



## Facilitator Guide

### Description

*Modeling Our Behaviors* focuses on the experience of one co-worker and his family's journey as a transracial family, his adoption experience and raising three girls. This story offers participants insights into the challenges and the complexity of a transracial family. Participants will discuss the importance of acknowledging differences; challenging stereotypes and, how to learn about people who are different from themselves - shifting from a *fixed* mindset to a *growth* mindset.

### Objectives

Participants will be challenged to:

- Begin new dialogues on issues facing our co-workers and our community
- Learn how to be brave (*as we listen to Kipp's story and others' sharing within their debrief discussions*) and lead from where you are
- Support Ameren's efforts to build a more inclusive workplace and community

### Target Audience

This program is intended for groups, organizations and people interested in building inclusive communities through dialogue and discussion.

### Tips for Facilitating

As a facilitator, your role is to encourage discussion. Considering the opinions and points of view presented in this presentation, focus discussion on those conversations and thoughts that affect inclusion, respect, and valuing others. To best facilitate the discussion, **carefully review the video and prepared materials in advance of presentation.**

## Guidelines:

- Review all presentation materials and the video in advance of your session.
- As you begin the session, establish ground rules for sharing (**see *Ground Rules Samples***).
- Stress the need to be respectful of others.
- Set expectations for the session by sharing the objectives (**see *Objective Section above***) and agenda.
- Actively manage time to allow sufficient discussion of the topics highlighted in the video.
- You may encounter off topic comments in your session. Prepare to steer the conversation back on topic. An example of something you could say might be “***That is an interesting comment. Let’s discuss it further after the session to allow time to cover discussion items more directly related to the video.***”
- At the conclusion of the session, thank everyone for their participation.

## Materials and Equipment Needed

Presentation: “*Modeling Our Behaviors*”

Click on link: [Modeling Our Behaviors](#)

**Wi-Fi or data connection is needed to view video**

Laptop with Video Screen for showing video via virtual platform (*i.e., Skype or Microsoft Teams Applications*)

Facilitator Guide

Participant Booklet

PowerPoint Presentation

## Time Requirements

Skype or Teams Meeting Log-in Preparation: 5 - 10 minutes

Video: 08:01 minute runtime

Discussion Time: 30 - 40 minutes

## Presentation

### Introducing the Program

Welcome participants. Explain that the story they are about to hear focuses on a father sharing the birth story of his adopted daughter and his perspective of raising her within a transracial (or multicultural) family. It features an Ameren co-worker. Kipp shares the challenges and complexity of raising a transracial family and how he is embracing the challenges and celebrating differences. Kipp's family has been exposed to an array of experiences and discusses the importance of appreciating cultural differences (sometimes the process feels very natural and sometimes it needs a little more work).

Tell the group that you will be asking questions following the video.

As a facilitator, your role is to encourage discussion. Considering the opinions and points of view presented in this presentation, focus discussion on those conversations and thoughts that affect inclusion, respect, and valuing others.

Tell the group that you will be asking questions following the video.

### Provide Sample Ground Rules for StoryCast Discussion

Facilitators, encourage people to be involved as active listeners and participants. No one else knows another person's thoughts and personal experiences as well as that person. Suggested ground rules are below. The bracketed portions are optional, so, feel free to include or not.

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| Participate | I encourage you to participate. [You will find you will get more out of the program, likely, enjoy it more and hopefully, even have a little fun.] <i>Note to Facilitator: give advance notice that you will be calling on co-workers by name to ensure you have their attention and to avoid embarrassing co-workers.</i>  |
| Respect     | We expect everyone to be respectful. [Not everyone may agree with each other, but when we are respectful, we live up to our company's values. With respect, we establish, maintain and even improve the way we relate to one another.]  |
| Open        | We hope you will be open.   |
| Educate     | We're here to learn and to inform, but we are all students of diversity, equity and inclusion. [Some may not have any experience participating in discussions of this nature or on these topics. And some may not have done so in a work environment. So, we expect understanding as we learn and find ways to talk about these issues, because some of us may not feel we have the "right" words to share our thoughts.] |

Share                      Sharing our experiences, respectfully, can help us connect with each other. Doing so, also can help us build trust.

