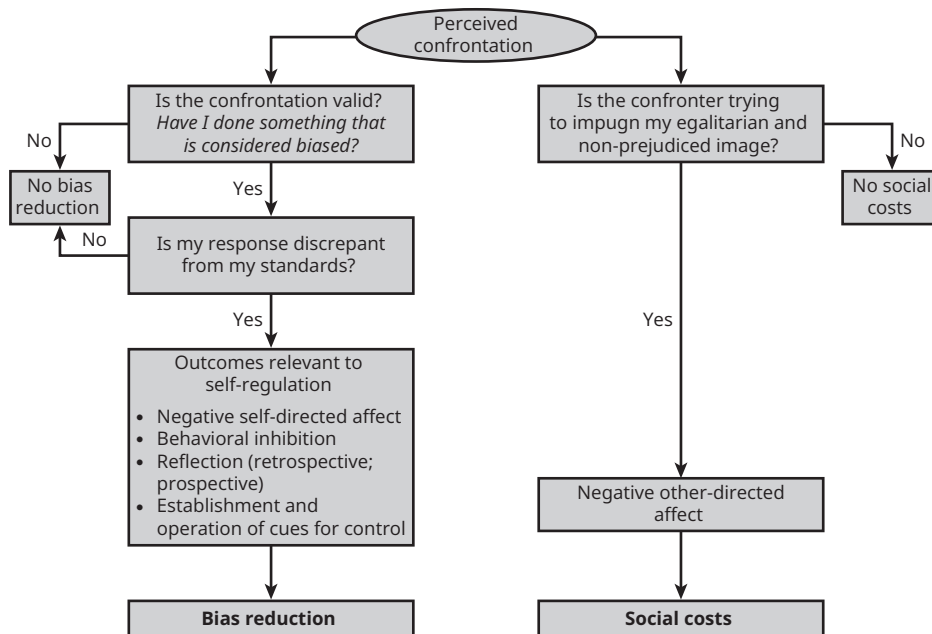


Figure 22.1 Validity and impugnment as determinants of confrontee consequences: A working theoretical framework for understanding bias reduction and social costs as two independent consequences of confrontation

These processes and related research have been summarized in depth elsewhere (e.g., Burns, Parker, & Monteith, 2017; Monteith et al., 2022). The gist is that Matthew will experience negative self-directed affect (e.g., disappointment with himself); his ongoing behavior will be briefly interrupted (behavioral inhibition); and retrospective reflection will occur that involves brief reflection on his biased response and the situation in which it occurred. These experiences help to create “cues for control,” or environmental stimuli that become associated with the biased response and the negative self-directed affect it elicited. These cues are important for detecting and inhibiting bias in the future, because their presence triggers behavioral inhibition and prospective reflection that facilitates nonbiased responses. For instance, the next time Matthew is in a situation where he may talk over a woman colleague, cues (e.g., the presence of a woman colleague; a work meeting) should put his mind on alert and facilitate bias avoidance.

Research suggests that these self-regulatory processes occur following confrontation (Burns & Granz, 2021; Chaney & Sanchez, 2018; Czopp et al., 2006; Parker et al., 2018). However, currently untested is whether the perceived validity of confrontation explains whether bias reduction processes are instigated. Some suggestive evidence comes from research related to confrontations of sexism. People take sexism confrontations less seriously than confrontation of racism (Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Gulker, Mark, & Monteith, 2013; Woodzicka, Mallett, Hendricks, & Pruitt, 2015). However, when participants were confronted about providing gender-biased hiring evaluations, and they also were given evidence of the harmful discriminatory outcomes of their evaluations, they reported greater negative self-directed affect and intentions to monitor for future gender bias than when evidence was not presented (Parker et al., 2018). Indeed, confrontation outcomes were as strong when evidence was presented alongside confrontation of sexism

as when racial bias was confronted (Parker et al., 2018; Study 4). We suspect that sexism confrontations that include evidence of harmful bias increase the perceived validity of the confrontation. This possibility can be tested in future research.

