DEI Resources

Please click on the listed items below to view the content.

Getting Started
- The 4 Layers of Diversity (Document)
- Diversity Wheel: The Dimensions of Diversity (Document)
- Why Diversity Matters (16 min. Video)
- Words Matter (4:45 min Video)
- Top 10 DEI Trends & Recommendations (Article)

Privilege + Allyship
- Your Privilege is Showing (13:26 min. Video)
- Barriers to Inclusion: Privilege (Article)
- 7 Examples of What Being an Ally at Work Really Looks Like (Article)
- 5 Tips for Being an Ally (3:31 min. Video)
- Be a REAL Ally (Article)

Microaggressions
- What are Microaggressions? (3:19 min. Video)
- What exactly is a microaggression? (Article)
- Microaggressions: More Than Just Race (Article)
- How to Shut Down "Microaggressions" at Work (Article)
- How to Respond to Microaggressions (Article)
- Can you spot the micro-inequities (2 min. Video Activity)

Unconscious (Implicit) Bias
- Unconscious Bias: Unintentional People Preference (Article)
- Harvard's Implicit Association Test (Activity)
    - **Suggested activity:** Engage in discussion
    - What surprised you? What did you learn? How will you take these learnings forward?
- Unconscious Bias at Work – Making the Unconscious Conscious (Life at Google) (3:58 min. Video)
- The Look: Talk About Bias (Activity)
    - **Suggested activity:** Conversation guide

Racial Inequity
- Race and Cultural Diversity in American Life and History (Approx. 8 hours to complete the course)

- 21-Day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge (Article)
- Racial Inequity in the Fire Service (2-Part Series)
- White Men: Time to Discover Your Cultural Blind Spots (16:47 min. Video)
- Blind Spots – Being Color Brave (60-90 min.) (Document)
    - Suggested activity: Watch video and complete reflection questions (15 min.)
  Answer the additional self-reflection questions (5 minutes) and share personal experiences (When you've been the only one, how being color brave benefits you personally and professionally, perceived barriers to being color brave) (15 min.)
    - Build your cultural awareness by recognizing that the groups we identify with influence how we see the world; activity provides team opportunity to identify resources to help build cultural awareness (10 min.)
    - Take action to identify key action items that you will commit to working on as part of your goal of becoming more color brave (10 min.)
- Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man (series of episodes featuring Emmanuel Acho covering a variety of topics and providing a safe place to have uncomfortable conversations about race) (Videos)
    - Episode 1: Introduction (9:27 min.)
    - Episode 2: Matthew McConaughey (13 min.)
    - Episode 3: Chip and Joanna Gaines (10 min.)
    - Episode 4: Emmanuel Acho answers questions from viewers (7:25 min.)
    - Episode 5: Interracial Couple – Lindsay Vonn & P.K. Subban with Rachel Lindsay and Bryan Abasolo (13:14 min.)
    - Episode 6: White Parents Raising Black Children (16:42 min.)
    - Episode 7: Carl Lentz, lead pastor of Hillsong East Coast (19:30 min.) Episode 8: Roger Goodell Part I (9:10 min) Part II (10 min.)
    - Episode 9: Conversation with the Police (22 min.)
    - Episode 10: Chelsea Handler (15:21 min.)

Gender and LGBTQ+Inclusivity
- City of Madison: Gender-Inclusive Language Style Guide (Article)
- Harvard's "Stop Telling Women They Have Imposter Syndrome" (Article)
- Being Inclusive – Understanding Gender Pronouns (Document)
- Gender and Sexuality: D&I in the Workplace (2-day Course)
- Pronouns Matter (Website)
    - Answers questions like:
    - What are personal pronouns and why do they matter?
    - How do I use personal pronouns?
    - What if someone makes a mistake?
    - How do I share my personal pronouns?

       o   How do I use gender inclusive language?

- Words Matter (4:45 min. Video)
- Global Toolkit for Change: Assessing LGBTQI+ Inclusion in Your Workplace (Document)

Ageism
- 6 Signs of Ageism in the Workplace and How to Deal With It (Article)
- SHRM's "How to Avoid Ageism" (Article)
- 5 Ways to Combat Ageism in the Workplace (Article)
- Generation Z Looks a Lot like Millennials on Key Social and Political Issues (Article)

Veterans
- SHRM's Tips of Hiring Veterans (Article)
- Clearing Up Employer Misconceptions about Veterans (Article)
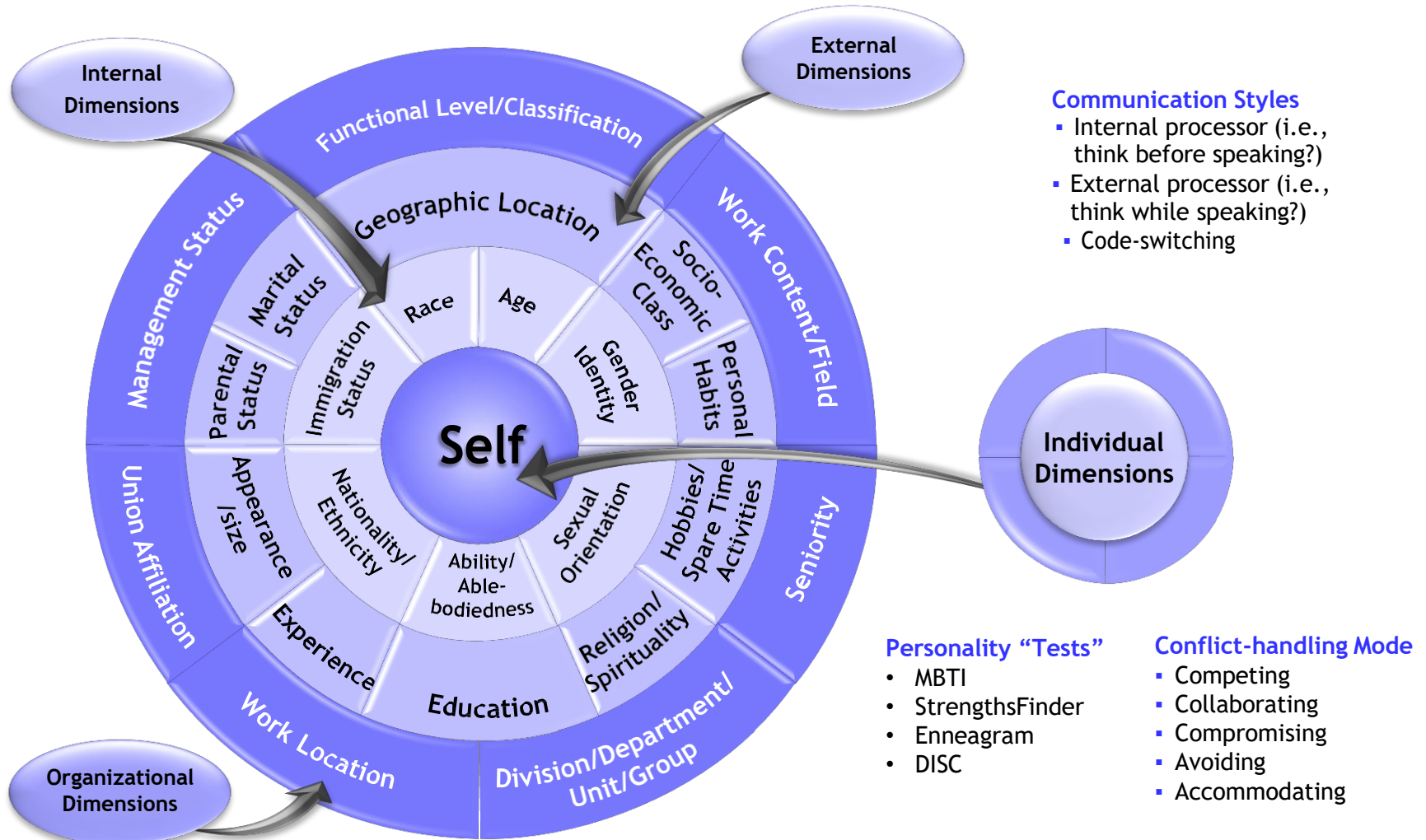- 10 Reasons to Hire Vets (Article)

Diverse Abilities
- Employing Individuals of All Abilities – A Guide for Employers (Article)
- Accessible and Authentic Interviews for Candidates with Disabilities Encouraging (Article)
- Applicants with Disabilities: Job Descriptions and Announcements (Article)

Fostering an Inclusive Culture
- The Forum on Workplace Inclusion – You Hear or Say something Offensive, Then What? (Podcast)
- CEO Action for Diversity and Inclusion – Real Talk Dialogue Podcast (25 min. Video)
- The 7 Pillars of Dignity & Respect (Article)
- How proximity bias holds employees (and workplaces) back (Article and Remote Work)
- Names That Are Unfamiliar to You Aren't "Hard," They're "Unpracticed" (Article)

The Four Layers of Diversity

Internal Dimensions

External Dimensions

Organizational Dimensions

Individual Dimensions

Functional Level/Classification

Management Status

Work Content/Field

Union Affiliation

Seniority

Work Location

Experience

Education

Division/Department/Unit/Group

Geographic Location

Marital Status

Parental Status

Appearance/size

Race

Immigration Status

Nationality/Ethnicity

Age

Self

Gender Identity

Sexual Orientation

Ability/Able-bodiedness

Religion/Spirituality

Hobbies/Spare Time Activities

Personal Habits

Socio-Economic Class

Communication Styles
- Internal processor (i.e., think before speaking?)
- External processor (i.e., think while speaking?)
- Code-switching

Personality "Tests"
- MBTI
- StrengthsFinder
- Enneagram
- DISC

Conflict-handling Mode
- Competing
- Collaborating
- Compromising
- Avoiding
- Accommodating

Adapted from Marilyn Loden and Julie Rosener, "Workforce America!" (Business One Irwin, 1991).

Human Resources

DIVING IN TO DIVERSITY

A Glossary of Dimensions to Accompany the Dimensions of Diversity Wheel

At the Y, we believe that in a diverse world, we are stronger when we are inclusive and our doors are open to all. Our Movement is made up of people from all backgrounds who are joined together by a shared commitment to our cause of strengthening community and helping all people reach their fullest potential with dignity.

