

# LET'S TALK COLLEAGUES

# #GLOBALGUYTALK

CONVERSATION GUIDE

A COOPERATION BETWEEN:

MAKE  
EQUAL

Si. Swedish  
Institute

# HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide contains several questions that you can choose from when hosting a #globalguytalk for colleagues. They have been divided into different categories. Decide which questions you will answer and in which order. Choose questions based on what is most suitable for the target group and the local context.

## INTRODUCTION

*'At my first job, I worked with a guy that I really didn't get along with. There was always something in the air, as if we never accepted each other and everything was a competition. One time, we had a huge argument, and I remember how ashamed I was of how I behaved. A few years later, we ended up talking about it. And the funny thing is that he felt the same way. He was afraid I didn't like him, and he didn't want to come across as a worse employee than me. And all this time, I felt the same! It's a shame we didn't talk about it earlier. We were enemies for so*

*many years for no reason.'*

This story shows you what can be discussed when joining the **#globalguytalk**. The topics below are **ego, vulnerability, relationship, banter, avoidance and sexual harassment**.

The questions in the **#globalguytalk** for colleagues exceed what you usually have time for in one **#globalguytalk** session. Make sure you split the questions into one or two themes per session.

**THEME:**

# EGO

## WARM-UP STATEMENTS – ANSWER YES OR NO

- I tend to take up a lot of space in conversations with others.
- I often have a hard time admitting when I've made a mistake.
- I'm good at receiving positive feedback.
- I'm good at receiving negative feedback.
- I feel stressed when other people around me do well.

# QUESTIONS

## LEVEL 1

- Are there expectations of how a man should be at work? Have you ever felt that you don't live up to those expectations?
- How does it feel if you have to apologise to someone else?
- Do you compete with and/or compare yourself to your colleagues? How and why?

**THEME:**  
**VULNERABILITY**

# WARM-UP STATEMENTS – ANSWER YES OR NO

- I've felt stressed out at work, and I haven't spoken to anyone about it.
- I often hide my feelings or lighten up difficult topics by joking about them or laughing at them.
- I can be vulnerable or emotional in front of my colleagues.
- My colleagues feel comfortable being vulnerable or emotional in front of me.

# QUESTIONS

## LEVEL 1

- Have you ever noticed that a colleague was sad or down?  
Possible follow-up question: What did you do? How did that make you feel?
- Are you comfortable seeking support from your colleagues when you're not feeling well?  
Possible follow-up question: How do you react when a colleague is sad and needs support?
- How would you feel if you needed to ask a colleague for help? Possible follow-up question: Would you rather ask a male colleague or a non-male colleague for help? Why?

**THEME:**  
**RELATION**

# SHIPS AT WORK

## WARM-UP STATEMENTS – ANSWER YES OR NO

- I can ask colleagues for non-work-related advice.
- I talk about the same things with my male colleagues as I do with other colleagues.
- As a man, I am expected to talk about and be interested in certain things during coffee breaks and lunch hours.



# QUESTIONS

## LEVEL 1

- When was the last time you asked a male colleague how he was doing? That is, used the expression 'How are you?' or similar as more than just a greeting phrase.
- How do you and your male colleagues react when someone tries to talk about something difficult or sensitive?
- If a colleague's behaviour or health worried you – would you be comfortable talking with them about it?

**THEME:**  
**BANTER**

# WARM-UP STATEMENTS – ANSWER YES OR NO

- All my colleagues feel comfortable during work-related social activities.
- I contribute to maintaining a nice and respectful atmosphere at work.
- New employees or visitors have a hard time understanding our jokes or certain slang that's used in our workspace.
- It's obvious what's okay or not okay to joke about at my workplace.

# QUESTIONS

## LEVEL 1

- Do you change the way you speak when you're in an all-male environment? How? Possible follow-up question: Do you change the way you speak when you are in a group or in a situation where no men are present? How?
- Do you ever go along with a certain type of banter that you personally find unacceptable? Why?