Perceived validity may also depend on whether the person who confronts is believed to have expertise related to bias or to be tainted by self- or in-group interests. For instance, when target group members confront, they may be perceived as experts, but potentially also as unduly influenced by their own interests. Wallace, Craig, and Wegener (2024) demonstrated that these countervailing forces predicted the effectiveness of social justice advocacy by target and nontarget group members, and that depending on the strength of these countervailing forces, targets may be less, more, or just as effective as nontarget group members. Indeed, some research found greater bias reduction for nontarget than target confronters (Gulker et al., 2013; Munger, 2017), but other research found no effect for confronter group membership (Czopp et al., 2006).

Social Costs of Confrontation

Bias reduction following interpersonal confrontation is consistently accompanied by another outcome: People levy social costs on confronters, including negative trait ascriptions (e.g., oversensitive and complainer) and reduced liking and desire for interaction (Czopp et al., 2006; Hildebrand et al., 2024). If confrontation elicits negative self-directed affect and other outcomes that facilitate future bias reduction, why would the perpetrator simultaneously be rankled with the confronter? As shown in Figure 22.1, VIDOCC posits that social costs are driven by independent psychological processes than those involved in bias reduction. We must first consider that most people want to think of themselves as fair and egalitarian; indeed, people go to lengths to protect their image as

nonbiased (e.g., Vonasch, Reynolds, Winegard, & Baumeister, 2018). Therefore, when someone points out bias, the perpetrator likely senses that person is trying to impugn their egalitarian image. VIDOCC posits that this sense that the confronter has gone out of their way to point out one's bias creates negative other-directed affect (e.g., irritation and annoyance), which feeds social costs directed at the confronter. Findings are consistent with the idea that bias reduction and social costs occur largely independently, with negative self-directed affect as a mediating factor for bias reduction and negative other-directed affect as a mediating factor for social costs (Monteith et al., 2022).

Social costs vary across a variety of factors. Future research is needed to test whether perceived impugment is the common underlying mechanism through which these factors operate. Regardless, identifying moderators of social costs is important for providing guidance to would-be confronters who are concerned about minimizing social costs. Indeed, research suggests that social costs are a salient concern that deter people from confronting (e.g., Alt, Chaney, & Shih, 2019; Shelton & Stewart, 2004).

Social costs are amplified when the confronted response is less obviously offensive. For instance, social costs are greater when the confronter calls out bias expressed in ambiguous rather than blatant ways (Saunders & Senn, 2009; Zou & Dickter, 2013) and when bias involves positive rather than negative stereotyping (Alt et al., 2019). In these instances, perpetrators likely believe that the confronter is "reaching" to point out bias, producing irritation and social costs.

Whether the confronter is a target or non-target group member also affects social costs. Target group members are perceived as ruder and more complaining than nontarget group members (Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Drury & Kaiser, 2014; Gulker et al., 2013; Rasinski & Czopp, 2010; Schultz & Maddox, 2013). Consistent with VIDOCC, these effects have been linked with a greater sense that target

group members are trying to threaten one's nonprejudiced self-image compared to non-target group members (Miller, Noland, & Monteith, 2023). These findings underscore allies' important role, especially because the greater social costs for target group members may cause other downstream adverse outcomes (e.g., bypassed for a raise and ostracized in social interactions).

Confronters concerned about social costs may be tempted to tip toe around confrontation. However, when participants viewed a blatant online comment that was confronted indirectly and passively, they perceived the comment as less offensive, were less likely to report it, and evaluated the confronter more negatively than participants who viewed a direct and more aggressive confrontation (Meyers, Leon, & Williams, 2020; see also Bak, Jurcevic, & Trawalter, 2024). At the same time, hostile language (e.g., calling the perpetrator racist, yelling, using profanity) increases social costs (Becker & Barreto, 2014; Czopp et al., 2006; Martinez, Hebl, Smith, & Sabat, 2017), whereas emphasizing fairness reduces social costs (Czopp et al., 2006). Whether language implies that the confronter believes the perpetrator can reduce their bias is also important. Confronters were evaluated more negatively when they were believed to hold a fixed rather than malleable mindset about bias (i.e., that people cannot versus can change their prejudices) (Rattan et al., 2023; Studies 4–6). Furthermore, when a confrontation included language suggesting that bias can be reduced (versus is fixed), participants were more willing to interact with the confronter in the future (Rattan et al., 2023, Study 6). Other research indicates that negative interpersonal confronter outcomes can be mitigated when a positive aspect of the perpetrator's self-image is primed prior to confrontation (Stone, Whitehead, Schmader, & Focella, 2011). Thus, bolstering the perpetrator's self-integrity appears to offer protection against the self-image threat that confrontation can pose.