The **Dimensions of Diversity Wheel** is an evolving framework that illustrates some of the key dimensions of diversity and the importance of understanding the intersectionality across multiple dimensions that informs an individual's identity and experiences.
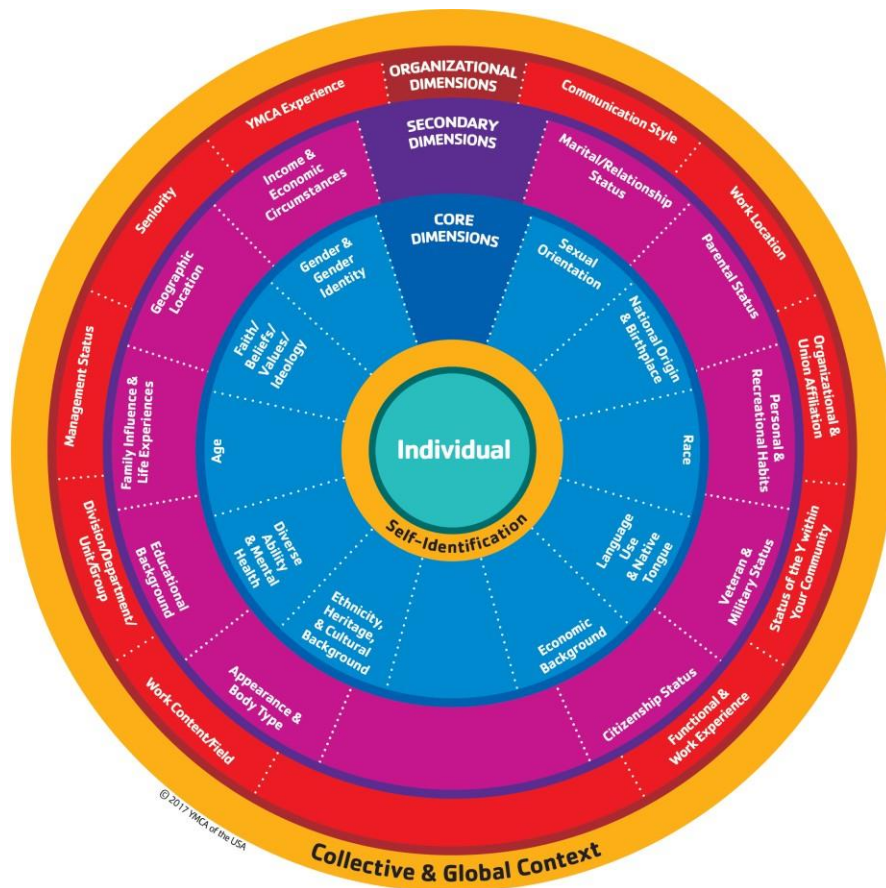
Learn about the different dimensions of the Diversity Wheel on the following pages.

CORE DIMENSIONS

Core dimensions are central to our personal experience, have sustained and often direct influence in our lives, and are frequently the dimensions that we most closely identify with. Many of these dimensions are harder to willfully change – reflecting "how we were born" or "what we were born into." Though some may naturally evolve and change over the course of our lives, the way we understand these dimensions was often shaped in childhood with lasting effects on our perceptions of our identity today.

AGE

An expression of an individual commonly measured in whole years since birth. Many societies commonly create arbitrary divisions to mark periods of life; for example, legal systems may define specific ages for when an individual is allowed (or obliged) to do certain activities.[i]

DIVERSE ABILITY & MENTAL HEALTH

Diverse ability refers to the wide range and spectrum of ability, whether physical, emotional, or mental that an individual identifies with. This can include one's status as having a disability under the U.S. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Mental health is a state of emotional, psychological, and social well-being in which an individual realizes their own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, and can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to their community.[ii] Mental disorders often fall under the ADA, but because they are often not clearly visible, mental health is specifically called out in this dimension.

ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

The circumstances and events that shape the economic situation of an individual during their upbringing from birth to adulthood, sometimes referred to in relation to Socio-Economic Status (SES). An example could be an individual who resided in a wealthy suburban area with access to good schools, but whose household had limited economic resources. Regardless of an individual's current income, one's economic background and experiences shape how they view money, wealth, and class over the course of their lifetime.

ETHNICITY, HERITAGE & CULTURAL BACKGROUND

The characteristics of a group of people that share a common and distinctive national, religious, linguistic, and/or cultural heritage. In common usage, there may be some degree of fluidity between these terms. Distinct from race, ethnicity includes various cultural norms, one's country/ies of origin or heritage, among other factors, while race is primarily (but not exclusively) dictated by appearance and other external factors. In the context of the U.S. Census, ethnicity determines whether a person is of Hispanic origin or not.

FAITHS/BELIEFS/VALUES/IDEOLOGY

One's experiences, attitudes, and practices related to how they view the world and their existence in it. Some individuals may identify most strongly with values such as caring, honesty, respect, or responsibility. Some may ascribe to a particular faith or religion such as Christianity or Hinduism or identify as having no faith/religion. And for some, this dimension may speak to their involvement or affiliation with a political group or ideology, or the absence of such affiliation.[iii]

GENDER & GENDER IDENTITY

Gender identity is an internal – therefore not visible to others – perception and definition of an individual's gender, based on how they align with the gender spectrum (i.e., the many ways people can identify with various aspects of historical and traditional gender expectations).[iv] Gender, or gender expression, is the external display of one's gender through a combination of dress, demeanor, social/cultural behavior, and other factors which are generally (though not absolutely) placed on binary scales of masculinity and femininity. While these terms can be used interchangeably, a more inclusive approach is to use both terms.

LANGUAGE USE & NATIVE TONGUE

Refers to the language(s) used by an individual, including their unique changes dependent on varying situations as well as dialect, intonation, phraseology, and accent. Native tongue is the predominant language of an individual also known as a first language – in some countries, "native language/tongue" refers to the language of one's ethnic group.[v] Language use can also include code-switching, a term used to describe the practice of moving among variations of languages, dialects, or vernacular to suit different contexts.[vi] [vii]

NATIONAL ORIGIN & BIRTHPLACE

Place of birth or origin, generally determined by geographic location (including country) at time of birth. This may also be used to describe the location of an individual's upbringing.

RACE

A specious classification of human beings created by Europeans in the United States to link socio-political status and physical traits together and create a new form of social identity that allowed for the further enslavement (indentured and permanent) of people (e.g. Africans, Irish, Native). The construct of race was backed by false science but became the norm of classification of humans in the United States and was later exported throughout the world in forms that vary from place to place.[viii]

Distinct from ethnicity, race has more to do with common location and appearance (among many other visual/observable factors, like clothing, accent, etc.), while ethnicity has to do more with national origin, heritage, and cultural norms and practices. For example: someone could be born ethnically Jewish* (e.g. if your mother is Jewish, you would be considered to be born Jewish) – but could be any race – white, black, native, etc.

*Note: Judaism is also a religion and individuals who identify as Jewish may also have a strong faith—however, as noted on the Dimensions of Diversity wheel, faith/beliefs/values/ideology is a separate dimension of diversity.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

One's innate sexual attraction towards others – whether of the same or different sex(es); the desire for intimate, emotional, spiritual, physical, and/or psychological attraction that one feels towards someone of the same, opposite, both, or multiple genders/sexes.[iv]

SECONDARY DIMENSIONS

Secondary dimensions often have a greater degree of control, choice, or self-determination to change by the individual, though societal and structural barriers/inequities may hinder their ability to do so. These dimensions often change over time and can inform our daily experiences. Our core dimensions interact closely with our secondary dimensions. For example, one's gender (a core dimension) can impact their income (a secondary dimension).

APPEARANCE & BODY TYPE

Appearance is the visual, external show, outward aspect or look of an individual.[ix] Many different factors influence appearance, such as clothing/accessories, lighting, and environment. Body type refers to the general shape or figure of an individual which is determined by skeletal structure and the biological distribution of muscles and fat.[x] Some elements of appearance are based on personal choice. Body type may inform the types of personal choices that an individual may (or may not be able to) make about their appearance.

*Note: In many contexts, body type is not necessarily changeable and therefore, in some contexts, this may be considered as an additional core dimension.

CITIZENSHIP STATUS

An individual's status in relation to being a citizen (in the country of reference) of a country. In the United States, some of these statuses include: Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR), Nonimmigrant, U.S. National green card holder.[xi]

*Note: There may be multiple factors influencing one's ability to change citizenship status related to core dimensions such as race, and ethnicity, heritage, and cultural background; so in some contexts, this may be considered as an additional core dimension.

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Any experience in education that an individual acknowledges, whether formal (such as institutions) or informal (such as homeschooling and other forms of life experience). It could refer to various stages of schooling, such as high school/secondary school, college, graduate school, etc. Education refers to the acquisition of knowledge, values, beliefs, habits, and skills. Methods of education include means such as discussion, training, teaching, and observation.[xii]

FAMILY INFLUENCE & LIFE EXPERIENCES
One's combined individual and collective events and cumulative experiences that can include trauma, loss of a loved one, marriage, divorce, adoption or birth of children, relocation for work or family, etc. While core dimensions largely speak to our experiences in childhood and upbringing, this dimension speaks to our current engagement with family, other people in our lives, and events that have taken place in adulthood.

GEOGRPAHIC LOCATION
Current place of residence. This can refer to the type of locale or region (such as rural, urban, or suburban). This can also speak to the name of a city, area of a city, county, state, or country.

INCOME AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES
A combined measure of work experience and an individual's current economic and social position in relation to others based on income, education, and occupation.[xiii] One's current income and economic situation are different from economic background, which was established in childhood.

MARITAL/RELATIONSHIP STATUS
A broad term that can describe a wide range of options that define an individual's relationship with a significant other(s). Also called civil status, this can be legally recognized (or not) for the purposes of official forms, documents, and taxes.

PARENTAL STATUS
One's status as a caregiver (past or present) for someone to whom they are in some way related; this can include legal guardians and parents who are biological, surrogate, adoptive, shared, grand-, or stepparents.

PERSONAL & RECREATIONAL HABITS
The activities, hobbies, and events (singularly or on an ongoing basis) that a person engages in in daily life or for recreation. These habits can be related to maintaining one's spiritual, mental, or emotional well-being (such as prayer or meditation), one's appearance (such as exercise), or another aspect of life.

VETERAN & ACTIVE MILITARY STATUS
Current or past involvement in any of the five U.S. armed services branches (Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard). This may also refer to family members of current and past enlisted soldiers, sailors, and airmen.[xiv]

ORGANIZATIONAL DIMENSIONS
These dimensions contribute to how we experience our time with the Y from an organizational and professional lens. They help to shape how we approach our work and how we connect with others across the Y Movement and across other organizations and institutions.

COMMUNICATION STYLE
The skills and manner in which an individual imparts or exchanges information to others. This can include both verbal and non-verbal as well as written and other forms of communication, specifically in a work context. Commonly defined or described in terms of aggressiveness, passivity, assertiveness, or any combination of the three.[xv]

DIVISION/DEPARTMENT/UNIT/GROUP
The specific gathering of people that includes your immediate colleagues as well as coworkers involved in projects and plans. Often determined by the respective organization, this is a grouping of individuals who are specialized to complete work that falls under the division/department/unit/group name.

FUNCTIONAL & WORK EXPERIENCE
Experience (both formal and informal) in specific fields of work either professionally or voluntarily.

MANAGEMENT STATUS
The title and type of leadership involved in direct and indirect supervision of an individual's work.

ORGANIZATIONAL & UNION AFFILIATION

The organizations and institutions that factor into personal experiences, professional development, and how individuals function at work. An example could be one's house of worship, one's YMCA membership, or one's union participation. In the case of some organizations, this dimension may tie into the core dimensions of Faith/Beliefs/Views/Ideology (e.g., one may identify as Christian, and their organizational affiliation would be their church).

SENIORITY

The length of service for an employee, whether in a single position or spanning multiple roles. Often related closely to experience, status in the workplace, and promotion. Seniority functions differently for every organization.[xvi]

STATUS OF THE Y WITHIN YOUR COMMUNITY

How the YMCA functions and is seen or recognized in an individual's specific community, including how facilities and spaces are used, programming and engagement, and how social responsibility and equity are elevated in the community. This can also refer to how a specific YMCA branch or service area may be understood in relationship to another.

WORK CONTENT/FIELD

Skills, experience, education, personality, and products that define a specific work type or discipline.

WORK LOCATION

The geographic or general location in which an individual works (e.g. on-site, off-site/remote, branch location or association/metro office, etc.). This influences an individual's needs regarding transportation, physical activity, and the people in the communities they serve.

