

How to be an Ally

1. What is an Ally?

An ally is any person who supports, empowers, or stands up for another person or a group of people. By recognising that although they are not a member of a marginalised group, an ally seeks to better understand the struggle of another's circumstances, recognises the privilege they receive from society's patterns of injustice, and takes responsibility for creating change, standing with marginalised groups in the face of intolerance and discrimination. Although the word 'ally' can be both a verb and a noun, it isn't an identity or a label to gain social capital. 'Ally' is a 'doing' word, and *being* an ally is fundamentally about *action*.

2. Types of Allyship

Active allyship: involves the dynamic and intentional promotion of inclusion, building relationships of trust, support and advocacy for marginalised individuals or groups.

Passive allyship: support for the cause without speaking up, intervening and acting when necessary.

Performative allyship: sharing knowledge and solidarity with inequity or a cause, without making the long-term and sustained commitment. It can be done to increase one's social capital rather than devotion to a cause.

3. DO'S

- Empathise without centring yourself – it's not about you.
- Be aware of the impact your words can have on the community you're advocating for.
- Be open to understanding when you don't understand.
- Be open to listening and learning.
- Accept that you will make mistakes and take the opportunity to learn from them.
- Listen without judgement.
- Recognise your own privilege.
- Educate yourself and others on issues relevant to the community you're advocating with.
- Use their preferred words and language.
- Ask what is needed/wanted and listen to what the community says.
- Be aware of your blind spots.
- Be aware of the impact you can have.
- Continually question your allyship. Challenge yourself.
- Try to help others become better allies.
- Be aware of the impact you can have.

4. Don'ts

- Don't take credit for the labour done before you stepped in.
- Don't always rely on the community you are advocating with to educate you. Take a proactive approach and educate yourself.
- Don't behave as if you know best.
- Don't assume that every member of a marginalised group feels oppressed or welcomes allies.
- Don't expect recognition, thanks or gratitude.
- While you may be advocating on behalf of a specific individual or group, it is important to ensure that you are not speaking for or *over* them: advocate *with*, not for.

5. More information & further guidance

- [Book — Nova Reid](#)
- [The Guide to Allyship](#)
- [6 Ways To Be An Authentic Ally At Work \(forbes.com\)](#)
- [Understanding Allyship: The Shared Pathway to Cultural Change | theHRD \(thehrdirector.com\)](#)
- [Inclusion allies | The Law Society](#)
- [What is allyship? A quick guide | Inclusive Employers](#)
- [Diversity and Inclusion allyship community](#)