



Understand and Embrace Diversity

Workbook

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Ask Yourself ...

What are your expectations for this training?

What expectations do you think your company has for this training?

What level of participation do you plan to bring to this training?

What are some communication ground rules you think would be useful for this training?

Learning Points

Participants will:

- Explore diversity issues.
- Discuss effective communication on challenging topics.
- Discuss how one's culture influences workplace behaviors.
- Examine the cultural styles and values of different groups and individuals within groups.
- Affirm business reasons for diversity.
- Determine the impact of prejudice.
- Identify and recognize “big picture” issues and challenges.
- Identify skills for effective understanding and communication.

Identification and Resolution

- Stay calm.
- Compromise.
- Discuss.
- Find time.
- Take care.
- Mediate.

Identification and Resolution

Strategies.

Stay calm.

- Create space and distance.

Compromise.

- Consider what might bring you closer to agreement.

Discuss.

- Choose a place that is private and quiet.
- Ensure that each party has the opportunity to speak.
- Use active listening techniques with each other.
- Keep the discussion issue focused without belittling the other party.
- Problem-solve using brainstorming techniques to meet each party's needs.
- Agree on a solution for a trial period.
- Schedule a follow-up meeting to re-evaluate.

Identification and Resolution

Strategies.

Find time.

- Discuss sooner rather than later. Don't give resentment a chance to take hold.

Take care.

- Don't allow abusive behavior.
- End the discussion, if necessary. Offer to return to the discussion another time.

Mediate.

- Bring in a third-party mediator, if necessary.
- Involve supervisor or Human Resources if differences can't be settled.
- Follow your company's policy on mediation between parties.

Cultural Iceberg

What do you think of when you consider diversity?

The Melting Pot vs. Multiculturalism

From early in this country's history, the United States was referred to as a "melting pot" and citizens took pride in this label because it reflected the various cultures that chose to immigrate to "America." The label implied an assimilation process that, whether conscious or unconscious, expected shared values and behaviors. What was lost in the process was cultural identification, language and cultural uniqueness. It's out of this concept that the idea of being "color blind" became something for which to strive.

Multiculturalism embraces and values differences. It encourages retaining cultural heritage and language and promotes adaptation instead of assimilation. The expectation is that differences will be recognized, honored and accommodated. Being "color blind," from a multicultural perspective, diminishes the value of our differences. Multiculturalism is similar to a tossed salad in which each vegetable brings its own distinctive color, shape and flavor to the salad bowl; each vegetable retains the properties that make it distinctive while also being mixed together to create a masterpiece.

Valuing Human Differences

Today's workforce is becoming increasingly diverse. Chances are that the people you work with every day are not exactly like you. They come from different backgrounds, may have different values and may even speak different languages. However, it's important for today's organizations to value human differences, not only because it's the right thing to do, but because it can affect the bottom line. For example, if a company's largest consumer population is women, it would be extremely beneficial to have women in their marketing department.

Read each scenario and determine whether the organization has recognized the benefit of valuing human differences.

- The XYZ Company is marketing a new product. They ask members of different ages, races and genders to participate in a focus group to discuss how they feel about the new product.
- Leaders in a large community use the same message, regardless of the audience, to urge all residents to participate in a new crime-stopping program.
- A manufacturing company has a predominant ethnic group in one type of job. They offer classes for these employees to help them move into different jobs and levels within the company.
- A large employer offers employees a choice of when they would like to take vacation for holidays, as there are a number of holidays having significant meanings to different ethnic groups.
- A catalog company whose business comes from telephone orders, only offers instructions over the phone in English, even though there's a significant Spanish speaking population in their city.

Advantages of Diversity

Workplace demographic changes reflect cultural demographic changes. A diverse workplace that reflects the diverse culture in which it does business will be **better able to compete — and succeed — in the marketplace.**

A successful organization may be translated into **better job security and opportunities** for its employees.

Diverse companies fully utilize their human resources, realizing **greater creativity, flexibility and potential.**

Broadening the field of choices also **expands the talent and skill pool** and increases the possibility of getting **the best person for the job.**

Diversity creates incentive for individuals to be the best that they can be.

A diverse workforce provides ongoing **opportunities for challenge, stimulation, expanding horizons and personal growth.**

Birth Order Diversity

The facilitator will ask you to split into groups, according to your birth order. This means you'll join the group that matches the order you were born in your family — or if you were adopted, the place you took in the family — oldest, middle, youngest. If there were more than three children in your family, and you are neither the oldest nor the youngest, regard yourself as a middle child. If you're an only child, consider joining the first-born group.

Once you've joined the appropriate group, appoint one person to take notes and speak for the group at the end of the exercise. Talk about what it was like to be in your position in the family. How did/does it affect your personality, your relationships with your parents, siblings and with others? Are you happy with your birth order? Do you think the typically held beliefs about birth order are true?

When the facilitator gives you the two-minute warning, write down the main points on which your group agrees, and have the spokesperson be ready to share them with the rest of the workshop group.