YMCA EXPERIENCE

The relevant experiences, education, training, and overall time spent as part of the YMCA Movement. This often can determine one's engagement and understanding within their role at their YMCA.

ADDITIONAL DEFINITIONS

DIVERSITY
The presence of differences that make each individual unique and that can be used to differentiate groups and people from one another.

EQUITY
Equity is the guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all, where individuals are not at a disadvantage from achieving their potential because of their background or social position. Equity requires intentionality around identifying and eliminating the institutional, systemic, and societal barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups (based on certain characteristics including ability, age, economic background, ethnicity, faith, gender, national origin, race, or sexual orientation), and developing the solutions and support systems that are relevant to social structures, trends, and emerging opportunities.
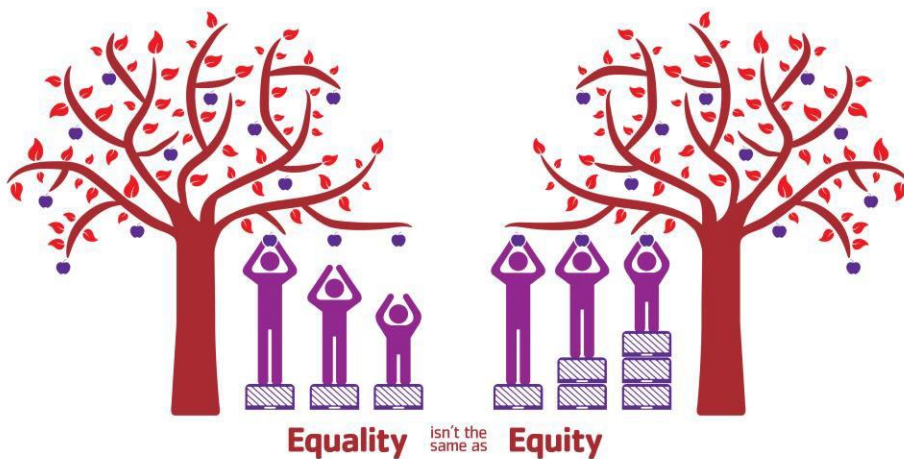
Equality: This approach means everyone is treated the same.

Equity: This approach recognizes unique disparities and provides relevant support systems for overcoming barriers.

Equality isn't the same as **Equity**

INTERSECTIONALITY
An approach arguing that classifications such as gender, race, class, and others cannot be examined in isolation from one another; they interact and intersect in individuals' lives, in society, in social systems, and are mutually constitutive.[xvii]

PRIVILEGE
An unearned advantage or benefit enjoyed by members of a group, a phenomenon derived through a history of oppression of other groups. Privilege is best understood as the systematic advantage that is conferred to one group at the expense of another. Terms such as white privilege, male privilege, and heterosexual privilege make explicit the relationship between privilege and the group for whom it is intended to function.

UNDERSERVED
Having little or no access to benefit from programs, support, services, opportunities, resources, etc. that meet needs, wants, and/or interests. Underserved populations are ones that are disadvantaged in relation to other groups because of structural/societal obstacles and disparities.

For more information, visit the DIG community on Link or call (800) 872-9622.

CITATIONS

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[xiv] Armed Services YMCA. (2017). Who We Are. Retrieved from: https://www.asymca.org/who-we-are.

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[xvi] INC.com. (2017). Seniority. Retrieved from: https://www.inc.com/encyclopedia/seniority.html.

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Barriers to Inclusion: Privilege

What is it?

Privilege refers to the concept that certain people experience certain privileges simply because of a particular aspect of their identity (for example, they are white, or male, or heterosexual) – privileges that are often overlooked. In her 1988 article "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack," Peggy McIntosh begins to spell out what those priviledges are, from "I am never asked to speak for all the people of my racial group," to "I can be pretty sure that if I ask to talk to 'the person in charge,' I will be facing a person of my race."

Privilege is not necessarily something that individual people seek out. Instead, it is something that shapes and is shaped by American society. It provides often invisible benefits to people of one status that people of another status cannot access. Many of the privileges that McIntosh identifies are privileges that white people may not even think about – indeed, McIntosh herself describes each item on her list as something she forgot about repeatedly, even after forming her list.

White privilege is not the only form of privilege that exists – privilege comes into play whenever one particular condition is considered to be the "normal" condition. Other forms of privilege that enter the workplace include class privilege, heterosexual privilege, male privilege, and able-bodied privilege. Nearly everyone experiences privilege in some form.

What can I do?

As an individual…

- Educate yourself on privilege and the ways to recognize it.
- Be aware of your language – when you refer to an "average" or "normal" person, are you referring to someone in the majority oversomeone not in the majority?
- Use your privilege to share your power. When you see privilege in action, call attention to it.
- Listen. Be supportive of colleagues bringing different perspectives.

As a manager…

- Educate yourself on privilege and the ways to recognize it.
- Be careful about assumptions you might make – especially about what is normal, and about the ways your staff might experience different phenomena differently.
- When making hiring or assignment decisions, be aware of the ways that privilege operates. Seek out diverse candidates.
- Make sure that your office communications are inclusive of all – that your images are diverse, that you alternate use of he and she when writing, etc.

Where can I learn more?

- *6 Action Items for White People in the Workplace & Beyond* by Amanda Gelender (https://medium.com/@agelender/6-action-items-for-white-people-in-the-workplace-beyond-ecf87271e89a#.z6crqb3ky)
- *White Anti-Racist Activism: A Personal Roadmap* by Jennifer R. Holladay (excerpt available at: http://www.tolerance.org/article/racism-and-white-privilege)
- *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack* by Peggy McIntosh (http://nationalseedproject.org/white-privilege-unpacking-the-invisible-knapsack)

Effective allyship is authentic and intentional. Whenever you ally, make sure to be **REAL: Reflect, Empathize, Act,** and **Learn.**

REAL is a tool to help you apply the principles of effective allyship all the time, no matter the situation.

You can be REAL during a short conversation in which you reflect, empathize, take immediate action, and learn in the moment from what you did. REAL allyship should also become how you approach your ongoing Allyship Journey as you reflect, empathize, act, and learn through every experience, over many years. Apply it during your daily practice as you build and maintain a culture of belonging, at work and beyond.

Keep in mind, practicing REAL allyship won't prevent you from making mistakes—mistakes are inevitable and essential to growth. REAL provides a practical guide to help you navigate mistakes (and breakthroughs!) as you progress in your unique Allyship Journey.

E
Empathize

Recognize that everyone has a unique experience. Try to feel what others feel. Accept and respect other perspectives. Harbor sincere curiosity to seek out and listen to new and different points of view. Extend kindness and understanding to everyone, including yourself.

What do others feel or need in this situation? What motivates their words and actions? How might my words or actions affect those around me?

L
Learn

Pay attention to the impact of your words and actions. Learn from these moments. Remember that every action you take contributes to your Allyship Journey. Take initiative to do your own research; online resources make it easier than ever to educate yourself about concepts like prejudice and systemic oppression.

How can I broaden my perspective? How might my background and previous experiences influence my perspective? How is my worldview different from those around me? What are ways I can educate myself about oppression without putting undue burden on marginalized individuals? What can I do differently and better tomorrow?

It's important that you get the support you need. When you need an ally, make sure to be **REAL: Reflect, Empathize, Act,** and **Learn.**

REAL is a tool to help you apply the principles of effective allyship all the time, no matter the situation. Apply it daily as you build and maintain a culture of belonging, at work and beyond.

E
Empathize

If someone is treating you unfairly or making assumptions based on your identity:

- Give yourself the same empathy you give others. Allow yourself to feel how you feel.
- Be patient with yourself; don't be afraid to express your emotions openly, even if it makes others uncomfortable.
- Feel empowered to ask for support.

Empathy is the basis of effective, authentic communication. Practice empathy when starting a conversation with someone about changing their mindset or behavior. Empathy is also how you can give grace to with others' mistakes as they learn the best way to ally with you.

L
Learn

Strive to learn from your experiences. Recognize that you deserve the same dignity and respect as anyone else, even if biases in the culture around you don't reflect it yet.

If you experience marginalization, you can learn from other marginalized groups with experiences that differ from your own. You may find similarities and differences in your experiences that can help you in your journey of empowerment and allyship. You can learn to guide and encourage your allies to become better supporters. Learn to ask for what you need from your allies.

Blind spots

Being color brave™

Discussion guide

Table of contents

This discussion guide can be used in large and small group meetings and events to generate dialogue and self-awareness on ways to become more color brave.
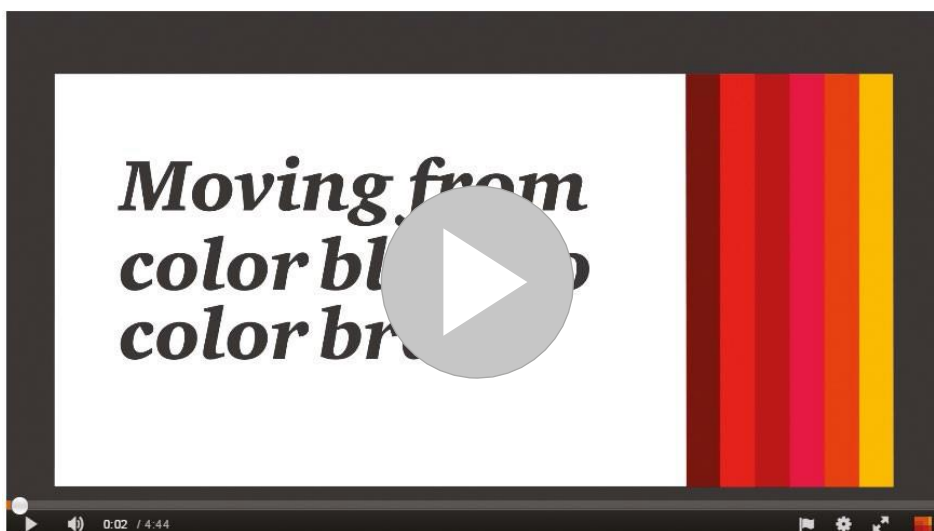
Getting started

As a group, watch the Color Brave video. Afterwards, take a few minutes to individually reflect on the questions below. Be prepared to share your answers with the group or in teams of three.

What one or two messages from the video had the most personal resonance for you, and why? Use the space below to write down your thoughts.

Self-reflection

Use the questions below to gain clarity on how color brave you currently are. Be honest with your responses. This is for your reference only.

Be curious

How often do I...	1: Almost always 5: Almost never				
• Take note of who's in my network?	①	②	3	④	⑤
• Work to better understand my potential blind spots?	1	②	③	④	⑤
• Seek diversity when assembling a team or planning a meeting?	①	②	③	④	5
• Share my own experiences to build a relationship?	1	②	③	④	⑤
• Ask questions about someone else's experiences?	1	②	③	④	⑤
• Seek opportunities to learn about other races and cultures?	1	②	③	④	⑤

Be bold

How comfortable am I with...	1: Very comfortable 5: Very uncomfortable				
• Attending an event that attracts people who are different from me?	1	②	③	④	⑤
• Networking/socializing with someone from a different cultural background?	1	②	③	④	⑤
• Intentionally being in the minority at a meeting/event to gain perspective?	1	②	③	④	⑤
• Encouraging everyone to share his/her perspective during a discussion?	1	②	③	④	⑤
• Listening to someone's perspective even if it doesn't match my own?	1	②	③	④	⑤
• Speaking up if I observe a lack of diversity?	1	②	③	④	⑤

continued

Self-reflection

Be forgiving

How often do I...					
	1: Almost always				
	5: Almost never				
• Assume someone has positive intentions?	1	②	③	④	⑤
• Forgive someone who has made a mistake?	1	②	③	④	⑤
• Hold my ideas "lightly" to allow me to change my mind?	1	②	③	④	⑤
• Use mistakes as an opportunity to start a dialogue?	1	②	③	④	⑤
• Take a chance by opening myself up?	1	②	③	④	⑤
• Reflect upon times I may have made an assumption based on someone's appearance?	1	②	③	④	⑤

Share your experiences

Regardless of where you are on the color brave spectrum, there is always room to grow and develop. On your own, take a few moments to answer the following questions using the space below. Then, form teams of three where you can take turns discussing your responses.

