

DIE+K *New Yorker* Presentation: Lesson

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This technique is designed for us to do for ourselves when we encounter someone who causes us to have, or even show, negative judgment or bias. Respect for others, no matter their differences, is created when we slow down and stop to think.

- Ask the group to get into partners. Presenter should write the letters out on a large poster board or chalkboard/whiteboard and a brief explanation (Details, Interpretation/Evaluate/Know More).
- Select one of the covers to do together, practicing the DIE+K as a group. I chose the Bin Laden look-alike.
- Prior to working together, go over the printed handout with instructions, paying careful attention to the difference between each letter. If you have an example from your own life, use it. I usually use the example that I judge teens/young adults on how loud they are in public and it irritates me every time until I remember to do this technique.
- Present the **D** (details). Repeat that it stands for details/facts only – what they see on the cover.
- Call for responses and then let them talk out loud as a group. This letter states the obvious – (“He’s wearing a jacket, He has a beard, There are marks on his face, etc.”). Redirect answers that are not factual for the first letter, **D**. “I think it’s Osama Bin Laden” is a common response, and it may be him, but that is not a detail; it’s an **I** (interpretation). You don’t want to jump to conclusions at this point. Using “I think” for **D** should be stopped immediately by the presenter. Tell the group that “I think” is for the letter **I**. Continue with more responses.
- Go over **I** and tell them to wonder about/think about/interpret the image (“I think the eraser means we will never need to worry about ObL again.”). This interpretation can be what the cover might represent or symbolize rather than what is factual. Take responses, commenting on each one because you want to be sure they understand. This letter can get a lot of discussion.
- Go over **E** (evaluate) which is often confused with **I**. Evaluating is how you feel about what you think you see (“I hate Osama bin Laden” or “Osama bin Laden should have been brought back for trial; he should have died by firing squad.”).
- **+K** (need to know) is what ELSE you need to know/discover/understand before you can judge the image on the cover. Maybe you’d need to know if ObL wore camo, or if the image you think you see might be one of a number of people who “look like” this and we are judging it in a limited way. It might change what your assessment is (“This person on the cover represents an entire group of people, Al Qaeda, which our military is almost finished wiping out.”).
- Once they finish the large group activity, ask them to choose from the other covers to practice the technique. Have them share their answers with the entire group. If they finish a cover, they can move on to one of the others; they’ll get more practice. Take responses by cover.
- If there is time, ask if anyone will share a situation they’ve encountered when they have shown immediate judgment or felt a strong bias coming on. Perhaps it’s something that has bothered them when they judge and they want to change and work toward more understanding and less judgment.
- Doing this activity will not mean that a bias will magically go away. We will still judge, and to help that in terms of diversity and inclusion takes a long time. Start somewhere once and then again and again and again. It’s a journey, but a necessary one.