How I Like To Be Treated

Check off any of these statements that are true for you. Feel free to add more of your own as well.

- _____ I want to be told when I make a mistake so I don't make it again.
- _____ I want you to tell me if you disagree with me.
- _____ I like being told when I'm doing well so I know I'm on the right track.
- _____ I'm uncomfortable if my boss asks for my input and listens to my concerns.
- _____ I want the freedom to do things my own way.
- _____ It's not the supervisor's role to help out when we're busy.
- _____ I don't want to have to ask for directions and approval every step of the way.
- _____ I like it when others tell me what's on their minds.
- _____ I like it when people call me by my first name.
- _____ I don't like to be noticed and singled out for praise.
- _____ I like to be seen as an individual, not just considered one of the group.
- _____ I like being treated as an equal.
- _____ Direct eye contact feels very aggressive and threatening.
- _____ I like _____.
- _____ It feels good when _____.

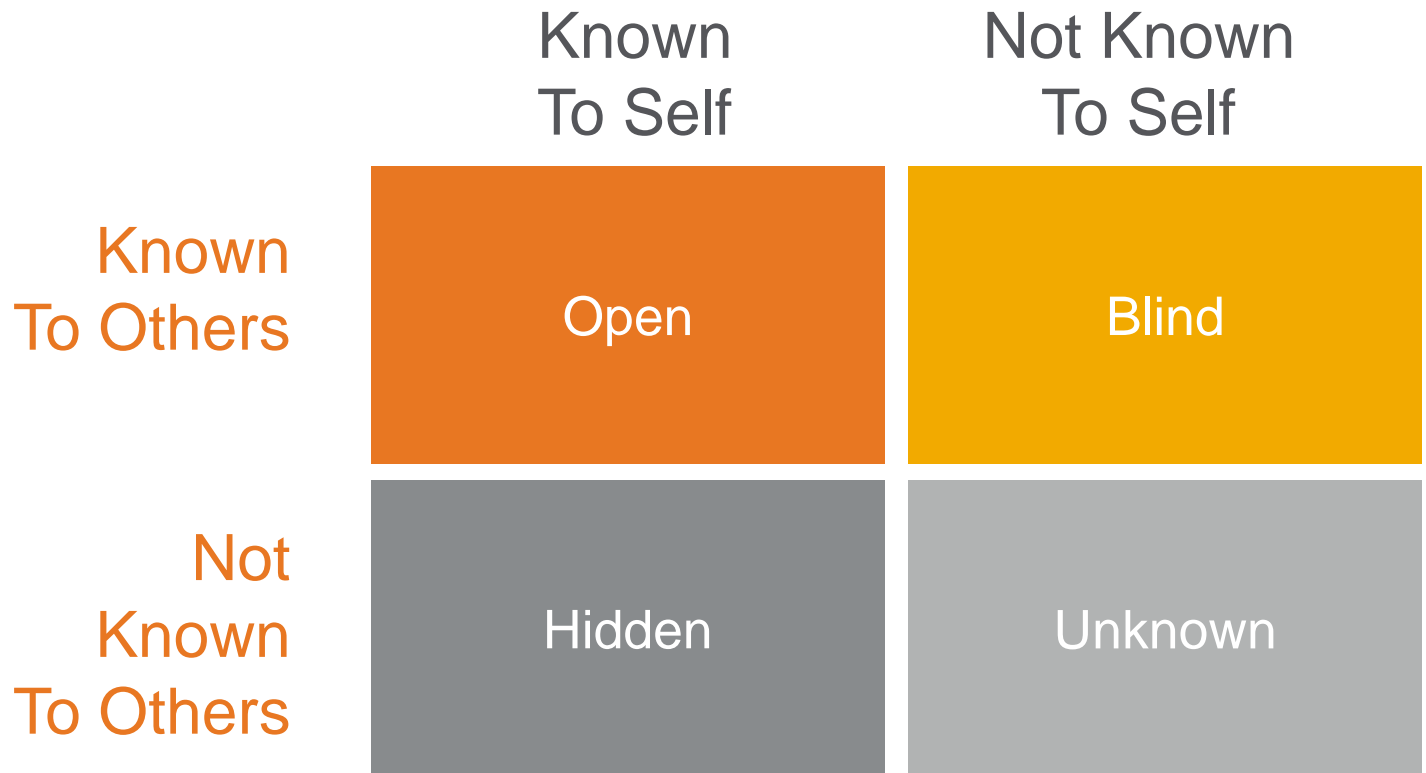
Primary Identity

What's your primary identity? Is it your race/ethnicity, your age, your gender, your ability/disability, something else?

What kind of filter does your primary identity provide?

What “blind spots” do you have about groups who don't share your primary identity?

The Johari Window



The Johari Window

Things we do unconsciously or are unaware of can be addressed via feedback, which can decrease the blind area and expand the open area. We may store issues that we're ashamed of or beliefs we hold that we're uncomfortable with in our hidden arena. With trust and proper support, we can discuss these concerns and further broaden the open window. We do need to use caution, however, when sharing those things that will increase our vulnerability.