1. Reflect on a recent situation where you've been the "only one" (whether race, gender, nationality, or similar). How did you feel? How did the situation impact your behavior? What did you learn from it?

2. What are the personal and professional benefits of being more color brave?

3. What are the perceived barriers to being more color brave?

Build your cultural awareness

It is important to recognize that the groups we identify with influence how we see the world. One way to widen your lens is to tap into resources that can help you build your cultural awareness.

In small groups, identify resources that can help you build your cultural awareness. Use the table below to capture ideas. Be prepared to share your thoughts with the group.

External organizations (community and professional)	*Workplace/community events*
Media outlets	*Personal connections*
Other	

Take action

Based on your discussions, identify key action items that you will commit to working on as part of your goal of becoming more color brave. Use items from this list, or document additional goals in the space below. Share your commitment with your group and others to help you stay accountable.

Be Curious. **I will...**
- ☐ Examine my network to see who's in it and who's not.
- ☐ Work to better understand my potential blind spots.
- ☐ Ask questions to understand the experiences and background of others.
- ☐ Participate in diversity events to learn about other races and cultures.

Be Bold. **I will...**
- ☐ Seek out diversity when assembling a team or assigning an opportunity.
- ☐ Challenge the status quo if groups are not represented.
- ☐ Solicit diverse points of view so all voices are heard.
- ☐ Invite someone from a different background to an event.

Be Forgiving. **I will...**
- ☐ Assume positive intent when others interact with me.
- ☐ Forgive someone who has made a mistake.
- ☐ Put myself in someone else's shoes rather than passing judgment.
- ☐ Challenge myself to engage in conversations about race to advance my development.

Other actions I will take to become more color brave include:

I will stay accountable for my action commitments by:

To learn more, visit:

https://www.pwc.com/us/blindspots

Blind spots

Being color brave

Discussion guide

Blind spots
Being color brave
Discussion guide

City of Madison
Gender-Inclusive Language Style Guide
Last updated November 16, 2020

Table of Contents

Purpose

The purpose of this style guide is to outline correct and respectful language that is inclusive of all genders. This guide supplements APM 2-52, Inclusive Workplace: Transgender, Gender Non-Conforming, and Non-Binary Employees.

Using gender-inclusive language is important for the health and safety of both employees and members of the public. Gender-inclusive language supports people of all marginalized genders, including women and transgender, non-binary, and gender non-conforming people of all genders.

Language is constantly changing, and we will need to adapt to new ways of talking and thinking to continue to support gender-inclusive communication. This guide will need to be updated to reflect respectful language as it changes.

Resources

To learn more about the topics discussed in this guide, please see the following resources:

Inclusive Language Content Guide
https://content-guide.18f.gov/inclusive-language/

Transgender Style Guide
https://radicalcopyeditor.com/2017/08/31/transgender-style-guide/

What Is the Singular They, and Why Should I Use It?
https://www.grammarly.com/blog/use-the-singular-they/

Trans-Inclusive Design
https://alistapart.com/article/trans-inclusive-design/

Designing forms for gender diversity and inclusion
https://uxdesign.cc/designing-forms-for-gender-diversity-and-inclusion-d8194cf1f51

Respectful Collection of Demographic Data
https://medium.com/@anna.sarai.rosenberg/respectful-collection-of-demographic-data-56de9fcb80e2

Gender-Neutral Language

Use the singular "they" instead of "he or she." The singular "they" is grammatically correct and should be used to refer to an unspecified person, a person whose pronouns are unknown, or a person who uses they/them pronouns.

>   *Example*: Before a resident fills out **their** application, **they** should check the eligibility requirements.

Do not assume a person's gender or pronouns. When communicating with or about coworkers, contractors, and members of the public, do not address them as Sir, Ma'am, Mr., Ms., Miss, or any other language that assumes gender. Only use honorifics (Mr./Ms./Mx.) if the person has indicated their desired honorific. The gender-neutral honorific "Mx." is pronounced *mɪks (micks)* or *mʌks (mucks)*.

Omit unnecessary references to gender. Do not call attention to gender, gender expression, appearance, or other identities. For example, is it important to the content you are writing that a doctor is a woman, or that a presenter is transgender? If not, remove the language.

When translating documents into other languages, opt for gender inclusion. In Spanish, for example, many South Americans countries have adopted the "e" in place of "o" when referring to groups.

>   *Example*: Tod**e**s ell**e**s están interesad**e**s en diversidad e inclusión.

Exclusionary Language	Inclusive Alternatives
He or she, (s)he, s/he	They
Him or her	Them
His or her(s)	Their(s)
Men and women *Example: "The men and women working at the City…"*	People, employees, etc. *Examples: "The people working at the City…"* *"The City employees…"* *"Employees of all genders…"*
Both genders	All genders
Opposite gender, opposite sex	Different gender
Councilman, alderman	Council member, alder
Chairman	Chair, chairperson
Policeman	Police officer
Fireman	Firefighter
Landlord, landlady	Owner, landowner, property owner
Husband or wife	Spouse, partner
Father or mother, sister or brother	Parent, sibling
Manpower, man hours	Staffing, staff hours
Hello, ladies and gentlemen!	Hello, everyone! Hello, all!
Dear Sir or Madam	Greetings, To Whom it May Concern, Dear [name]

Transgender-Inclusive Language

Always use a person's chosen name and pronouns. A person's name and pronouns are not optional or "preferred," and their correct name and pronouns must be used every time.

Use "gender" instead of "gender identity." Saying that someone "identifies as a man" or that their "gender identity is non-binary" marks them as different and undermines their gender. Just say, "He is a man," or "They are non-binary."

Use "gender identity" only to specify or draw a distinction between gender identity and expression.

> *Example*: The community group recognizes diversity of both gender identity and gender expression.

Invalidating Language	Validating Language
Preferred name and pronouns	Name and pronouns, chosen* name and pronouns *Use "chosen" only when distinguishing from deadname.*
_____identifies as _____ *Example: Carl identifies as male.*	_____is _____ *Example: Carl is a man.*
People who identify as non-binary	Non-binary people
Women and transgender women	Women, or transgender and cisgender women

Other Language to Avoid

This list is not comprehensive, and it is subject to change. *Offensive language is listed here only for the purpose of education. It should not be used in any other context.*

Offensive / Outdated Language	Correct Language
Transgendered	Transgender
_____is a transgender.	_____is transgender. *Transgender is an adjective, not a noun.*
Transman, transwoman, trans male, trans female	Man, woman, transgender man, transgender woman, trans man, trans woman (*include space*)
Males, females	Men, women
Sex reassignment surgery, sex change operation	Gender confirmation surgery
Sex change	Transition
Biologically male / female, born a man / woman	Assigned male / female at birth *It is very rarely appropriate to talk about a person's sex.*
Real name, birth name	Deadname *Do not use a person's deadname. Always refer to the person by their chosen name.*

More Information

To learn more about proper language for writing about transgender people, see:
https://radicalcopyeditor.com/2017/08/31/transgender-style-guide/

Forms & Demographics

Avoid asking for information you don't need. Demographic information can be sensitive, and can deter users from completing forms. Users may not feel comfortable sharing their personal information, or the available options may not describe them. Data collection can be especially invasive for underserved populations, who may not trust government organizations due to historical and systemic oppression.

Only ask for demographic information if the City needs the data to serve a marginalized population. Demographic data should be de-identified and treated confidentially during analysis and use.

Think critically about whether you truly need to know a user's gender (or any other personal information). Could you omit the question? Could you ask for a person's pronouns instead of gender?

Questions to Consider

Consider these questions before you choose to ask for personal or demographic information:

- How would I use this information to benefit the target audience of this question?
- Do I have the resources and a plan to effectively analyze and apply the information I want to collect?
- What potential harm could I cause by asking this question?
- What potential harm could I cause by *not* asking this question?
- Is this question intrusive? Would I ask this question of a stranger?
- Why might a person with a marginalized identity be uncomfortable providing this information?

Best Practices

If you must ask for demographic information, always follow these guidelines:

- **Be transparent** about why you are asking and how it will benefit the user.
  Sample: We use demographic information to help us understand our population and for grant reporting. Please help us serve you better by choosing the options that best describe you.
- **Allow users to choose multiple options** by offering checkboxes instead of radio buttons.
- **Make fields optional**, and include an option "Prefer not to say".
- **Allow users to choose their own language** by making the field a text box, or offering an option "Prefer to self-describe".

Name

Do not require a legal name. If you need a person's legal name in order to comply with state or federal regulations, also ask for their chosen name. Explain why you need their legal name, and use their chosen name in any response.

Gender & Pronouns

Consider what information you need to collect. Do you need to know if a person is transgender? Do you need to know their gender, or just what pronouns they use?

Gender
Please select any that apply.
- ☐ Woman
- ☐ Man
- ☐ Non-binary / Genderqueer
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Prefer to self-describe (specify)

Gender
Please select any that apply.
- ☐ Woman
- ☐ Man
- ☐ Non-binary / Genderqueer
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Prefer to self-describe (specify)

Do you describe yourself as transgender?
- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Prefer not to say

Pronouns
For example: she/her, he/him, they/them.

[   ]

LGBTQ+ Identity

Avoid asking for a person's sexual orientation or gender if possible. Recognize that this topic is very personal for many people, and some users will be very uncomfortable with this question.

Are you a member of the LGBTQ+ community?
- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Prefer not to say

This question may be used in addition to question(s) about gender, as listed above.

Incorrect Fields

Do not use any of these incorrect field configurations.

Sexual Orientation ✖
- ☐ Straight
- ☐ Gay
- ☐ Lesbian
- ☐ Bisexual
- ☐ Transgender

Gender ✖
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Other

Gender ✖
- ☐ Woman
- ☐ Man
- ☐ Transgender Woman
- ☐ Transgender Man
- ☐ Non-binary

Do not list Transgender under Sexual Orientation.

Do not place non-binary genders into an "Other" category or use the labels "Male" and "Female".

Do not list Transgender Woman/Man separately from Woman/Man.

Being Inclusive – Understanding Gender Pronouns

A pronoun is a word used to refer to either the people who are talking (like "I" or "you") or a person being talked about in the third person (like "she/her," "he/him," and "they/them"). Since some pronouns are gendered ("she/her" and "he/him"), it is important to be intentional about the way we use pronouns as we all work to create as inclusive an environment as possible.

Pronouns are Important. You cannot always know what someone's pronouns are by looking at them. Asking and correctly using someone's pronouns is one of the most basic ways to show your respect for their gender identity. When someone is referred to with the wrong pronoun, it can make them feel disrespected, invalidated, dismissed, or alienated.

If you don't know someone's pronouns, it's okay to ask. You can say, "What pronouns do you use?" or "What pronouns do you go by?" or "What pronouns would you like me to use when I refer to you?"