In the research on social costs summarized above, as in most confrontation research, participants were either confronted by a stranger or they read a scenario or watched a video involving confrontation. However, bias confrontation often occurs among people who have pre-existing relationships. In what ways might interpersonal dynamics in preexisting relationships affect social costs? A potentially relevant factor is interpersonal trust, including the belief that another person has one's best interest in mind, which softens the blow of criticism from others (Murray, Holmes, & Collins, 2006; Shallcross & Simpson, 2012). Hildebrand et al. (2024; Study 3) found that participants directed lower social costs at a confronter who was a friend compared to a stranger, and this effect was statistically mediated by participants' preconfrontation level of trust toward the confronter. The causal role of trust was established in another study that manipulated whether participants completed a trust-building exercise with their study partner before the partner confronted them for biased responses (Hildebrand et al., 2024; Study 2). Participants who completed this exercise (vs. did not) reported more positive postconfrontation partner evaluations. This research suggests that fostering trust, such as in workplace settings using trust-building exercises, will facilitate positive experiences when using confrontation to curb bias.

Although confrontation's social costs can be mitigated in a variety of ways, they are likely to occur to at least some extent. Even when participants interacted with a friend or someone they were induced to trust, their evaluations were more negative with than without confrontation (Hildebrand et al., 2024). However, social costs may not be applied when people observe confrontation rather than being confronted themselves. In fact, several studies revealed that nontarget bystanders evaluated someone who witnessed bias more negatively if they did not confront, compared to when they did confront (Dickter, Kittel, & Gyurovski, 2012; Estevan-Reina et al., 2024; Kutlaca, Becker,

& Radke, 2020; Li et al., 2024; Vaccarino & Kawakami, 2021). These findings align with VIDOCC: If participants are not confronted themselves, they are less likely to believe that the confronter is trying to impugn their egalitarian self-image.

When Do People Confront Bias?

Researchers are quick to point out that targets of bias and allies often do not confront bias. Reported rates of confrontation range from 0% to 45%. People often do not confront despite wanting to do so (Crosby & Wilson, 2015; Dickter & Newton, 2013; Shelton & Stewart, 2004; Swim & Hyers, 1999; Woodzicka & LaFrance, 2001) and forecasting that they would confront (Kawakami, Dunn, Karmali, & Dovidio, 2009; Kawakami, Karmali, & Vaccarino, 2019; Szekeres, Halperin, Kende, & Saguy, 2023a).

A useful framework for understanding factors that influence confrontation likelihood is the Confronting Prejudiced Responses (CPR) model (Ashburn-Nardo & Karim, 2019; Ashburn-Nardo, Morris, & Goodwin, 2008). This model, inspired by work on bystander intervention in helping situations (Latané & Darley, 1970), describes hurdles that must be cleared for confrontation to occur. Factors affecting confrontation likelihood can be understood in terms of each step of the process. The first two steps involve detecting that bias has occurred and interpreting the bias as warranting a response. For instance, benevolent forms of prejudice (e.g., women are nurturing and should care for others) and positive stereotypes (e.g., Asian people are good at math) often are not recognized as harmful forms of bias (Czopp, Kay, & Cheryan, 2015) and are less likely to be confronted than more obviously negative bias (Alt et al., 2019).

