

DAYS OF DIALOGUE: AT&T'S JOURNEY



Introduction

In 2016, our Chairman & CEO, Randall Stephenson, challenged AT&T employees to show the world the potential of diverse people working together toward common goals. Since then, AT&T employees across the globe have embraced the call to better understand one another and appreciate our different perspectives. That work is not always easy, but as our Chairman says, the effort is well worth it.

These pages capture some of the resources that have helped us on this journey and some of the things we've learned along the way. We hope it helps you on your own path to deeper understanding.



“ I'm proud that AT&T is recognized as a leader in being diverse and inclusive. It's clear evidence that we are living out one of our most important core values: Stand for equality. But as with everything in life, there's more we can do. As you've heard me say before, we should not just simply tolerate others and their beliefs, but instead go beyond tolerance to truly understand people with backgrounds and viewpoints different than our own. And understanding always starts with dialogue. Open and honest dialogue is hard work. It may even be uncomfortable at times. But if we are to make AT&T a better, stronger and more inclusive place to work, the effort is well worth it. ”



Randall Stephensen

Chairman & Chief Executive Officer

“ Despite the often-contentious tone of our national debate surrounding issues of equality, respect and fairness, there are encouraging signs. Large companies noted for their commitment to diversity and inclusion are emphasizing the need for honest conversations in the workplace, and the results are promising.

This year, I've talked with thousands of AT&T employees about the importance of having these conversations at work, and how to make them constructive. We've tackled contentious and divisive issues head-on and learned a lot about one another – and about ourselves.

Live events featuring honest discussions with real people — that's been our approach at AT&T. And while we're far from perfect, our commitment gets stronger every day. ”



Corey Anthony

*Senior Vice President-Human Resources
& Chief Diversity Officer, AT&T Inc.*



Sharing What We've Learned from Days of Dialogue

AT&T employees were invited and encouraged to participate in Days of Dialogue - team conversations intended to deepen understanding and inclusion. This is an opportunity to continue building understanding through engaging dialogue sessions.

Here are some tips that have helped leaders of these important conversations in our organization:

Set the Tone/ Be the Role Model

- Come with a positive attitude
- Greet conversation participants as they enter the room
- Actively Listen: Listen to understand, not to respond.
- Don't talk over people



Create a Safe Environment

- Remain neutral in your reactions to what is being discussed. Don't make judgmental comments.
- Don't tolerate unprofessional comments or body language. Redirect the discussion and call out unprofessional behavior without singling out people.
- If you get emotional responses, acknowledge the emotion and assure people that some topics bring up emotions, that we are all human, and that it's OK. Acknowledge their courage to share. Make people comfortable to continue.
- Although rare, if you encounter disruptive, overly emotional or inappropriate behaviors, you should address directly and immediately.
 - If it persists, ask the person to leave the meeting.

Encourage Participation



- Ask clarifying and follow-up questions to encourage discussion.
- Thank participants for their participation.
- Don't be afraid of silence. Once you've asked for participation, give people time to think. (Also, people get uncomfortable if it's quiet too long and will jump in to fill the void.)
- If some aren't participating:
 - Ask them if they would like to add something (Some people need a “push” to participate. If they say they don't have anything to add, that's OK, too.)
 - Although you don't want to do all of the talking, it's OK to share your insight or examples to trigger additional thoughts in others.



- If someone is monopolizing the discussion (this can be tough):
 - Break in during a pause.
 - Be polite, “Excuse me for interrupting, but I want to make sure everyone has a chance to share.”
 - Give the person a chance to wrap up, “Before you go on, can you summarize your key thoughts?”
 - Ask a clarifying question to help the individual summarize, “So, what I’m hearing is... ?” “How would you summarize your input?”
 - Thank the person for participating. “Thanks for that story – does anyone else want to add on?”

The Conversation

SET GROUND RULES

- Be Present

- Put electronic devices down.
- Listen first, and generously: Seek to understand different perspectives.
- Ask questions for clarity and without judgment.

- Show Respect

- Assume others have good intentions.
- Everyone gets a chance to talk voluntarily.
- Share respectfully & honestly.
- Be aware of your own biases and reactions.

- Cut Others Some Slack

- Forgive one another for awkwardness.
- Don't let uncomfortableness or political correctness censor you.

- Share Your Story/Hear Others' Stories

- * Spend the bulk of your time here.
- Ask for a volunteer: Who would like to share a story or part of their background that shaped their perspective on diversity?
- Continue to ask for volunteers and give all an opportunity to share.