**THEME:**  
**AVOIDANC**  
**E**

# WARM-UP STATEMENTS – ANSWER YES OR NO

- Someone I'm close to told me that I spend too much time at work or on a hobby.
- I've spoken to a colleague who seemed down or behaved in a destructive way.
- I tend to put off dealing with things that I find difficult at home or at work instead of dealing with them straight away.
- I tend to eat, work, party, gamble or work out more than usual when I'm worried about something.

# QUESTIONS

## LEVEL 1

- What are the consequences of avoiding your problems instead of dealing with them? Possible follow-up question: How does that affect people who are close to you?
- It's important to take occasional breaks from everyday struggles to save energy. However, methods for recovering (such as working out, playing video games, or watching TV) can easily turn into a means of avoidance. How do you make sure that you're taking healthy breaks without falling into a pattern of avoidance?

**THEME:**  
**SEXUAL**

# **HARASSMENT AT WORK**

**WARM-UP  
STATEMENTS –  
ANSWER YES OR  
NO**

- I know what is considered sexual harassment.
- I can intervene if one of my colleagues treats someone else in an intrusive or offensive way.
- If sexual harassment or any other type of offensive behaviour were to be discovered at my workplace, those responsible would be held accountable for their actions.

# QUESTIONS

## LEVEL 1

- If you notice a colleague coming on to or flirting with a non-consenting colleague – what do you do?
- Can you think of a situation in which it isn't okay to flirt with someone? Possible follow-up question: How can you tell if someone is consenting to your romantic/sexual advances?
- What can you do to prevent sexual harassment at your workplace?



# QUESTIONS

## LEVEL 2

- How much of your self-worth do you base on your work performances? For example, if you face setbacks at work, how is your self-esteem affected?
- Do you ever hide your mistakes or failures to maintain your status? If yes, does this behaviour cause any problems for you or your workplace?
- Do you feel envious of your colleagues in certain situations? Why? What does it feel like, and how do you handle that feeling?
- How do you handle criticism? How does it feel if a colleague questions something you've said or done in front of others?  
Possible follow-up question: Does it matter who questions you?

# QUESTIONS

## LEVEL 2

- Do you easily get angry or annoyed? Possible follow-up questions: Are there times when you've regretted being angry or annoyed in a work-related situation? How do you wish you had reacted?
- Has anyone ever been angry or annoyed with you at work? Why? Possible follow-up question: How did you feel about that? How did you react?
- Have you ever cried at work? Please share what happened.

# QUESTIONS

## LEVEL 2

- Do you and your male colleagues ever act or talk in a way that makes others feel unwelcome? Possible follow-up question: What can you do to change that?
- Can you tell your colleagues if you're frustrated or disappointed in them?

# QUESTIONS

## LEVEL 2

- How do you think a new employee would feel about the internal language used at your place of work? Possible follow-up question: What can you do to create and maintain nice, inclusive, and respectful language?
- Why do you think there are so many workplaces that struggle with avoiding sexist or excluding language?
- Have you ever witnessed a colleague's unacceptable behaviour without intervening? What are your thoughts on that now? Possible follow-up question: Do you wish you had intervened? If so, do you have any suggestions for what you could have done?

# QUESTIONS

## LEVEL 2

- Sometimes we don't act rationally when we're feeling down; instead of confronting our problems, we avoid them by doing something else. Can you identify some of the ways you avoid your problems? Is there a risk that they might affect your performance at work? Do you ever use work as a means of avoiding something else?
- If you suspect a male colleague is in trouble due to, for example, excessive drinking, working too much, or spending too much time on a hobby – what do you do? Do you talk to him?

# QUESTIONS

## LEVEL 2

- **Have you ever flirted with a colleague?** Possible follow-up questions: Did you make sure it was consensual? How did that affect your professional relationship?
- **What kind of flirting with a colleague can be problematic?** Possible follow-up question: Would it make a difference if they were newly employed, had worked longer than you, or if they were your manager?
- **If someone flirted with you at work and you didn't want them to, what would you do?** Possible follow-up question: If someone flirted with you at work and you were interested, what would you do?