The third step in the CPR model involves taking responsibility to confront. Responsibility can be influenced by people's social and organizational roles. Studies indicate that people in supervisory or more powerful roles are viewed

as more responsible for confronting bias than people in less powerful or subordinate roles, and that people with greater authority and power are indeed more likely to confront than others (Alt, Wong Chavez, Dickter, & Shih, 2024; Ashburn-Nardo, Lindsey, Morris, & Goodwin, 2020). Responsibility may also be influenced by the presence of other potential confronters, known as diffusion of responsibility. Although there is some evidence for this idea (Swim & Hyers, 1999), it has yet to be tested experimentally. Messaging that anyone who values egalitarianism and social justice is personally responsible for confronting bias is important for encouraging people to clear this hurdle.

Even if bias is identified as warranting confrontation and people see themselves as responsible for speaking up, they may be uncertain of what to say (Szekeres et al., 2023a). Knowing how to confront is the fourth hurdle in the CPR model. Confrontation by others can provide targets and allies with useful role models, as well as conveying that confrontation is normative, which increases observers' confronting behavior in the future (Case, Rios, Lucas, Braun, & Enriquez, 2020; De Souza & Schmader, 2022). Confrontation readiness, skills, and behavior can be bolstered when people receive training on how to confront and engage in role-playing (Hurd, Trawalter, Jakubow, Johnson, & Billingsley, 2022; Lawson, McDonough, & Bodle, 2010; Monteith, Burns, & Hildebrand, 2019; Plous, 2000). We have more to say on how to confront in the next section of this chapter.

The final hurdle in the CPR model is deciding to confront. At this step, possible benefits and costs are considered, and people confront if benefits outweigh costs (Good, Moss-Racusin, & Sanchez, 2012). Possible benefits of confronting can be linked to people's motives for confronting. For instance, targets may be motivated by a desire for respect or to reduce bias directed at their group, and allies' motives may be egalitarian (e.g., bias reduction) or nonegalitarian (e.g., to fulfill an expectation) (Becker & Barreto,

2014; Mallett & Melchiori, 2019; Munder, Becker, & Christ, 2020). Thus, confronting allows targets and allies to achieve important goals, which are weighed against costs. As discussed above, one possible cost is being evaluated negatively. Social costs are especially salient and likely to depress confrontation when others control valued resources and people fear backlash (Shelton & Stewart, 2004). Concerns about social costs may also be salient when perpetrators do not consider their bias to be offensive. In one study, Black American and Asian American participants reported lower intentions to confront positive than negative stereotyping, and this effect was serially mediated by the belief that positive stereotyping was seen as less offensive and confrontation would elicit greater social costs than negative stereotyping (Alt et al., 2019). Beyond negative evaluations, possible confronters consider other costs related to self-protection goals. For instance, targets of bias may fear for their physical safety or avoid confrontation to preserve cognitive and emotional resources (Trawalter, Richeson, & Shelton, 2009; Woodzicka & LaFrance, 2001).

Sometimes confrontation simply may not seem to be worth the effort, even if costs seem minimal. People are less likely to confront when they believe that stereotyping and prejudice are so entrenched that people really cannot change, compared to when they believe bias is malleable (Chaney & Chasteen, 2024; Rattan & Dweck, 2010).

Considering the complexity of situations in which confrontation may occur and people's varying motives, we are not surprised at failures to confront. However, as we will address in the next section, we believe that rates can be increased through interventions.

INTEGRATIVE INSIGHTS FOR THE PROMOTION OF DEI

Our review indicates that, across many studies and under varying conditions,

confrontation is a powerful means of curbing bias. The irritation perpetrators experience toward confronters and social costs triggered by these feelings suggest caution in high stakes situations; however, we also see that social costs can be mitigated. The disturbing revelation of confrontation research is that people often do not confront.

Providing people with opportunities to acquire knowledge and skills is key to increasing confronting behavior. Below, we integrate the current literature to describe critical topics to address when preparing people to confront bias (see Figure 22.2). (Note that we do not repeat citations from research summarized in previous portions of this chapter.) Although knowledge and skills may be developed through various means, we illustrate with a confrontation workshop in mind.

