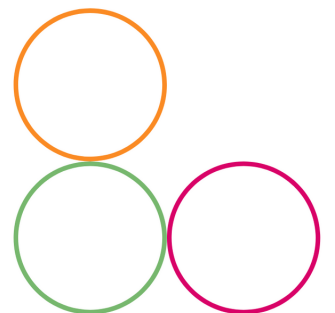




5 Ways to be an Inclusive Leader

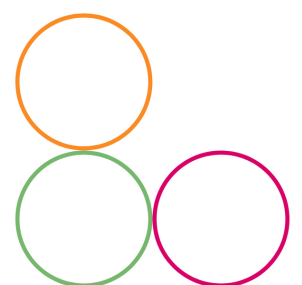
and help your team thrive



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1. Listen

Listen to the voices of the people you work with. Many of them will be willing to share their lived experiences with you, if you are willing to listen. Carve out some one-on-one time to have meaningful conversations with each person on your team, during which you actively listen. Active, sincere listening will help you understand and connect with the people on your team, and their diverse experiences and perspectives.

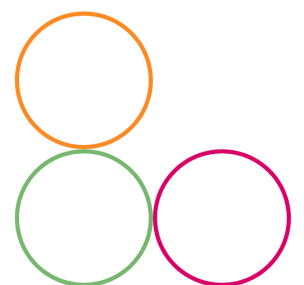


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2. Keep an open mind

Avoid making any assumptions about the world or peoples' lived experiences. Instead, keep an open mind and be flexible to learning new information, regardless of how much life experience you have. Everyone's lived experience won't be the same as yours. When in doubt, just (respectfully) ask questions.

Here's an example: one of your colleagues just got engaged and you'd like to congratulate her. Instead of assuming that your colleague now has a husband (unless she has told you), keep an open mind that she has a partner: who could be an opposite-sex partner or a same-sex partner.

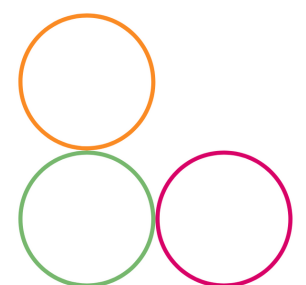


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3. Be courageous



Be courageous enough to make mistakes. Be courageous enough to accept that you are not perfect (none of us are). Be courageous enough to keep trying anyway. Be courageous enough to have awkward conversations, and be courageous enough to apologize if that's what someone needs from you. Be courageous enough to challenge your own growth, both as an individual and as a leader!

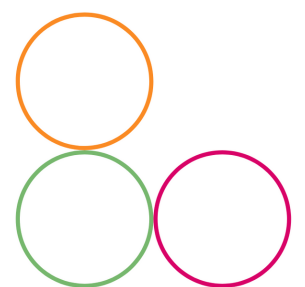


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4. Be a source of validation & support

One of the biggest hurdles to inclusion is when leaders invalidate the experiences of people. When someone on your team shares something with you, never minimize or invalidate their experience, or start talking about your own experiences. Instead, respond with validation, empathy, and support.

Here's an example: You're meeting some colleagues for an off-site lunch. An employee with a disability arrives late and tells you that they had a difficult time finding accessible parking. Instead of responding with a discussion about your own parking challenges, validate the employee's individual experience and respond with empathy and understanding to the barriers they just faced.

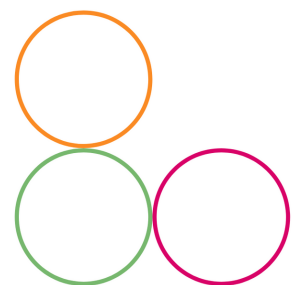


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5. Stay informed & keep learning



Stay up-to-date with resources that will keep you informed about the diverse lived experiences of people. This may include a library membership, online blogs, or podcasts. We tend to gravitate towards information that's already familiar to us. Challenge yourself to "check out" resources that inform you about experiences that are different from yours. Consider taking a course on the history of Indigenous Peoples; reading pieces authored by Black human rights activists; or tuning into podcasts by LGBTQ+ creators.



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Questions? Let's connect!

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