

Cultural Diversity PLUS

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Learning Summary

Diversity

Diversity training has evolved from focusing solely on eliminating discrimination to proactively seeking inclusion. In the end, diversity is about cultivating meaningful relationships.

Aspects of Inclusive Workplace

- ✓ Everyone is valued and treated with respect.
- ✓ Everyone feels listened to.
- ✓ Every employee at every level practices the behaviors that support an inclusive environment.
- ✓ Potential or actual tensions are actively addressed.
- ✓ The makeup of the workforce represents the local community and its customers.

Understanding Bias

- **Fundamental attribution error:** Explaining someone's behavior based on inherent personality traits rather than external circumstances.
- **Subtle stereotyping:** Characterizing people in terms of high or low warmth and high or low competence based on their "type" or "profile."

Rather than thinking we can eliminate bias, a better approach is to consciously address it by questioning the validity of our assumptions and choosing behaviors that support fairness and equity.

Virtually Imperceptible Inequities

Micro-inequities are small, subconscious behaviors that when repeated, result in separation or unfair treatment. Some examples:

- ✓ Giving feedback to one employee more frequently than to others.
- ✓ Always eating lunch with the same group of people.
- ✓ Habitual seating arrangements in a meeting that don't allow others to sit close to the leader.
- ✓ Assuming a female employee doesn't want to work with a client requiring conference calls at odd hours because she is a new mother.

Framework for Organizational Inclusion

- Demonstrate a desire to seek diverse perspectives at all levels.
- Find and capitalize on the unique skills of each individual.
- Establish a buddy system that connects each new employee with a veteran employee to "show them the ropes."
- Find non-bureaucratic ways of challenging the status quo.
- Foster an atmosphere of flexibility and learning.
- Admit mistakes, weaknesses, and vulnerabilities.

Different Ways of Conveying Respect

- ✓ **Direct vs. Indirect** eye contact and communication
- ✓ **Time:** Value of punctuality or relationships
- ✓ **Individual vs. Group** achievement and recognition
- ✓ **Hierarchy:** Value of position and status or accomplishment based on skill
- ✓ **Reserved vs. Emotional** demeanor

Productive Conflict Resolution

- Discuss the issue and determine how it is perceived by both parties involved.
- Act in good faith.
- Share observations with openness and curiosity.
- Separate substantive issues from "style" differences.
- Decide how to approach the resolution process.
- Consider possible causes.
- Identify the needs of each side and find common ground.
- Consider "achieving disagreement."

Be Part of the Solution

Every person has the ability to lead by example and influence other individuals and the organization.

- ✓ Don't look to be offended.
- ✓ Respond with grace while setting the record straight.
- ✓ Speak up if you experience or notice truly offensive behavior.
- ✓ Treat others with respect.