So what is "misgendering?" Misgendering is incorrectly referring to a person's gender by incorrectly assuming their gender identity (perhaps by outward appearance) or using incorrect pronouns. Misgendering someone can be done intentionally or unintentionally but it has long lasting harmful impacts.

If you make a mistake, apologize and move on. It is totally fine to make a mistake, it happens to everyone! What is most important is that you do not make a big deal about it. Just apologize quickly, correct yourself, and move on. Ex: "Oh, I'm sorry, I meant they."

If you make it a big deal, you draw more attention onto someone who maybe does not want it. As long as you portray that you are sorry and you try harder next time, it is going to be okay. Remember; this is more for them and not you, so never make your apology about you. Always make it about the person you have wronged.

Being an ally is not a thing you are, it is a thing you do. Practice makes perfect and you are always evolving as a person. Mistakes happen, but what matters most is that you are dedicated in making this world a better place for everyone. Keep at it! You are incredibly valuable to the community!

Examples in Use:

She/Her/Hers	He/Him/His	They/Them/Their
She is excited for the event.	He is excited for the event.	They are excited for the event.
Her phone call just started.	His phone call just started.	Their phone call just started.

Some Basic Definitions and Terms

LGBTQ+: This is often the acronym used to refer to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer individuals. The plus is used to be inclusive of many other gender and sexual identities such as pansexual, two-spirit, bigender, etc.

Trans or Transgender: an umbrella term and identity for someone whose gender identity doesn't match their sex assigned at birth

Cis or Cisgender: A person whose gender identity is the same as their sex assigned at birth

Nonbinary: umbrella term for people with gender identities that fall outside of the traditional conceptions of strictly either female or male

Genderqueer: umbrella term with a similar meaning to non-binary; it can be used to describe any gender identities other than man and woman, thus outside of the gender binary

Gender Non-Conforming: a personal identity, behavior, or gender expression that does not conform to masculine or feminine gender norms

Gender Fluid: Denoting or relating to a person who does not identify themselves as having a fixed gender and can vary over time

Gender Identity: A sense of one's self as trans, genderqueer, woman, man, or some other identity, which may or may not correspond with the sex and gender one is assigned at birth.

Gender Expression: How one expresses oneself, in terms of dress, hairstyle, body modifications, accessories, makeup, and/or behaviors. Society, and people that make up society characterize these expressions as "masculine," "feminine," or "androgynous." Individuals may embody their gender in a multitude of ways and have terms beyond these to name their gender expression(s).

Sex versus gender: Sex is the category a person is assigned at birth; in the United States this would be under male and female. This is generally determined based on genitals either in utero or after birth. The reality though, is that people's biology is more diverse than society's categories and requirements. Gender is what society determines you are, based on outward appearance and expression, such as man or woman. Gender is a socially constructed classification system that relies on "normative" assumptions of femininity and masculinity. Sex and gender are often conflated due to the cisnormative (the belief that all people identify with the sex they were assigned at birth) assumption that female = woman and male = man for everyone.

Global Toolkit for Change:

Assessing LGBTQI+ Inclusion in Your Workplace

OUT **&** EQUAL

WORKPLACE ADVOCATES

Introduction:
A Changing Landscape for Business

Around the world, the state of equality for the LGBTQI+ community is in rapid fl   from great advancements to severe setbacks. For businesses, these changes pose both opportunities and challenges.

In the last fi   years alone:

- Six countries, including the second most populous in the world, India, have struck down their LGBTQI+ criminalization statutes;

- A full 91 percent of the Fortune 500 have gender identity protections enumerated in their nondiscrimination policies (up from 3 percent in 2002).[1]

- The number of countries with marriage equality has risen to 31;[2] and,

- Global acceptance of the LGBTQI+ community has steadily risen in over 130 countries, across three decades, as measured by social surveys.[3]

Global LGBTQI+ Progress

Legal Changes

Decriminalization

- There are 124 United Nations member States (64 of UN member states) where consensual same-sex sexual acts between adults are legal. Sixty-nine UN member states still criminalize consensual same-sex sexual acts between adults.[4]

- Belize (2016), India (2018), Trinidad and Tobago (2018), Botswana (2019), Gabon (2020), and Angola (2021) are some of the most recent countries to decriminalize same-sex sex.[5]

- Most countries in Latin America have decriminalized same-sex sexual relations between consenting adults. There are nine countries, mostly in the Caribbean, who still have laws criminalizing same-sex sex.[6] The majority of these laws are colonial-era relics imposed by countries such as the United Kingdom.

Marriage Equality

- Thirty-one countries have adopted marriage equality legislation: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Uruguay.[7]

Anti-Discrimination

- Twelve countries around the world have constitutional protection against discrimination based on sexual orientation: Bolivia, Cuba, Ecuador,

In the same stretch of time, attacks on the community, including in the form of legislation, social discrimination, and violence have prevented more progress.

- In 2021, 375 transgender people were killed around the world, according to documented cases, the highest amount of violence against gender diverse people since official recording efforts began;[8]

- In the United States, hundreds of anti-LGBTQI+ bills have been introduced at the state-level, with 2021 nearly doubling the amount of bills from 2020;[9]

- 58% of transgender students in India drop out of high school, greatly reducing their economic opportunities later in life.[10]

- Eastern Europe has seen several regressions in LGBTQI+ rights, such as legislation in Hungary banning information in schools seen as promoting LGBTQI+ equality and the implementation of "LGBT-ideology free zones" in Poland.[11]

Fiji, Kosovo, Malta, Mexico, Nepal, Portugal, San Marino, Sweden, and South Africa.[12]

- Many other countries such as Australia, Brazil, Canada, Angola, and Peru have broad protections against sexual orientation-based discrimination.[13]

- Brazil criminalized homophobia and transphobia through a Supreme Court ruling in 2019.[14]

Transgender Rights

- In 2012, Argentina was the first country to allow transgender individuals to legally change their name and gender marker without facing barriers such as hormone therapy, surgery, or psychiatric diagnosis.[15] Since then, other countries such as Australia, Belgium, Botswana, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, France, Greece, India, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, Pakistan, Portugal, South Africa, have adopted similar laws.[16]

- Argentina, Austria, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Iceland, India, The Netherlands, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Taiwan, Thailand, the United Kingdom, the United States (21 States and Washington DC), and Uruguay mandated that all national identity cards and passports can have a gender-neutral option.[17]

Social Changes

- The average levels of acceptance for LGBTQI+ people and their rights have increased globally since 1981.[18]

- There have been openly LGBTQI+ politicians elected and/or appointed to government offices in Aruba, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Chile, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, Faroe Islands, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guam, Guatemala, Hong Kong, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Isle of Man, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macau, Mexico, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, South Africa, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Tunisia, the United Kingdom, the United States, Uruguay, and Venezuela.[19]

Global Market Changes

In many parts of the world, however, the business community has forged progress well ahead of legal and social changes.

> Fortune 500: Nondiscrimination Policies & Benefi (2022)[20]
> - 93% include sexual orientation protections
> - 91% include gender identity protections
>   > 68% extend these protections globally
> - 67% offer trans-inclusive health coverage
>
> 2022 marks 7th year of LGBTQI+ issues as part of the agenda at Davos (World Economic Forum).
>
> In 2018, 32 major corporations and NGOs joined Out & Equal in the "Statement in Support of Diversity, Respect, and Inclusion for LGBT+ People in the Workplace in Brazil."[21]
>
> 87% of participants of the 2021 IBM LGBT+ Jam believe that their organization should take a more assertive public position on LGBT+ inclusion and belonging.[22]

The business community is therefore best poised to leverage the momentum for LGBTQI+ equality when and where it happens and this same community needs support in how they effectively navigate the broad challenges to LGBTQI+ equality.

Many leading multinationals have fully integrated LGBTQI+ inclusion efforts into their strategic business models and are in the second and even third decade of these efforts. They have established a clear and compelling business case for LGBTQI+ inclusion beyond the moral or rights framework. LGBTQI+ workplace inclusion is central attracting and retaining top talent and market share, and more broadly is a bellwether for innovation and forward movement.

From small to mid and large-sized businesses, employers that recognize the LGBTQI+ community will be more profi   more likely to attract and retain talented employees, and more innovative as the market changes and LGBTQI+ people as well as their friends and family come to expect inclusive products and advertising.[23]

Over recent years, more people and companies are increasing genuine efforts toward greater openness and inclusivity, but the path to achieving diversity, equity and inclusion is sometimes unclear. In this guide, we take what we know from decades of work with global employers and apply these lessons to a fl   self-evaluation tool for a range of businesses.

Getting Started

In this toolkit, we demystify and make accessible both the tried-and-true best practices in LGBTQI+ inclusion from major global and regional employers as well as feature emerging new practices for businesses. In partnership, we move beyond checklists and evolve to fl tools of individual empowerment and organizational change. Finally, we support employers in assessing gaps between policy and culture.

A business can have supportive policies in place but still lose talent and customers to a culture that does not align with the policies on paper. On the other hand, some businesses have very inclusive cultures but fi themselves needing to solidify these values into policies. Change is rarely linear and for businesses today, navigating the path of LGBTQI+ inclusion requires a multidimensional view to understand the totality of the route, avoid possible obstacles, and even fi a few shortcuts. Welcome to the next level of advancing inclusion and assessing your workplace!

Toolkit Components

This toolkit has three key components:

1 *Equality as a Matter of Policy:* An overview of foundational policies, benefi and protocols needed as a baseline to ensure workplace inclusion that you can use as a measure against your company's current policies.

2 *Building and Sustaining an Inclusive Culture:* An explanation of practices that support culture change within a company to be utilized as a reference and benchmarking tool for the practices within your company. This section includes two categories of practices: internal and external.

3 *Everyday Experiences of Inclusion Efforts:* These are refl questions to assess the impact that culture and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) practices and policies have on employees. This is where you are able to gain perspective into any existing gaps in policy and culture practices versus the day-to-day realities across your workforce.

This toolkit is not intended to establish a publicly shared inclusion score. Instead, it is intended as a tool for continuous learning, evaluation and improvement. In fact, due to the individualized nature of the third section of this tool, *Everyday Experiences of Inclusion Efforts*, results may vary based on who is completing the evaluation—and that is part of the value of this tool. This feature allows you to identify potential differences in the lived experiences and perspectives across the business.

Descriptions of how to evaluate your scores for each component are included at the end of each section, and details on how to assess your cumulative scores and suggestions for next steps are included in the fi section of this toolkit.

We encourage you to share your confi results with us and utilize us as a resource to advance your company's DEI initiatives. We also encourage you to use this tool across departments and seniority levels to gain a well-rounded perspective, and to monitor progress by continually measuring success over time.

Component 1

Equality as a Matter of Policy

As important as culture is within an organization, an inclusive culture alone cannot provide clear, tangible expectations of inclusion and non-discrimination, nor can an inclusive culture pay for healthcare or retirement. This is why, for example, the majority of the Fortune 500 have implemented clear non-discrimination policies and extended benefi plans to ensure equality among LGBTQI+ and non-LGBTQI+ workers.

Prospective and current employees need to know that they will not be fi or denied a job or a promotion because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. All employees need to understand the expectations of equal treatment in the workplace and understand that there is accountability and recourse should these policies be violated.

