#WEC2023

Women & Equity
Conference 2023

KEYNOTE

How allyship can make the difference

Bianca Bax
Expert Partner Humanized Change
Bain & Company

8 June 2023 • BRUSSELS, BE

By careersinternational

How allyship can make the difference

Careers International – Women & Equity Conference

Brussels, June 8th, 2023

BAIN & COMPANY

For those who missed the earlier session: **Who am I?**

Bianca Bax

Expert Partner
Humanized Change

Bain & Company Amsterdam

- **>23 years of management consulting experience** – started as consultant #13 in Amsterdam and 1st woman
- **EMEA lead for DEI** and **global lead for leadership alignment in transformations**
- Believes you need to be as **rigorous about the human side of change** as you are about the analytical side to get deeper results
- Co-author of publications **"The fabric of belonging, how to weave an inclusive culture"** and **"Working women and the war for talent"**
- A **trained professional coach**, holds an MBA from Columbia in NY, and a MSc in Chemical Engineering from Delft

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What is **allyship in the context** of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion? And **why does it matter**?

Why it matters: It is **hard to be the 'diverse' voice** (and listen it)

DIVERSITY

Diverse Teams Feel Less Comfortable — and That's Why They Perform Better

by David Rock, Heidi Grant, and Jacqui Grey

SEPTEMBER 22, 2016

In numerous studies, diversity – both inherent (e.g., race, gender) and acquired (experience, cultural background) – is associated with business success. For example, a 2009 analysis of 506 companies found that firms with more racial or gender diversity had more sales revenue, more customers, and greater profits. A 2016 analysis of more than 20,000 firms in 91 countries found that companies with more female executives were more profitable. In a 2011 study management teams

Allyship is about actively understanding and leveraging **your position(s) of power/privilege to support others**

What Allyship is…

A role that **everyone can play** – and everyone will need – at different times

An **active, consistent practice** that requires ongoing learning and action

Self-awareness around one's own identity and your relative positions of power in different contexts

Sharing or extending your power with / to others

What Allyship isn't…

A role just for those in the 'majority' culture (e.g., straight, white, men, cisgender)

A universal set of actions for everyone to learn and put into practice

An identity that someone gets to claim because they believe in and support DE&I

'Saving' / solving problems for other people

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Allyship is different from mentoring and from sponsoring!

Mentor

Shows you the ropes on HOW to do the job and grow

Sponsor

Stands on the table for you when you are NOT in the room

Ally

Not a formal role, but authentic support often due to a lived experience

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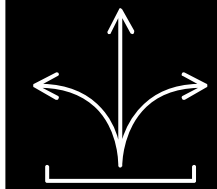
Allyship can take on different forms…



PROACTIVE ALLYSHIP

Safe to be brave!

Baseline to promote **psychological safety**, particularly for those identifying with dimensions of marginalized identities

Even without an incident, there may be **structural disadvantages someone or a group of people may face** that can lead to inequity or exclusion if left unaddressed

REACTIVE ALLYSHIP

An incident has occurred where someone could be negatively affected – regardless of intentions

If a negatively affected individual is present, it may be **difficult for them to address or resolve** the issue on their own due to their position or status

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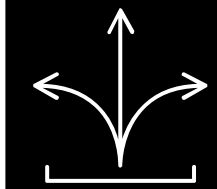
…and different forms of **Allyship** require **different tactics**



PROACTIVE ALLYSHIP

1. **Mind your gaps** – identify areas where you lack lived experience or knowledge; actively seek to learn more so you don't miss allyship opportunities
2. **Invest in relationships** – build trust / relationships with colleagues; make space for them to share their authentic selves so you can better support them
3. **Plan ahead** – in advance of meetings or situations where someone may be the 'only' or 'other,' prep yourself and *(if helpful)* them (e.g., speaking roles)

REACTIVE ALLYSHIP

1. **Use your voice** – speak out against offensive jokes and problematic comments; find your go-to phrases to interrupt and / or deflect; don't speak for others
2. **Amplify others** – publicly acknowledge people for their ideas and contributions, but also providing the context on their lived experiences
3. **Enter with empathy** – if you hear / see something, check in with the impacted person and offer ways to support them (e.g., listen, advise, advocate)

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Reflecting on today's session, **what is one action YOU will take?**

THANK YOU!