

HOPE NOT HATE WORKSHOPS

The Hope not Hate project (see page 10) developed a number of hands-on communications workshops which were offered in a variety of different settings. The workshops built capacity in social media communications techniques and also offered training for those working in church-related, social, health and youth work, to develop strategic approaches to hope speech in specific situations, to try to change the narrative. Below is an example of a half-day workshop that aims to develop a nine-point plan to deal with online hate speech. In evaluating the workshops, participants highlighted that it was empowering to work on the case study situations, rather than immediately on their own situations.

Introduction

Offer an introduction to online hate speech, what it is, and how it can go viral.

Group work

The workshop is divided into groups, each of which deals with a fictional case study related to hate speech. The online workshop outline offers four examples as starting points (see box). However, those facilitating the workshop are encouraged to get participants to think up their own case studies, either in the plenary session or in each small group. This makes the process more creative and relevant to the participants.

Each small group is asked to put together a simple nine-point strategic plan around three key areas:

- Crisis communication – three points to deal with the immediate issues in a strategic and clear way.
- Follow up – three points that check the initial strategy is working and can evolve as needed.
- Strategic preventative measures – three points that could be developed within the institution to avoid this happening in future.

Discussion and presentation

Following the group work, each group presents their strategic plans in a plenary session, with the opportunity for discussion and critical feedback.

A final information session points to further resources on issues of communication and hate speech, as well as to education material which can be adapted to develop workshops

elsewhere. A further module could be developed encouraging participants to work on a strategic plan for their own contexts.

Material is available online, enabling people to train others in their own contexts. An overview can be found at: <http://www.wacceurope.org/projects/social-media-divide/hope-not-hate/>

CASE STUDY OUTLINES: WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN... ?

1. A handout on finding ways to deal with extreme right-wing views in the work place, produced for staff training in a nursery, is given to the local newspaper which reprints parts of it out of context. Over the next 48 hours the modest Facebook page the organisation normally uses to post job offers is inundated with targeted racist comments.
2. Your church-run care home for elderly people rents much-needed extra space in a nearby building, only to later discover it is owned by a politician with known neo-Nazi views. The politician uses the rental agreement to publicize their credentials, meanwhile your organization is accused on social media platforms and in the local press of cooperating with Nazis.
3. Your new youth centre for work with young people from a migration background begins to attract a growing number of critical comments on its social media platforms. Why are you only doing things for migrants? Why aren't you doing something for homeless people or older people?
4. You run a small family guidance centre in a provincial town. At an open day you present some of the work at the centre, including its work with women and girls in situations of domestic violence. An older man asks some rather strange questions. In the weeks following the open day a growing number of very hostile comments about victims of domestic abuse are left on the organisation's social media platforms, all the comments mention you personally. It would seem to be the person who attended the open day.