The "What" and the Essentials

1. Non-discrimination Protections

a. What is it?

i. Non-discrimination protections codifi into the employer's policies assure job applicants and employees that they will be treated equally and that their identity as an LGBTQI+ person will not be a liability on the job. Some countries do not recognize protections for LGBTQI+ people, but even when national or local law prohibits discrimination in the workplace, it is still important to have a company's own policy refl its commitment to non-discrimination. This clarity supports the recruitment and retention of talent as well as the workforce's understanding of expectations. Employers should not assume that employees are familiar with the law and need to take their own steps to communicate their policies and processes to address violations of non-discrimination policy.

b. What are the essentials?

i. Terminology: The terminology of "sex", "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" should be specifi named as protected categories. Intersex should be a covered category under nondiscrimination provisions that prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex. (For more information on intersex workplace inclusion, click here.) Some businesses also opt to include "gender expression."

ii. Communication: The policy is communicated both publicly (e.g. on websites, job applications, etc.) and readily available internally (e.g. on the intranet, posted on boards in the worksite, and found in the employee manual).

iii. Training and education: The employer provides specifi training on the policy to all new employees and managers with regular refresh opportunities to the entire workforce.

iv. Reporting violations: The employer has a clear process to investigate and address any violations of the policy, including anti-retaliation policies.

The "What" and the Essentials

2. Partner and Family Benefits

a. What is it?

i. Partner and family benefi   refer to the availability of any employer-provided benefi   including healthcare coverage, parental leave, family benefi   including adoption, surrogacy, and fertility treatments, retirement, product discounts, and more to the employee or the unmarried partner of an employee, including in places that do not legally recognize marriage equality. These can include employees in either same or different gender relationships. When looking at the total compensation package for any employee, benefi   may account for upwards of 20% to 30% as employees receive healthcare options, paid leave and fi   retirement options. If a business extends these benefi   to married couples but not unmarried partners, that employer may be viewed as violating the central tenet of equal pay for equal work across its employee base. The proportion of people who are getting married is going down in many countries across the world[24] and only 31 countries recognize marriage equality. Therefore, it is even more crucial that businesses meet this reality to ensure they do not lose talent.

b. What are the essentials?

i. Equal benefi   LGBTQI+ employees often face unique barriers to partner and family benefi   Equal and inclusive benefi   should be offered to married spouses, LGBTQI+ couples, single parents, and unmarried partners.

ii. Documentation: Creating fair and equal standards for documentation of relationship status. In other words, not compelling same-gender partners to furnish proof of commingled fi   duration of relationship or other documents that are not asked of married couples. Employer-provided affi   can provide protection against fraud which is possible for both married and unmarried couples.

The "What" and the Essentials

3. Inclusive Healthcare Coverage

a. What is it?

i. Transgender and intersex-inclusive healthcare coverage refers to a business's own insurance coverage and paid medical leave as covering employees and—if applicable—their dependents in receiving transition or ongoing care as a transgender or intersex person. Many healthcare insurance plans still include discriminatory exclusions that are not based on sound medical opinion, denying transgender and intersex people vital healthcare coverage. It's incumbent on the employer to work with their insurance provider or administrator to ensure these exclusions are removed and affi mative coverage is included.

b. What are the essentials?

i. Examining current materials: Examine the insurance materials, namely the coverage options for individuals wishing to undergo gender affi mation surgery and follow-up care for intersex individuals like revisions of earlier surgeries or hormonal replacement therapy. In addition, examine exclusions for coverage that may not be eligible for coverage or reimbursement—some may even name transgender or intersex people as excluded for certain coverage options.

ii. Advocate for coverage: Work with the insurance provider or administrator to adopt guidelines of coverage for medically supported transition-related care and ongoing treatments such as hormone therapies, surgical procedures, and more.

Note: If the employer does not extend medical coverage to employees or their family members, then do not count this section in your fi score.

4. LGBTQI+ Inclusion in Supplier Diversity Programs

a. What is it?

i. Businesses of all sizes enjoy a great amount of choice and power when deciding on their own supply chain—from family-owned restaurants selecting food vendors to huge multinational fi ms contracting with accounting fi ms. Many large businesses allot selected percentages and fi   spend to vendors and contractors majority-owned by traditionally marginalized groups in business (e.g. women, persons with disabilities and more). Increasingly, businesses are adding LGBTQI+-owned businesses to their diverse supply chain initiatives. This is a winning strategy for all involved—businesses source diverse, talented vendors and the LGBTQI+ business owners continue to grow their fi   reach. These relationships also give the contracting business authentic connections to the local LGBTQI+ business community which in turn enhances their openness to the market and future profi   business services and products.

b. What are the essentials?

i. **Intersectionality:** Include LGBTQI+-owned businesses in supplier diversity programs along with other marginalized identity groups (i.e. Black-owned, women-owned, disability-owned, etc.).

ii. **Establish a baseline and future goals:** An established baseline determines the current diversity among your suppliers, as well as the amount paid to each. From here, you can set focus targets, goals, and monitor progress.

iii. **Mechanisms and resources for identifying and contracting diverse suppliers** is likely an important piece of these programs. Finding LGBTQI+-owned or LGBTQI+-friendly vendors can be challenging, but

with the right tools such as robust supplier databases and community partnerships, you will have a wider reach to forge partnerships with diverse suppliers.

iv. An added bonus is pipeline, incentive, or development programs for suppliers. Your company may offer incentive or development programs to LGBTQI+ suppliers so that they can continue to succeed and remain a valuable part of your company's chain, as well as grow and develop new business opportunities for themselves.

5. Workplace Gender Transition Guidelines

a. What is it?

i. These guidelines are for the company's transgender and gender non-conforming employees and/or clients, their coworkers, managers, HR leaders, and anyone else involved in the employee's transition process. They are a set of guidelines and policies that establish best practices to best support and protect transgender employees throughout their transition.

ii. There is no one way to transition. Some changes may include gender expression, gender-affi ming surgery, changes to one's gender on offi identifi documents, name changes, pronoun changes, etc. It is important to note that some trans and nonbinary employees will opt never make any of these changes, while others might wait until they feel it is more safe to do so. In any case, a culture and policy of respect should be in place.
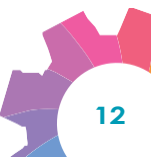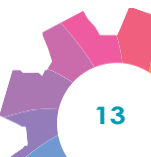
b. What are the essentials?

i.   **Confi**   An individual's transgender status is considered confi   and should only be disclosed as needed and only with the individual's consent.

ii. **Internal documents:** If an employer's policy requires that all employees use their full legal name and gender on all internal documents, it should consider revising the policy to accommodate employees who use their chosen names.

iii. **Name and legal gender change protocols:** Whether an employee legally changes their name or chooses to go by a name other than their legal name, there are compliance considerations for each situation. Tax and Revenue institutions often require an employee's legal name to be on offi   documents; however, companies should have their own internal systems for recognizing and using a person's chosen name within internal servers, email addresses, and payroll records. Internal addendums can also be attached to any offi   documentation that requires a legal name to be listed.

iv. **Equal treatment:** Anyone can legally change their name–they can use a nickname or preferred name or change their name after a divorce or upon marriage. However, trans people face enormous legal barriers in different parts of the world to change their name and gender. With a name change protocol, your company is ensuring equal treatment among your employees. This includes using their chosen name in email addresses, business cards, nameplates, identifi   badges, intranet and company directory, etc.

v.   **Employers should not require any documents or proof** to support a trans or nonbinary employee's request for a name change or change to their gender marker in the company's internal systems.
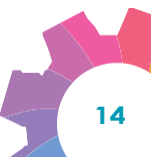
The "What" and the Essentials

6. Inclusive Dress Code

a. What is it?

i. A dress code is a set of workplace appearance guidelines. The purpose of company attire policies is not to enforce gendered attire for employees, but rather to ensure that they are dressed in whatever the company deems as professional and functional wear.

ii. All employees should feel comfortable how they present in the workplace regardless of gender identity, race, religion, culture, or disability.

b. What are the essentials?

i. Make explicit that every employee can wear the attire they feel most comfortable with, provided it is safe, functional, and appropriate for the workplace.

ii. Inclusive language is key. Simple changes in language can ensure that certain attire is appropriate without using gendered language (dictating different articles of clothing for men and women) or other lenses of bias (such as not allowing for religious or cultural expressions of attire and hair). One example of neutral and inclusive language is: "Business casual attire is required for external meetings with clients or prospects. Employees should use discretion on other occasions and are expected to demonstrate good judgment." Additional clauses can be added to ensure inclusivity and leave no room for misinterpretations, such as clarifi   that the dress code "will not be used to discriminate against any employee on the basis of gender identity, sexual orientation, sex, race, ethnicity, religion, disability or any other aspect of an individual's identity."

The "What" and the Essentials

7. Gender Neutral Facilities

a. What is it?

   i. Gender neutral facilities, such as restrooms or locker rooms, create safer and more comfortable circumstances for transgender and nonbinary employees. By eliminating facilities that are gendered male and female, trans and nonbinary employees are freed from having to make decisions about their gender identity that do not refl their internal sense of self. Gender neutral facilities also help protect these employees from facing discrimination or harassment.

b. What are the essentials?

   i. **Restrooms:** Organizations should determine if there are opportunities to create gender neutral restrooms in the offi building. For example, if offi have single person male and female restrooms, they can be converted into all gender restrooms.

   ii. **Locker rooms:** Depending on the nature of the work, employees may need access to a locker room during the workday. Organizations should look into opportunities to create single person changing rooms or gender-neutral locker rooms that still maintain appropriate privacy while also prioritizing safety and comfortability for all employees.

Evaluation of Component 1: Equality as a Matter of Policy

RED

Your company has **three or less** of the above seven policies that contribute to an inclusive workplace.

More inclusive policies are needed to guarantee a safe workplace for LGBTQI+ employees. Some basic protections may be lacking.

YELLOW

Your company has **four to six** of the above seven policies that contribute to an inclusive workplace.

There is still room for improvement when it comes to ensuring a safe and welcoming workplace for all. Basic level protections may be in place, but more policies are needed to fully sustain an inclusive workplace for LGBTQI+ employees.

GREEN

Your company has **all seven** of the above policies that contribute to an inclusive workplace.

Both basic and more advanced-level policies are in place to create a workplace where all LGBTQI+ people belong and thrive. Continue to stay afl   of best practices and policies.

Component 2

Building and Sustaining an Inclusive Culture

Moving beyond putting pen to paper in the implementation of inclusive workplace policies, another key factor of full inclusion is internal and external practices toward building and sustaining cultures of inclusion and belonging. LGBTQI+ and ally employees need to feel that they can bring their authentic selves to work without fear of discrimination or social isolation. This is key not only in cultivating a more productive and innovative workforce, but also for the mental and emotional wellbeing of employees.

Measuring how inclusive a culture is can be a diffi task. The practices below outline some of the best and emerging practices in creating cultures of inclusion.

Note: It is important to collaborate with local leaders and LGBTQI+-led organizational partners in each country that your company has employees. In some countries with punitive legislation against LGBTQI+ people, or with hostile social environments, some of the following practices, such as a Self-ID campaign, would be much more complicated to implement. In that case, you may omit that section from your fi score.

