














THIRD-PARTY INTERRUPTER

Guide to Interrupting Microaggressions in the Legal System

WHAT YOU HEAR...	THIRD PARTY INTERVENTION EXAMPLE
<p>(1) When the courtroom clerk calls “<i>In the matter of Yousef Yousef... 2021 FEL 25,</i>” the courtroom staff, including the judge, erupt in laughter after hearing the name.</p> <p>OR:</p> <p>The courtroom clerk calls out “<i>In the matter of Bich Chan...</i>” mispronouncing your clients name so that it sounds like an offensive English word, and then laughing, she says “<i>Hmm... that’s an unusual name.</i>”</p>	 INTERRUPT
<p>(2) Attorney: “<i>Is my client in the back yet?</i>” Court Officer: “<i>We are moving the bodies now.</i>”</p>	 INTERRUPT
<p>(3) The courtroom clerk tells counsel: “<i>Counsel, we will call that case at the end of the list. We are waiting for an interpreter to arrive before we call that case.</i>”</p> <p>Assumes the youth or parent, who is Latino, needs a translator without asking. (Actually, their first language is English.)</p>	 INTERRUPT
<p>(4) While sitting in a multi-stakeholder team meeting, one of the leaders says “<i>Most of the crime that happens in San Diego is committed by young people who live in the #zipcode.</i>” (You know that the #zipcode has a high percentage of Hispanic and/or Black residents.)</p>	 INTERRUPT
<p>(5) While in the courtroom, waiting for the first case to be called, the judge asks a new attorney “<i>Which case are you interpreting for today?</i>”</p>	 INTERRUPT
<p>(6) During an office-wide training on implicit racial bias, the trainer shows a photo of Trayvon Martin without a hoodie on. A white colleague asks the trainer: “<i>Why are you showing that photo? He was walking around the neighborhood with a hoodie on! He looked scary. That’s why Zimmerman was scared</i>”</p>	 INTERRUPT

<p><i>of him.</i>”The office is predominately white, but there are several Black staff and attorneys, a few of whom have Black sons.</p>	
<p>(7) A member of the court staff says: <i>“This is why these kids are in such bad shape. Look at the way her mother is dressed.”</i></p>	 INTERRUPT
<p>(8) During plea negotiations, a prosecutor repeatedly refers to a 17-year-old African American male respondent as <i>“a young man”</i> or as <i>“the juvenile.”</i></p>	 INTERRUPT
<p>(9) In deciding what plea would be appropriate, the judge advises you that she wants the youth (a Black child) to read a book of his choosing and prepare some artistic expression that reflects the content of that book – for example, <i>“a rap”</i> or some <i>“slam poetry.”</i> Not a traditional book report, but an artistic expression instead.</p>	 INTERRUPT
<p>(10) While investigating the facts of a case, you speak to a witness (a store security officer), who says: <i>“People in this neighborhood are always stealing, I knew he would steal from the moment he walked into my store.”</i></p>	 INTERRUPT
<p>(11) An attorney is overheard meeting with an African American client when he says: <i>“I’m not going to get us back in front of the judge to ask for relief until you cut your hair. You look wild with that afro, and you know it’s going to make our chances with the judge even worse.”</i></p>	 INTERRUPT
<p>(12) During sentencing, a judge orders an Indigenous youth to report for drug screening, despite no history of drug abuse or usage.</p>	 INTERRUPT
<p>(13) When an African American mother becomes agitated, loud, and a little rude in a court hearing, the judge says: <i>“Ma’am, I find that you are being extremely rude to the Court. If you keep being loud, I will have to remove you from the courtroom.”</i></p>	 INTERRUPT
<p>(14) In every case involving an Hispanic youth, the local probation officer asks the court to order <i>“no gang involvement”</i> as a condition of release, even when no facts specifically indicate gang involvement.</p>	 INTERRUPT