

Three Very Simple Diversity and Inclusion Actions for 2014

By *Simma Lieberman, The Inclusionist*



Actually, why wait until 2014; you can begin as soon as you finish reading.

I'm not going to suggest New Year's resolutions or tell you how to make them. There are enough books and suggestions online.

Here are three no-cost, very simple diversity management practices you can begin today. You may think that these are so obvious, you don't need to be told, but I want you to be aware of whether or not you practice these with people who are very different than you, or who you don't know.

It's easy to greet the same people every day, however, I'm suggesting you move out of your comfort zone. You'll rapidly notice your comfort zone expanding as well as employee participation and creativity.

Small actions that go viral, and begin to be practiced by large groups of individuals can result in huge benefits for the whole organization.

1- Use the Power of Hello

- Get to know the people on your team, at your site, and other locations if you don't know them all.
- If you are a manager, talk to and learn the names of three new people in your organization every day, and suggest that other people do the same. If a name is hard to pronounce ask the other person to help you pronounce it, and write it phonetically.

It's been all too frequent that employees tell me that they work in places where people don't speak and where the manager just walks by them. They tell me that they feel invisible. You don't have to be a manager, leader or supervisor extend a hello.

Saying hello takes no time, costs no money and can have dramatic results on morale. When "hello," goes viral, people will be more comfortable asking for and giving help to each other.

Suggested action: Be conscious of the people that you greet most often. Do you tend to look at people and be friendlier with people most like you? If so, create an intention, and interact with people that are not like you.

2- Take Diversity to Lunch

Invite people who are different than you to lunch. Be curious, and ask for their perspective on various work issues. Get to also know them as people. Not only will you learn and share your brilliance, you'll benefit from theirs.

3- Develop a New Kind of Orientation Process

Create a welcoming process to help new employees learn about the organization, and speed up integration into the company or department. Share your mission and values of diversity management and inclusion so they can get on board.

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