Dr. Henry Louis Gates on Deepening Understanding and Inclusion at AT&T

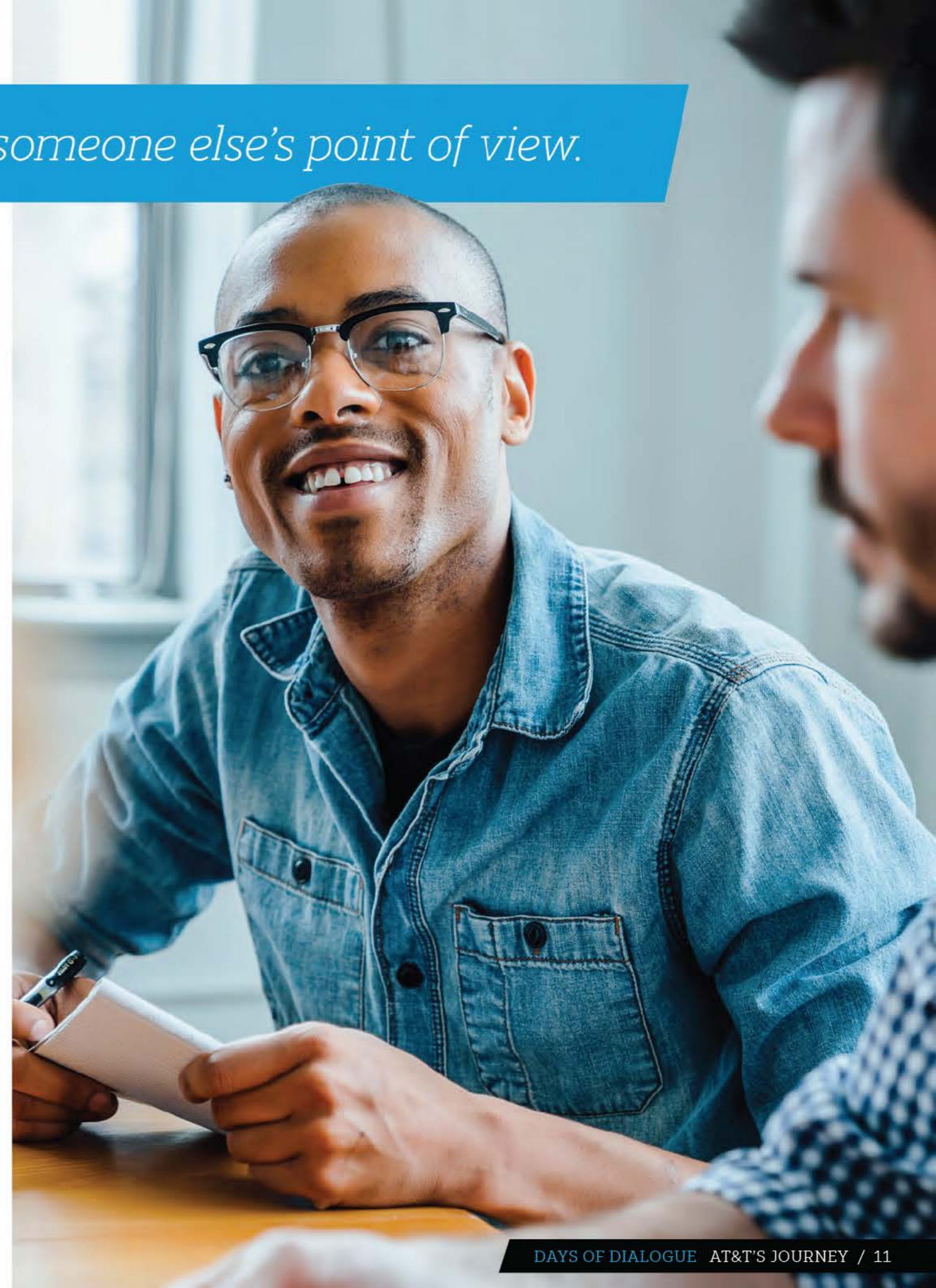
Dr. Henry Louis Gates is a Harvard professor, host of PBS show Finding Your Roots, and longtime friend of AT&T. He shares that no matter where we each are, we all need reminders to help us on this journey to deeper understanding. Here are some of his takeaways from his time helping individuals and groups on this important path:

