



June 4, 2020

Dear Sherlock Team,

This week, a request came to me asking if Sherlock would support the team's participation in the Black Lives Matter protest in George Floyd's memory. I am very proud to be part of a team with that compassion and commitment. I hope that the expectation was my enthusiastic support, which I gave. I feel strongly that we should support this movement now and in the future, and I want to take this opportunity to remind the team that our goal is to be proactive, not reactive.

Historically within Sherlock, I felt I erred too much on being outspoken on the issues of race, particularly those affecting the African American community in the United States. Many of you know that I am personally touched by those challenges; however, I want to be clear that advocacy and understanding are not the same. What I expect of Sherlock is for us to do our best to effect positive change and to listen to voices sharing direct experience.

For those adding their energy to the protests, I commend you. In every facet of life, we need to maintain this effort, not just when it is popular and obvious to fight against the hate and supremacy that prevents equality. It astounds me that demands for peaceful protest are simultaneously met with hypocritical outrage, like when a Green Beret advised Colin Kaepernick to kneel for awareness of systematic police violence against the Black community. It pains me when we ignore conflict by asking prosecutors who partner with police to determine whether or not a grand jury should be convened, whether to break protocol with testimony, and whether a case should even go forward against their partners in the justice system. Whatever we feel we need to do, we need to do more.

Please, do not be distracted by efforts of deflection. I remind you that, as a nation, we celebrate a bloody, guerilla war every July that was fought to relieve the burden of taxation, exclusively, for propertied, white men. Today, we are still fighting, but for more than representation; we join our efforts to save the lives of our own citizens. If we correct our justice system and the corrosive patterns of inherent bias within our culture, we remove the cause of these protests and looting. Like any disease, we must treat the cause, not the symptoms.

Racism is an evil that we often notice but rarely confront. Perhaps it is most obvious when we read about cases like George Floyd. Our industry, despite its progressive stance, needs to do more. Sherlock needs to do more. I have seen initiatives to 'welcome' the African American community into existing structures. These are wonderful beginnings, but we need to move the center of our thinking away from the influences of a biased culture. Further, it is not just biotechnology. In medicine's best institutions, Black adults and children receive less pain medication based on biases, and Black patients receive less care overall. Outside of the healthcare industry, it is no better – I have witnessed the common occurrence of Black teens followed through stores in white neighborhoods and towns, despite the much higher probabilities of shoplifting by people from other races. We all must work to proactively undo the damage that we compound every day.

Sherlock has done well in some areas, but not well enough for me. You, too, should be unsatisfied. We made a commitment when the company was founded: the composition of our company should do better than our regional demographics when it comes to diversity, and our culture should continue to support diversity within and outside of our walls.

Through experience and some study, I have observed that many consider the choice with race to be binary: racist or not racist. Those are not functional distinctions. If we live in a culture where racism is endemic, then merely not being racist is accepting the existence of structural racism. There is a third choice, which has been described best by Professor Ibram X. Kendi: anti-racism. An anti-racist actively opposes racism, and she does so constantly. I highly recommend the book, 'How to Be an Antiracist,' which Sherlock will buy for any employee willing to read it. Just ask me.

The ideals of anti-racism were delineated by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., whose commitment to peaceful protest began to wane in his final years. As he reflected on the civil rights movement, he composed these lines in his 'Letter from a Birmingham Jail':

First, I must confess that over the past few years I have been gravely disappointed with the white moderate. I have almost reached the regrettable conclusion that the Negro's great stumbling block in his stride toward freedom is not the White Citizen's Counciler or the Ku Klux Klanner, but the white moderate, who is more devoted to "order" than to justice; who prefers a negative peace which is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice; who constantly says: "I agree with you in the goal you seek, but I cannot agree with your methods of direct action"; who paternalistically believes he can set the timetable for another man's freedom; who lives by a mythical concept of time and who constantly advises the Negro to wait for a "more convenient season." Shallow understanding from people of good will is more frustrating than absolute misunderstanding from people of ill will. Lukewarm acceptance is much more bewildering than outright rejection.

In Dr. King's words, we see the magnitude of our challenge.

Now is the time for change. Regrettably, centuries ago was also the time for change. Now is not the time to be content with progress. Progress has become the substitute for change. I implore each of you to make changes. Within Sherlock, let's have our views and culture lend constant, proactive support to this movement. Let's do better than our peers and our region to represent diversity. Let's give voices with experience full privilege in these debates. Let's make Sherlock anti-racist. Let's make our everyday choices anti-racist.

For the duration of my tenure, Sherlock will always act in ways that support the ideals of Black Lives Matter and racial justice and equity. Be an anti-racist. I support you.

Thank you,



Rahul K. Dhandu
Co-founder, President and CEO