A first issue to address is, why confront? As decisions to confront involve a cost–benefit analysis, confrontation likelihood can be increased by underscoring evidence-based benefits. Furthermore, myths can be dispelled (e.g., “Saying something won’t do anything anyhow”) and knowledge useful for achieving benefits may be imparted. For

instance, sometimes people eschew public confrontation. However, this may change when they learn that public confrontation increases target’s identity-safety and restores antibias norms in the wake of bias. Beyond benefits, downsides to not confronting can be emphasized. These include feeling guilty for remaining silent (Shelton, Richeson, Salvatore, & Hill, 2006) and, due to dissonance reduction processes, coming to believe that the unconfronted bias is not problematic after all (Rasinski, Geers, & Czopp, 2013; Szekeres, Halperin, Kende, & Saguy, 2023b).

A second issue to address is who should confront? We suggest starting with a discussion of diffusion of responsibility, as learning about this phenomenon may decrease its occurrence. Target versus ally confrontation can then be discussed, asking, “Is one better?” People are likely to share opinions and personal experiences that underscore costs and benefits, providing opportunity for engagement. Research illustrating that targets incur stronger social costs than allies will provide a scientific basis for promoting ally confrontations. Motives for allyship may be mentioned, particularly the pitfalls of performative allyship (i.e., insincere allyship

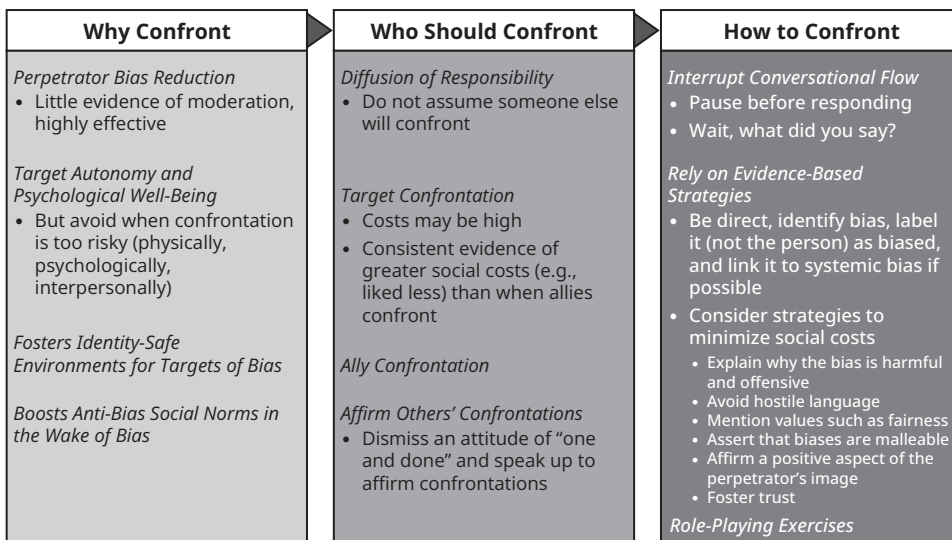


Figure 22.2 Topics to address when preparing people to confront bias

actions performed to create a positive impression) (Kutlaca & Radke, 2023). Finally, confrontation affirmation should be discussed. In public settings, even if someone else confronts initially, others' affirmation of the confrontation is essential for boosting targets' identity-safety.

Given that people's uncertainty about what to say thwarts confrontation, a third major topic to address is how to confront. Workshop facilitators can point out that when bias occurs in an ongoing interaction, interrupting the conversational flow can provide a moment to consider how to confront. A simple pause can be effective, especially given that brief silence following bias can itself communicate disapproval (Koudenburg et al., 2021), and asking the person to repeat themselves has the added benefit of encouraging consideration of the comment in question. Next, we discuss possible content of confrontations, relying on evidence-based strategies. Bak et al. (2024) found that Black people valued confrontations that were direct, identified the bias, labeled it as biased, and linked it to systemic racism. Based on the broader literature, we concur that the first three features are essential and that connecting to systemic bias, when possible, is important. For instance, as discussed earlier, passive rather than direct confrontation language reduces the perceived offensiveness of bias. In addition, workshop facilitators can discuss strategies for minimizing social costs, particularly the six noted in Figure 22.2, perhaps using research spotlights to illustrate. Finally, providing an opportunity for role-playing (as confronter, perpetrator, and bystander) will help to prepare people for confrontation. Collecting people's (anonymous) descriptions of situations they have encountered ahead of workshops allows for tailoring role-playing scenarios to the audience.