Dr. Henry Louis Gates

Host of Finding Your Roots

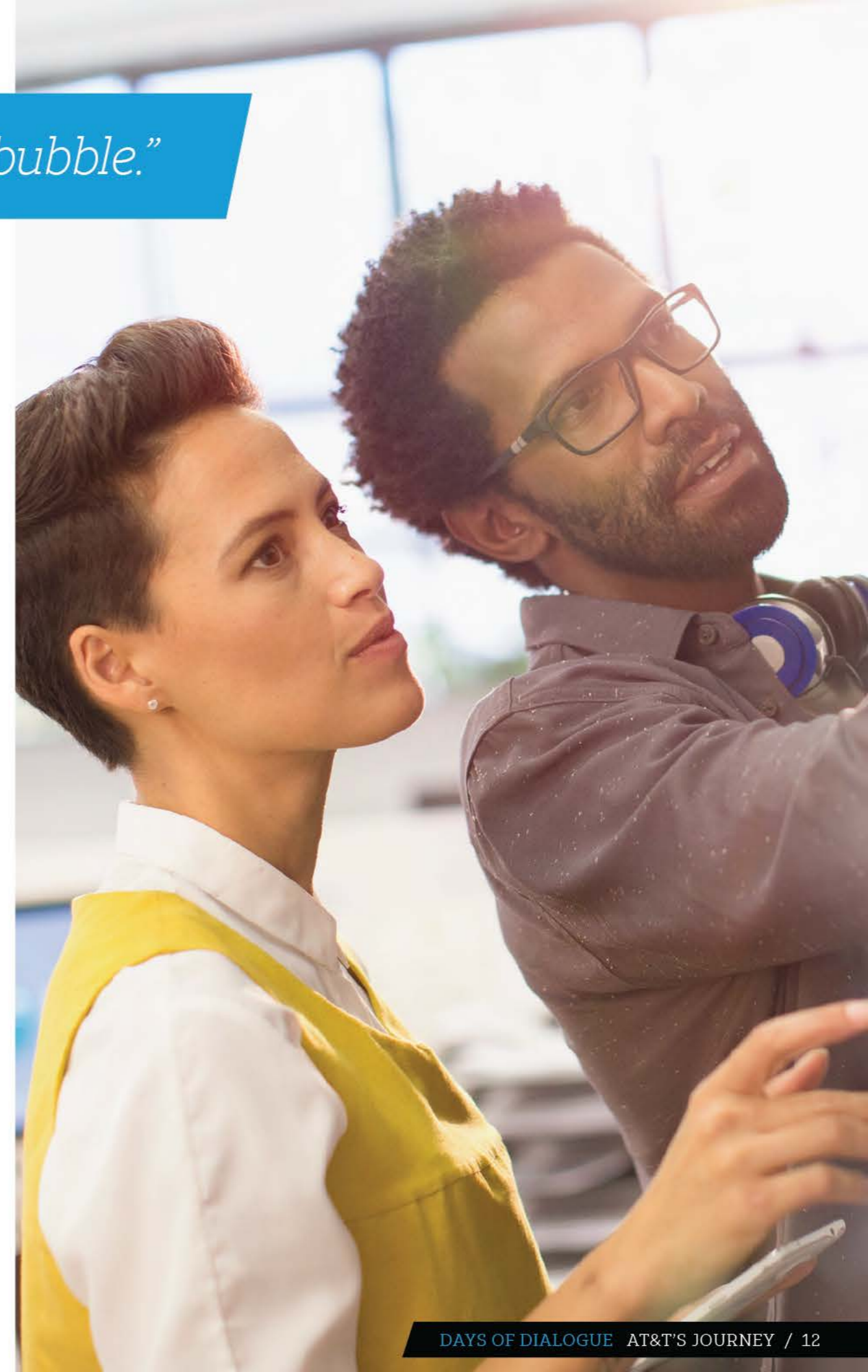
1. Step back and try to look at the picture from someone else's point of view.

When assessing an awkward situation related to differences in race, gender, sexual orientation, or religion, always ask yourself, “what or whom is being cropped out of the picture? What am I not seeing and why?” Step back for a minute and try to imagine yourself as the other person in your gaze. View the picture from a different angle. Have the courage to say to those you are struggling to understand why they might hold a certain opinion and ask them to help you to comprehend their point of view.



2. Avoid falling into what we might call a “world-view bubble.”

Read books and articles or watch TV series and films that challenge your assumptions. Take the risk of trying to get to know someone who does not share your worldview. Invite them to lunch or dinner. Attend a house of worship with someone of a completely different faith—or even no faith at all! Everybody at all points on the political spectrum shares the same concerns: Loving and providing for their family; staying healthy; living well; being a good person and a good neighbor; defending both their citizenship rights and their right to be themselves, whatever that might mean. Under the superficial differences that seem to divide us, DNA analysis of the sort that we do each week on Finding Your Roots reveals that we are all fundamentally the same.



3. Support the free and open exchange of ideas.



Defend freedom of speech and the press from censorship of any kind. (This does not, of course, include hate speech, which every organization regulates in its own way.) The marketplace of ideas can function and thrive only when everyone is allowed to speak and be heard. Listen most carefully and patiently when you most disagree. But defend your ideas and principles with gusto!