

Sense of Urgency

Looks like:

- A constant sense of urgency makes it difficult to take time to be inclusive, encourage democratic and/or thoughtful decision-making, to plan long-term, or to consider consequences.
- A constant sense of urgency frequently results in sacrificing potential allies for quick or highly visible results. For example, an organization might sacrifice the interests of communities of color in order to win victories for white people (who are seen as the default or norm community and therefore 'more valuable').
- This dynamic is often reinforced by funding proposals that promise too much work for too little money, and by funders who expect too much for too little.

Antidotes:

- Learn to make practical work plans that set up people for success.
- Write realistic funding proposals with realistic time frames.
- Understand that things take longer than anyone usually expects. Leadership should build in flexibility and suppleness during times when urgency seems to pervade the workflow and/or workplace culture.
- Discuss what it means to set goals around anti-racism, anti-colonialism, and other forms of resistance to structural oppression. Dedicate time to support individual and organizational learning, and collectively herald structural changes that give rise to inclusion and diversity.
- Take the time needed to learn from past experiences and find a feasible, consistent method for documenting and/or preserving these learnings.
- Realize that rushing decisions takes more time in the long run. Inevitably, people who didn't get a chance to voice their thoughts and feelings will at best resent and at worst undermine the decision because they were left unheard.
- Be clear about how you will make good decisions in an atmosphere of urgency.