The "What" and the Essentials

Part 1: Internal Practices

1. Employee Resource Groups, Affi   Groups and/or Business Resource Groups

a. What is it?

   i. Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), Affi   Groups, and Business Resource Groups (BRGs) are voluntary employee-led groups with the ultimate objective of fostering a sense of community and diversity and inclusion within their company. ERGs are typically led by and composed of employees who share a common identity, special interest, or life experience (i.e. LGBTQI+, race and/or ethnicity, veteran status, women, people with disabilities, parents, etc.).

   ii. These formal structures offer a community of support, safe spaces, and initiatives toward greater workplace inclusion. Allies can also be invited to join an LGBTQI+ ERG.

b. What are the essentials?

   i. Official company recognition as a formalized workplace organization.

   ii. A direct line to company leadership or an Executive Sponsor is a useful aspect of an ERG structure that ensures access to leadership.

   iii. A budget, usually determined by the D&I or HR department to carry out activities and programs.

   iv. A mission statement and goal(s) for the ERG is necessary to maintain focus and track progress.

   v. Internal structure. For example, the group might have rotating Chairs, Chapter Leads, etc.
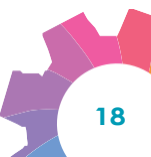
vi. Various city, country and/or regional chapters, depending on the size of the company and age of the ERG. Global or Regional Co-Leads can help to track progress, maintain cross-regional connections, and implement "glocalized," or global to local, programming and initiatives.

The "What" and the Essentials

2. Inclusive and Targeted Recruiting Efforts

a. What is it?

i. Inclusive recruiting refers to how an employer takes steps to communicate their LGBTQI+ inclusion policies and programs in their job opportunity postings, presence and materials at job or career fairs, and across all talent recruitment efforts. Targeted recruitment efforts are very common for businesses seeking to ensure a diverse, talented workforce. These efforts include posting career opportunities on LGBTQI+ listservs or websites, having booths or other presence at LGBTQI+ professional conferences.

b. What are the essentials?

i. **Inclusive job descriptions:** Clearly defi   role, transparent expectations, benefi   available, and the use of inclusive language (or neutral language, if applicable, like languages such as [Spanish](#) and [Portuguese](#)).

ii. **Diverse applicant pool:** Attracting top talent means a diversifi   approach to where an employer posts their job postings, namely across listserv and media outlets targeted at LGBTQI+ people, women, persons with disabilities and more. Using general websites such as LinkedIn, job postings can include language or symbolism to refl   their commitment to diversity and inclusion broadly, with specifi   mention of LGBTQI+ diversity.

iii. **Inclusive application process:** Some key components here are simple, transparent job applications with clear instructions, inclusive interview processes such as cross-departmental interviews and fl   and supportive measures for people with disabilities or neurodivergent individuals. In addition, application materials should allow for optional pronouns, any prior names, and chosen names which sends clear signals that diversity is welcomed and that LGBTQI+ folks are not unfairly discouraged from applying.

The "What" and the Essentials
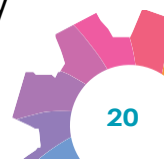
3. Self-ID

a. What is it?

i. LGBTQI+ data collection efforts—more commonly known as "self-identifi   or "self-ID"—shine light on diverse identities that may otherwise be invisible in the workplace. Since sexual orientation and gender identity are not typically visible characteristics in the workplace, self-identifi   is especially important for LGBTQI+ employees.

ii. Self-ID allows employers to understand the size of their LGBTQI+ workforce, observe patterns in LGBTQI+ representation across the organization, and meaningfully track progress towards key inclusion goals. It can also improve the employer's abilities to analyze and respond to employee needs, identify where greater investment or attention may be needed, connect LGBTQI+ employees to professional development opportunities, and more.

iii. An organization's self-ID program sends two messages to employees:

1) LGBTQI+ inclusion is a company priority.

2) LGBTQI+ identity is recognized on the same level as demographic groups already captured in internal surveys and records.
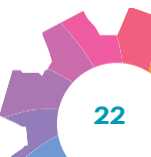
b. What are the essentials?

i. Deciding the method of data collection: The fi   step in implementing a self-ID program is to determine the method of the data collection. Two primary methods of collecting LGBTQI+ self-identifi   data are through anonymous engagement surveys and/or confi   employee records. Organizational engagement surveys are typically anonymous and can include optional demographic questions on sexual orientation
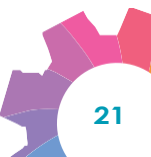
and gender identity (SOGI) as a part of a larger set of demographic questions. Existing Human Resource Information Systems (HRIS) provide opportunities for employees to voluntarily report sexual orientation and gender identity demographic information.

ii. Communication strategy: LGBTQI+ self-ID data is particularly sensitive, therefore, self-ID initiatives should be accompanied by robust communication strategies that clearly explain why the data is being collected, where it will be stored and protected, who will have access, and how the information will be used.

iii. Asking the appropriate questions: It is important to use careful and clear wording when drafting questions to gather self-identifi data, explaining key terms where applicable. The phrasing of a self-ID question has signifi infl over the value of the data collected since insensitive or unclear language can discourage someone from disclosing their identity or potentially cause an employee to incorrectly self-identify. To ensure trust and encourage disclosure, employers should proactively communicate the purpose for the self-ID questions and emphasize confi of the data to address any fears or concerns. Questions collecting this demographic information should be entirely optional and employers should practice transparency by informing employees about the purpose of the questions and how the data will be used.

The "What" and the Essentials

4. LGBTQI+ Inclusion and Educational Trainings

a. What is it?

i. Workplace inclusion training is a key component to creating cultures of belonging at work. They establish expectations toward policies and cultures of nondiscrimination. They also provide educational information about diversity and inclusion in order to fortify employees' understanding of DEI and cultivate empathy. In the case of LGBTQI+ inclusion, the concepts of sexual orientation, gender identity, and the overall rapid evolution of language related to the community makes it worthy of unique content. Many employees want to be respectful and inclusive but lack foundational knowledge to do so.

b. What are the essentials?

i. All workplace inclusion trainings, such as general workplace conduct trainings, DEI employee trainings, and manager trainings, should be LGBTQI+-inclusive and preferably be developed in collaboration with trusted community partners.

ii. Free resources: Employers should offer and promote free educational initiatives such as informational resources, inclusion guides and toolkits, educational webinars, workshops, conferences, etc.

iii. Incentives: Some ally educational and awareness programs offer incentives for employees to continue their learning beyond a baseline level by offering different level badges for employees to display on the intranet or on their desk as a visible marker of allyship.

iv. A safe space is a crucial foundation for learning and relatability. Educational initiatives can foster a safe space for learning by laying out participation guidelines, respect for others' learning journeys, and a moderator or curator who can potentially step in to resolve any issues that may arise.

The "What" and the Essentials

5. DEI-focused Mentorship Program or Reverse Mentorship Program

a. What is it?

i. A mentorship or reverse mentorship program is a structured, often one-on-one, relationship in a work setting aimed at creating opportunities for historically excluded groups, such as LGBTQI+ people, to gain access to career education, a professional support system, hands-on mentorship from industry leaders, and network growth.

ii. Reverse mentoring pairs younger employees with executives to mentor them on fresh perspectives on various topics, including the value of DEI initiatives, driving culture change, inclusive leadership, and exchanging digital skills such as social media marketing.

iii. By design, both types of programs are aimed at creating equitable opportunities for career development and promote cultures of belonging in the workplace.

b. What are the essentials?

i. Strategic planning and organization: This includes a thoughtful and strategic mission statement for the program and specifi   tangible DEI goals (i.e. "increase LGBTQI+ representation in managerial positions by 15% in 3 years").

ii. Intentional recruitment and training of mentors and mentees that equip both parties with expectations, structure, and goals.

iii. Data and metrics should be collected from the program in order to measure effectiveness.

The "What" and the Essentials

Part 2: External Practices

1. External Community Partnerships and Engagement

a. What is it?

    i.   External community partnerships and engagement is the process of building collaborative relationships with LGBTQI+ organizations (nonprofi and NGOs) affi by a special interest or issue. Community partnerships are an important tool in combining and mobilizing resources to infl change and achieve desired goals.

    ii. Organizations that are able to recognize the power of their infl are able to strategically identify the ways a specifi issue (i.e. LGBTQI+, women's issues, racial justice, etc.) intersects with their own business interests.

b. What are the essentials?

    i.   **Fostering relationships:** Organizations should focus on fostering strong, collaborative relationships with external community partner organizations and community members so they can better understand their market and more effi meet their needs.

    ii. **Defi ing purpose:** Defi a purpose of the partnership and establishing strategic goals leads to more successful external engagement with tangible, positive outcomes. It is important to identify the key stakeholders within the partnership and create specifi roles for each person involved in the work.

    iii. **Establishing a budget:** A crucial aspect of entering community partnerships is determining an annual budget for the partnership, respective of your organization's overall budget. Many community partnerships will require a certain amount of annual donation depending on partnership level and what the partnership is working to accomplish over the year.
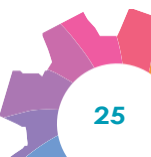
The "What" and the Essentials

2. Philanthropy and Public Advocacy

a. What is it?

i. Organizational philanthropy is when an organization donates their time, resources, and/or money to a charitable cause that will help improve communities and support advocacy work that an organization or group focuses on.

ii. Organizations have a responsibility to a range of stakeholders—their employees, shareholders, customers, local communities in which they operate, etc.—to constantly innovate and increase their value, which cannot realistically be achieved within an organization's own operations. Just as businesses impact political, economic, social, and environmental trends, so too do these forces directly impact business. It is at this intersection that organizations cultivate their public advocacy positions.

b. What are the essentials?

i. Determine purpose: Determine your organization's reason for advocating for LGBTQI+ issues. Companies should consider how this intersects with their business values and how it affects their employees, stakeholders, suppliers, and the community at large.

ii. Assess internal position: When beginning your organization's philanthropy and public advocacy journey, assess the organization's track record and previous stances on LGBTQI+ issues and decide if there is internal work that needs to be focused on fi   or in tandem with external advocacy. How has the organization established its own position before promoting LGBTQI+ equality externally?

The "What" and the Essentials

3. Inclusive Marketing Efforts

a. What is it?

i   Inclusive marketing involves creating content that speaks to specifi diverse communities and refl the community's values, unique needs, and interests. Marketing efforts include multi-media advertisements, social media promotions, events, fundraisers, and more.

ii. LGBTQI+-focused inclusive marketing efforts attempt to eliminate exclusion that the LGBTQI+ community has historically experienced and helps members of the community feel seen and valued as consumers.

b. What are the essentials?

i.   **Target audience:** In developing an inclusive marketing strategy, it's critical that the organization focuses on the target audience. Determining the appropriate audience for the marketing campaign will ensure the messaging is reaching the desired group of consumers.

ii. **Setting goals:** Determining what the organization is attempting to achieve through the marketing efforts is key in the process of creating an inclusive campaign. Is the goal to bring in more LGBTQI+ customers? Recruit LGBTQI+ employees? Recognize and celebrate the community? Establishing the goals of the campaign will help guide the messaging and content.

iii. **Establishing a budget:** Successful marketing efforts will require monetary investments from the organization. Organizations should work within the appropriate channels to create the budget for the campaign based on overall goals.
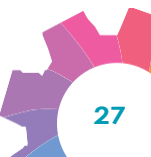
Evaluation of Component 2: Building and Sustaining an Inclusive Culture

RED

Your company has **three or less** of the combined eight internal and external practices that contribute to an inclusive culture.

More inclusive culture practices and protocols are needed to guarantee a safe workplace for LGBTQI+ employees. Some basic internal and/or external practices may not be in effect.

YELLOW

Your company has **four to seven** of the combined eight internal and external practices that contribute to an inclusive culture.

There is still room for improvement when it comes to ensuring an inclusive workplace culture. Based on your result, basic practices may be in place but more is needed either internally and/or externally to foster a healthy culture of belonging.