These suggestions for facilitating knowledge and skill development can be implemented in a variety of settings. Educational settings (e.g., classrooms and trainings) may be ideal, but workplaces, the home, community

centers, churches, and other settings may also provide opportunities for teaching people about confrontation. Indeed, in the USA, the promotion of bias confrontation outside of educational institutions is increasingly crucial considering conservative-led DEI assaults in higher education and public-school settings (Gretzinger & Hicks, 2024; Harper, 2023). Where DEI offices have been dismantled, DEI trainings and workshops regarding bias are restricted or forbidden, colorblind policies and practices have been adopted, and racism is considered a thing of the past, the promotion of confrontation may be challenging. Still, many people recognize the need to identify and speak up against bias. According to 2023 Pew Research Center data, whereas 74% of U.S. Republican/Republican-leaning adults indicated "the bigger problem for the country today is seeing racial discrimination where it really does not exist," 80% of Democrats/Democratic-leaning adults indicated "not seeing racial discrimination where it really does exist is the bigger problem" (Hurst, 2023). Finding ways to foster confrontation among people who acknowledge stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination as problematic—whether these biases are veiled or in plain sight—is paramount to the continued promotion of DEI.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS AND CLOSING THOUGHTS

Research is needed to assess the impact of growing DEI opposition and related legislation (e.g., on college campuses; Gretzinger & Hicks, 2024) on confronting behavior and reactions to confrontation, including among people on the political right. Another priority is to test the effectiveness of interventions to increase confrontation behavior. The evidence-based suggestions for learning opportunities offered in the previous section can be incorporated in longitudinal intervention research that assesses confronting behavior

both across people's daily lives and in experimenter-controlled follow-ups with staged opportunities for confrontation.

Turning to future research examining confrontation outcomes, such as bias reduction and social costs, the time is ripe for moving beyond commonly used paradigms. First, much research examining bias reduction following confrontation has used the stereotypic inference task (e.g., Czopp et al., 2006), described earlier in this chapter. Newly developed paradigms can assess generalizability, especially if they assess biases in addition to stereotyping. Second, insights into interpersonal dynamics affecting confrontation outcomes requires departure from the common practice of studying confrontation among people with no prior experiences or expectation of future interaction. Third, additional theory-testing and development is needed. For instance, we reviewed various factors that influence the magnitude of social costs but do not currently know whether, as proposed in VIDOCC (Monteith et al., 2022), the perpetrator's sense that the confronter is trying to impugn their egalitarian self-image is the common explanatory factor.

Research on confrontation outcomes that extend beyond perpetrators and confronters is in its early stages, with many important issues still needing attention. For instance, does confrontation serve as an identity-safety cue not only for the group targeted by the bias incident (Hildebrand et al., 2020) but also for other marginalized group members? In research demonstrating a boost to anti-bias norms following confrontation, the initial incident involved blatant bias (Li et al., 2024). We are currently investigating whether antibias norms are enhanced when subtle bias is confronted.

While these and other future research directions are pursued, and as findings are used to inform confronting practices, we encourage researchers, practitioners, and potential confronters to keep two points in mind. First, while people who endorse prejudice and express bias may reference their free speech

rights, would-be confronters can keep in mind that their interpersonal confrontations of bias are also protected speech. Second, confrontation's longer-term consequences are important to keep in mind. As evidenced in research we have reviewed, even if perpetrators' immediate reaction to confrontation is irritation, they subsequently reduce their bias. With increased understanding of the benefits and outcomes of interpersonal confrontation, along with the development of confrontation skills, we anticipate that more people will use this strategy to address bias, to promote equity, and to foster inclusion.

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