Getting feedback reduces the size of the blind spot; disclosing information increases the open quadrant and decreases hidden information.

Increased shared information means greater opportunities to work more effectively with — and improve understanding of — each other.

Unlock the Unknown

How do earlier experiences influence the person you've become?

Your presenter will lead you in an exercise that will help you explore this question. Follow the instructions; you'll have a chance to process this in your small group.

Minimize the Facade

Work individually to answer the questions below. Share your responses in your small group. Each group will sets its own rules and methods for sharing.

- What's something I'm proud of about my work and/or the people I work with?
- If my life story were to be made into a movie, what actor/actress would play me?
- What's something I've learned, in the past week, from someone different from me?
- If I could invite any two people — dead or alive — to dinner, whom would I choose?
- What's something about my own ethnic/racial/cultural group that makes me proud?

Internal Messages

**“Birds of a feather
flock together.”**

**“Sugar and spice and everything nice,
That’s what little girls are made of.”**

**“Snakes and snails and puppy dog tails,
That’s what little boys are made of.”**

- What do these sayings have in common?
- What do we learn from them?
- How do they influence our perceptions?
- How do they direct our behavior?
- What do we do with the information?
- How did we learn this?
- Translate them into internal messages that we might hold.
- Are they accurate?
- List examples of diversity-related myths we may have internalized.

Big Picture

What issues, both personal and those embedded in our social/political system, get in the way of making diversity work?

- Blame.
- Paradigm shifts.
- Discomfort with change.
- Giving up “the way it’s always been done” or “the way it works for me.”

Sample Scenarios

Your first language is English and you are peers with a co-worker whose first language is Spanish. You're annoyed that every time you're talking with him, either informally or around business concerns, if another co-worker who shares his first language comes by, he'll speak Spanish to that co-worker. You feel left out and it's beginning to interfere with your work. ***How will you address this?***

You're differently-abled and use a wheelchair for mobility. You feel you're being treated in a solicitous manner by the members of your team. You don't mind courtesy, but it seems as if they're acting as if you're unable to do anything for yourself. You live independently and are able to function just fine when they're not around and you just wish they would recognize that. ***What can you do to change the situation?***

You're a female who has been assigned the lead role working with other co-workers on a project. It excites you because it complements your experience, expertise and interests. One of your male co-workers on the team regularly interrupts you and you sense that his behavior is undermining your leadership. ***How are you going to handle this?***

You have a co-worker who has been open about the fact that she's a lesbian. She has decorated her work space with posters, quotes and pictures that reflect her sexual orientation. You often consult with her or work together on projects and spend a lot of time in her work space. You are uncomfortable with the whole idea of a homosexual lifestyle and are finding it more and more difficult to work with her in her station. ***What do you need to do?***

Speak Up

Effective Interruptions

1. Share observations.
 - “What I heard you say was ...”
2. Own your feelings.
 - “When you say that I feel ...”
3. Reflect the impact.
 - “Statements that classify whole groups of people are inaccurate, and hurtful, and perpetuate myths and falsehoods.”
4. Request your change.
 - “I would like you to refrain from making _____ ist comments around me or in the workplace.”
5. State the consequences.
 - “If you persist in making those comments, I will ...”

Plan for Change

- Anxiety, awkwardness and discomfort are natural.
- External/superficial/easy changes are sought first.
- People first think about what they have to lose instead of what they might gain.
- There are different levels of readiness for change.
- Feeling alone in the process is common.
- If new behaviors are not reinforced, the tendency is to revert to previous behavior.
- Establishing a support system can facilitate the change process.

Make Your Action Plan

What ideas, behaviors, attitudes, feelings, techniques about how to understand and embrace diversity did I gain from the training:

I will focus on applying these techniques by:

I will seek support for this from _____
(This could be a professional peer, friend, supervisor, group, books, audio or video files, or other resources that you may gather.)

I will review my progress one month from today: _____

☐ I am satisfied that I have made sufficient progress.

☐ I will choose another area of my professional behavior to address:

I want to continue to develop my skills and will review again one month from today

I commit to this action plan.

Signature _____

Date _____

About Professional Support

You may consider seeking professional support if you experience any of the following:

- Sleep problems.
- Performance issues at work.
- Relationship difficulties with family or friends.
- Loss of interest in hobbies you normally enjoy.
- Lack of care about normal everyday work tasks.
- Excessive anxiety or worrying more than normal.
- Feeling overwhelmed or sad for more than two weeks.
- A noticeable change in appetite, eating too little or too much.
- Behavior and coping methods have become harmful to yourself or others, whether that is through aggressive behavior or unhealthy habits, such as drinking too much alcohol or taking drugs.
- Thoughts of harm to self and/or others.

Keep in mind some of these conditions may warrant more urgent professional help and you should seek support if you are unsure.

Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available to all employees and their covered dependents and may include some free counseling sessions per issue, per year. Please check with your employer or your health plan for details.

Citations

American Psychological Association: How to choose a psychologist.

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