

We're in Crisis - Here are 5 Ways You Can Practice Leadership Today

By Cindy Joseph

It's Monday, the start of the workweek for many of us. As we get back to our 'normal' day-to-day activities, this is a reminder (or maybe a notice for some) that many of us are not ok. Your Black colleagues in particular may be dealing with the weight of the COVID pandemic that has disproportionately impacted the Black community and are likely processing and grieving the continued, senseless killings of Black people at the hands of those who are hired to protect us.

Even if we don't show or say anything, the magnitude of it all can be overwhelming. I am personally angry, frustrated, and exhausted.

If you're a leader, a people manager, or just someone who cares about the people you work with, here are some things you can do today.

Check-in now. Check-in with your colleagues, but in particular, with the Black people, you work with. Ask how they are coping. Give space for people to share or ask for what they need, but do not press anyone to discuss anything they don't want to.

Recognize that people may not be 100% 'on' when they don't feel safe. I'll speak for myself - I'm finding it really hard to be productive and feel safe with a pandemic raging and traumatizing violence against my community on constant display. This is all against the backdrop of folks who are all too willing to call the police on Black people for non-criminal activity.

Allow time and create space for people to process their feelings and support each other - employee resource groups and other community forums can be a helpful outlet for those who need a safer space to connect and organize.

On a very practical note, if you have the ability to help your teams reprioritize or shift how, when, or what work gets done - now would be a good time to explore options.

Finally, use your voices. There are lots of ways of showing support and advocating for change. Some will join protests, others will donate to help organizations working for social justice. In your own workplace, don't stay silent.

Be proactive - let your teams and communities know what you do and do not stand for, what will and will not be tolerated. Be explicit about condemning racism, discrimination, and bias - whenever and wherever it shows up. Your colleagues may not say anything out loud but the silence can be telling. If you support social justice, this isn't the time to be quiet.

To the Black community - know that any feelings of anxiety, stress, and overwhelm are valid. Remember to take time for self-care to regroup and center yourselves as you need to.

Workplace (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) values statements ring hollow if leaders remain silent in times like these. How will you show up today?

[Cindy Joseph](#) is speaking on Thursday, September 24 from 12:30-1:30 p.m.

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ABOUT

Cindy Joseph is the founder and chief executive officer of The Cee Suite LLC. For nearly two decades, the core of Cindy's career has been finding and developing diverse talent. Prior to launching The Cee Suite, she managed human capital programs for two of the world's leading financial services and consulting companies, Goldman Sachs and Accenture. Her key areas of competency include recruiting, diversity and inclusion, and performance management.

Regardless of her role, title or mandate, Cindy has always felt a strong connection to personal and professional growth, mentorship, and inclusion efforts, and has passionately used her platforms to support and inspire high-performing teams.

Today, Cindy advises organizations in varying stages of their talent management and diversity, equity and inclusion journeys and helps teams transform their critical "people" practices. She also works with individuals one-on-one as they seek to elevate their professional brands and careers.

When Cindy is not at home in Brooklyn, N.Y., she spends much of her personal time traveling the world. She is a graduate of Howard University, where she earned a degree in psychology, and a Certified Professional Diversity Coach.