As you ask questions, remember to allow people time to think before they respond. Do not jump in too quickly with your own answers. The role of the facilitator is to generate discussion. Ideally, you will be neutral and not share your perspective.

## **Group Discussion**

For large audiences (more than 10-12 people), consider dividing into smaller groups to discuss questions. Key points from each small group can be shared with the larger group and captured on the flip chart at the conclusion of their discussion

## Discussion Questions

1. What were some of the messages you heard in the video related to courage and inclusion?

### Possible Answers:

- Inclusion is created when everyone feels seen, heard and valued.
  - Inclusion asks us to take what is different and sometimes uncomfortable and make it a part of how we do business, a part of our culture and a part of who we trust and rely upon.
  - Courage includes the moral strength to persevere difficulty or fear.
  - Courage is the ability to do something that you know may be difficult; yet, you are open to learning different ways of doing things.
2. Kipp stated he is intentional about incorporating people that look like Skylar in everyday life, from books she reads to people they spend time with. Why is representation important in the workforce?

### Possible Answers:

- Encourages all of us to learn about people who are different from us.
  - Different perspectives make for more innovative teams – various views and backgrounds can drive innovation.
  - The pairing of diversity of expertise with social diversity makes for diversity of information – enhances creative thinking, stronger problem solving, nuanced decision-making, and perspectives capable of unearthing capabilities that may never have been given prior consideration.
  - Increased opportunity to hear the unique contributions offered by others.
  - Representation can become pillars of confidence, creating a space for the underrepresented.
  - Promotes respect, value, and a sense of belonging.
  - People feel seen when they see people that look like themselves.
3. Kipp and his wife, Nikki, try to model their behaviors in the way they communicate to one another and to their children. Modeling is one way in which behavior is learned. What are some ways we can model positive behaviors in the workplace?

### Possible Answers

- Show gratitude – recognize others for their contributions.
  - Show respect for others, even when you may disagree with them.
  - Mentoring relationships help us learn from the experience of others.
  - Demonstrate an interest to learn from others – even if there is a difference of opinion.
4. Kipp mentions that they are a 'transracial' family. 'Transracial' adoption may be a new term to some. Transracial adoption, or interracial adoption, happens when an adoptive family of one racial background adopts a child from another racial background. In other words, it is the merging of racial experiences and cultures within the adoption process.

Was this term new to you? What is your experience, if any, with transracial families?

**Possible Answers**

- Requires personal responses from participants
- Keep learning
- Keep listening
- Remain open to others who have an experience that is different than that of your own.

5. Kipp mentions that he and his wife Nikki ask each other challenging questions and force each other to have awkward conversations in order for them both to improve.

How have awkward conversations helped you grow – either personally or professionally?

**Possible Answers**

- I've learned more about myself because if I reflect on where my mind was at the time of the awkward conversation, it usually sets the tone for how the conversation will go.
- While the awkward conversation may have been unexpected or uncomfortable, it made me feel a bit more human – realizing we are not perfect.
- The tone of my voice tends to change when interacting with different people based on my level of comfort/confidence. Awkward conversations have helped me build my skill to match my tone to the person I'm speaking with; or, speak with a sense of calm to de-escalate the situation (for example).
- Awkward conversations have helped me with the manner in which I carry myself by being situationally aware of my body language.

## Review Objectives

Participants will be challenged to:

- Begin new dialogues on issues facing our co-workers and our community
- Learn how to be brave (*as we listen to Kipp's story and others' sharing within their debrief discussions*) and lead from where you are
- Support Ameren's efforts to build a more inclusive workplace and community

## Closing Comments

Conclude the session by sharing your organization's or group's policy statement or position on diversity. Be sure to thank the participants for their contributions to discussions and for their time.

## Survey

Please take a few minutes to complete a brief survey on *The Courage to Live Your Values in Uncertain Times* video series:

Click on link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2021DiscussionsAcrossDifferences>

***Let's keep the dialogue going.***