

Who Needs Diversity and Inclusion Training and Related Work?

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News of the “End or demise of the Diversity Training and Consulting Field” is a wee-bit premature. After a 25-year career training and educating nearly a million participants in my workshops and partnering with hundreds of clients - I wanted to share some observations about the **“Participants and clients who need diversity and inclusion training and related work the most!”** Remember I have done this work in every state but North Dakota and my work and life have taken me to more than 70 countries.

Participants and clients who need to embrace their own biases about Diversity & Inclusion

- The participant who comes to the session early to tell me “He does not need this training” yet does not know what the workshop is about. He has a bias about a session on bias (bias squared)
- The participant in my workshop who wants to sign the roster and leave before anyone gets here “Because he is color and gender blind” and/or “I don’t want to cause you any trouble.”
- The participant “Bad mouthing the session” in the back of the room and he does not know me (I am sitting in the back as everyone files in) and he is trying to convince me this session, my session is a waste of time. He is trying to build an “anti-workshop coalition.”
- The Executive, The Leader, The Manager who can barely manage “People like him/herself let alone people that are different” and just does not want to admit to himself or anyone else or value these skills.
- The “Heckler” in the session who does not realize that by attacking me, the session – they are “Showing everyone else by their actions why we need this conversation” - they are my poster child – thanks!
- The classist, sexist, racist, homophobe, elitist, etc., in the class who is proud of their values and wears them like a badge of honor.
- The “They would never fire me – don’t you know who I am?” – Very high up person who thinks because of their status or tenure their firm would never discipline or fire him/her. Huge ego and cocky.
- Before the session the participant who sends me this nice email “You can’t train all of us – some of us you will have to kill” or “You must be a blanket blank Jew!” – Now I am fired up to train in this environment!!
- The client who wants me to “Do everything in a one-hour session” – really?

- The client who wants me to do “Something off-the-shelf” and “Get started right away” but does not want to tell me what is really going on – I call this the “Set Up, The Ambush”
- The client who “Does not want me to ‘rock-the-boat’ but they are on fire” with their emerging diversity and inclusion issues and facing bad press at least and a big lawsuit at worst.
- The client who “Does not want anyone to feel uncomfortable in the session” yet their own employees are complaining about harassment, hostile work place, discrimination, bullying, favoritism etc.
- The client who is very homogeneous at the top and the middle ranks of management and leadership and when I ask - “Who is not here, what perspective, what voice is not in this room?”- They look at me with this blank stare. They are on what I call the “friends and family hiring plan.”
- Any individual or organization that is “Fighting change and trying to maintain the status quo.” Diversity and Inclusion is about change – change in the workforce, the workplace, and the marketplace. So many stories – so little time and space.

You see the Best Diversity and Inclusion Training Participants (and clients)

- have to learn to be comfortable being uncomfortable – get out of their comfort zones and really ask the tough questions
- will be confronted in the session without the session being confrontational
- must “discuss the undiscussables” – the taboos, the ugly couch and carpet in the living room
- have to become self-aware and look within themselves, their own blind spots – call it grappling with unconscious bias
- have to want to learn, have to want to improve themselves – their employer cannot make them
- who have a bias for action – acknowledge and want to address their emerging diversity and inclusion and are not in denial

I always tell my clients – “If we do an organization-wide assessment for you, we will tell you what we found, not what you want to hear.” At DTG – we are truth tellers – only the truth can set you free. Only the truth will breed loyalty and trust in your employee ranks. Trust is at the center of all of our work.

Hire a firm like DTG, then ignore the findings of the organization-wide assessment or ignore how your employees “fight” the training and proceed at your own peril. I always say – “Do not worry about training all of your employees and feeling uncomfortable about the push back and resistance to the training – worry more about not training any of your personnel and they all stay!”

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