



DEI – Only a political correctness ????

DEI is a much-used term – and to be “in” and politically correct, websites address this issue. It stands on top of discussion points.

So, what does DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) really mean?

Unfortunately, in the business world it is mostly reflective of how many people are hired to indicate how diverse the company is.

It is most often used to address hiring ethnic diversity, less often used to address “how do we keep the diverse hire”. And ethical diversity is not limited to the specific groups, but includes our global diversity, including our First Nations.

Unfortunately, many companies are proud to show off their diverse hiring, which often covers up the fact that new immigrants are willing to settle for lower wages to get into the workforce. These diverse hires are not a reflection of real interest in DEI but are motivated by financial benefits.

This falls short of addressing the real issues around diversity. There is an obvious gap between what might be seen as diverse and what is diverse.

Other discussions that are missing are around physician handicaps, visible or not visible, and how to accommodate these.

Our focus should not be on what we perceive the diverse group needs, it also should not be the obligation of the diverse hire to teach us, but we should make it our responsibility to educate ourselves.

Bob Joseph captures this approach perfectly with his RESPECT approach: Research, Examine, Strategize, Present, Evaluate, Customize and Transform (Indigenous Relations, 2019, pgs. 72ff).

Underestimated is also the fact that the existing staff member are exposed to and confronted with a new situation – dealing with a change to what they are used to can be for

some people more challenging than others. This could require some open discussions, education and consideration and openness to change.