GREEN

Your company has **all eight** of the internal practices and external practices that contribute to an inclusive culture.

Both basic and more advanced-level internal and external practices are in place to create a workplace culture where all LGBTQI+ people belong and thrive. Continue to stay afl of best practices and policies.

Component 3

Everyday Experiences of Inclusion Efforts

This section is meant to be refl and individual to each employee who completes this mini survey. To that point, it is helpful to have a diverse range of employees complete this section to identify possible gaps between policies, programs, and inclusive culture practices versus the day-to-day realities for employees. A data set that encompasses a cross-section of employees will allow for a comprehensive overview of experiences and trends across different identities, roles, and/or geographies. From senior executives to mid-level managers to entry level employees, these questions translate to concrete indicators of when and how concerted LGBTQI+ inclusion efforts are successful and where there is still signifi room to improve.

To best support your organization in distributing this survey and easily quantifying responses, we are happy to provide you with this **downloadable template**. Using this template with automated formulas not only makes counting the score for this section easier, but more importantly, it ensures your company's confi ownership of the survey, as well as the ability to add optional demographic questions if you wish to collect that data as well.

Component 3 Survey

1. At this workplace, everyone knows what the non-discrimination policy is and what it means for LGBTQI+ employees.

   1 No, few people do

   2 Many but not all do

   3 Just about everyone does

2. I know that if I experience or witness discrimination, my concerns will be taken seriously and will be properly addressed.

   1 I doubt it

   2 I may be heard but I am not confi   the behavior would be addressed

   3 I am confi   that the behavior will be addressed and my concerns will be heard

3. Jokes or negative comments about LGBTQI+ people are common around this workplace.

   1 Yes

   2 Sometimes

   3 Never or rarely

4. I have heard our business's leaders speak proudly about the LGBTQI+ workforce and/or the company's inclusion efforts for this community.

   1 Never or rarely

   2 Sometimes, but not often

   3 More often than not

5. I don't have to hide who I am at work as an LGBTQI+ person or as an ally.

   1 I generally have to hide that part of myself

   2 Sometimes I have to hide my identity to get by at work

   3 I generally do not feel I need to hide who I am at work

6. At this company, LGBTQI+ employees are generally:

   A. Respected

   1 Never or rarely
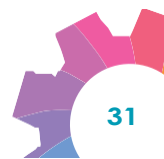
   2 Sometimes

   3 More often than not

   B. Visible

   1 Never or rarely

   2 Sometimes

   3 More often than not

   C. Found across different roles and levels

   1 Never or rarely

   2 Somewhat but tend to be in select roles

   3 Often found at all levels, including leadership

Note: When tabulating your cumulative score, please count your average score across parts A, B, and C as your final score for question 6. If you are using the downloadable template, this will be properly automatically calculated as such.

7. How frequently do you hear colleagues share their gender pronouns? This can include practices such as introducing themselves with their pronouns in meetings and adding their pronouns to email signatures.

    1 Never or rarely

    2 Sometimes, but not often

    3 More often than not

8. Anyone applying for a job or in the hiring process, would know that we are LGBTQI+ inclusive.

    1 Never or rarely

    2 Sometimes, if the applicant asked

    3 Most likely—our inclusive values would be specifi   communicated

9. Do you feel represented in your company's public profi   and branding, including marketing and advertising?

    1 Never or rarely

    2 Sometimes, but not often

    3 More often than not

10. I would recommend and encourage a member of the LGBTQI+ community or strong ally to join my company.

    1 No

    2 Maybe, depending on their role or what team they join

    3 Defi
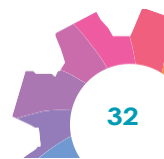
11. Transgender and nonbinary employees and/or customers have safe and respectful access to appropriate facilities.

- 1 Never or rarely

- 2 Sometimes, but not often

- 3 More often than not

12. Leaders at this company make clear that LGBTQI+ inclusion is part of our business strategy for success.

- 1 Never or rarely

- 2 Sometimes, but not often

- 3 More often than not

13. LGBTQI+ people here have access to professional development opportunities and mentors as anyone else does.

- 1 Never or rarely

- 2 Sometimes, but not often

- 3 More often than not

14. I am encouraged to connect with local LGBTQI+ organizations for partnerships, advice, or events.

- 1 Never or rarely

- 2 Sometimes, but not often

- 3 More often than not

15. This business values and prioritizes relationships with LGBTQI+-owned businesses in our supply chain and contract initiatives.

- 1 Never or rarely

- 2 Sometimes, but not often

- 3 More often than not
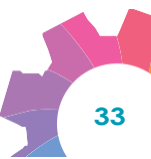
Evaluation of Component 3: Everyday Impact of Inclusion Efforts

At the end of the survey, every employee who fi   the survey will Add up the numerical value of each of your responses to obtain the sum total. This number should range anywhere from 15-45.

RED

Your total score is 15-24.

The lived realities of employees at work do not refl   a culture of belonging. The workplace may feel anywhere from hostile and unsafe, to unwelcoming and restrictive.

YELLOW

Your total score is 25-35.

There may be pockets of resistance to full inclusion and/or inconsistencies in how the workforce understands and embodies LGBTQI+ diversity and inclusion.

GREEN

Your total score is 36-45.

Employees' experiences at work are generally positive, they are able to be themselves and see the values of LGBTQI+ inclusion refl   and embraced across many layers of the company and its leadership.

Assessing Your Cumulative Scores to Achieve a Holistic View of LGBTQI+ Workplace Inclusion

Now that you've completed each part of this *LGBTQI+ Inclusion Toolkit*, you'll want to look comparatively across your scores for all three components. How did you score in each of the components— "Equality as a Matter of Policy", "Building and Sustaining an Inclusive Culture", and "Everyday Experiences of Inclusion Efforts"?

Red scores indicate a more urgent need to address a clear gap in inclusion efforts, whereas yellow scores indicate a more nuanced reality. Yellow scores may be indicative of a company that is still mid-journey to becoming more LGBTQI+-inclusive, or perhaps a situation where policies or culture practices do not fully address all aspects of inclusion.

We can measure policies and culture practices quantitatively, but the translation of that to the actual experiences of every employee, across all levels and departments, can be diffi   to get a comprehensive view of. For example, what if your company has trans-inclusive healthcare and benefi   yet trans employees experience the day-to-day environment to be not one in which they are comfortable bringing their full selves to work? One of the most valuable practical uses of this toolkit is to compare scores across components in order to identify gaps like this and explore possible solutions. **A few scenarios are explained on the following pages:**

Equality as a Matter of Policy: GREEN

Building and Sustaining an Inclusive Culture: GREEN

Everyday Experiences of Inclusion Efforts: YELLOW

Your company has inclusive policies and protections in place, including many best practices that seek to create a healthy culture of belonging for LGBTQI+ employees. However, efforts may be needed to strengthen effectiveness, or be given more priority by company leadership. This is refl   in the yellow scoring of everyday experiences of employees.

The next step would be to go beyond policy to strengthen and grow inclusive culture practices, both internally and externally, to ensure that employees feel a true sense of belonging at work.

Equality as a Matter of Policy: GREEN

Building and Sustaining an Inclusive Culture: YELLOW

Everyday Experiences of Inclusion Efforts: RED

Your company has all of its inclusive policies and protections in place, but is still lacking some of the best practices toward creating a sustained culture of belonging for LGBTQI+ employees. Related to the lack of culture-supporting practices, the everyday experiences of employees are showing this significant gap between the intention of the policies and the day-to-day workplace culture.

The next step would be to build on your company policies by implementing more best practices, both internal and external, around creating inclusive cultures, while also continuing to grow and develop those already in existence. LGBTQI+ community partners are helpful here if they are not already a part of your company's ecosystem. This should help towards improving the everyday experiences of employees.

Equality as a Matter of Policy: RED

Building and Sustaining an Inclusive Culture: YELLOW

Everyday Experiences of Inclusion Efforts: GREEN

Despite your company not having sufficient LGBTQI+-inclusive policies and the need for fuller inclusion practices, the everyday experience of your employees in terms of inclusion and belonging is very positive.

The next step would be to safeguard and reinforce these experiences by solidifying policies that protect LGBTQI+ employees from discrimination and offer inclusive benefits, as well as continue to develop best practices around culture change.

Whatever set of scores your business has obtained in this self-assessment, you have Out & Equal as an enthusiastic partner in the next steps of your inclusion journey. Rather than publicize ratings, we encourage all businesses, large and small, to submit their participation in this self-assessment to toolkitforchange@outandequal.org. Out & Equal can provide assistance in interpreting cumulative scores as well as tailored consultation as to next steps and future opportunities for partnership and collaboration. Thank you for taking the time to complete this self-assessment and for all that you do to create workplaces where everyone can belong and thrive.

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WORKPLACE ADVOCATES

Employing Individuals of All Abilities – A Guide for Employers

The following are excerpts from the EmployAbility Toolkit, compiled by a consortium of agencies and disability organizations to assist employers with information on employing people of all abilities, dispelling myths, and helpful tips to get started.

The Business Case

The business case hiring a qualified person with a disability brings greater benefits beyond filling an open job. There's solid business case, too. Here are just a few of the benefits of hiring people with disabilities:

Reason #1: Return on Investment. Businesses that employ people with disabilities turn social issues into business opportunities. These opportunities translate into lower costs, higher revenues and increased profits. Capitalize on the ROI of employing people with disabilities:

INCREASE REVENUES

• Access new markets

• Improve productivity through innovative and effective ways of doing business

REDUCE COSTS

• Reduce hiring and training costs

• Increase retention

ENHANCE SHAREHOLDER VALUE

• Capitalize on opportunities to meet business goals

Reason #2: Marketing. Customers with disabilities and their families, friends and associates represent a trillion dollar (that's $1,000,000,000,000. TWELVE ZEROS) market segment, according to the U.S Dept. Of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy's AskEarn.org. They, like other market segments, purchase products and services from companies that best meet their needs. A large number of Americans say they prefer to patronize businesses that hire people with disabilities.

Another benefit of employing people with disabilities is increasing your opportunity to gain a lasting customer base. Very often these are employees who will stick with you through thick and thin, as long as you stick with them.

CAPITALIZE ON NEW MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

• Mirror the market to attract a wider customer base

• Increase your market share

DEVELOP NEW PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

• Respond to marketplace needs

 • Lead your market

• Increase profitability

Reason #3: Innovation. Innovation is key to the success of your business. Employees with disabilities bring unique experiences and understanding that transform a workplace and enhance products and services. As part of

your team, these employees can bring these experiences to bear, helping to build your business and lead your company into the future, together.

WORKPLACE INNOVATION

• Create more efficient and effective business processes

• Develop and implement management strategies to attract and retain qualified talent

• Use technology in new ways to increase productivity

PRODUCT AND SERVICE INNOVATION

• Stimulate new product and service development through disability-inclusive diverse teams

• Customize products and services to increase profitability

DEFINE THE FUTURE

• Foster the development of next-generation products and services (Sources: ThinkBeyondtheLabel.com, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy)

What Do We Mean by the Term "Disability"?

Disability includes a wide range of conditions. A few examples:

• paralysis

• blindness or visual impairment

• deafness or hard of hearing

• intellectual or developmental disabilities

• learning disabilities

• psychiatric disabilities and mental health conditions

• epilepsy

• chemical sensitivity

• head injuries

• cerebral palsy

• HIV/AIDS

• and many others

Disability impacts people's lives in a wide variety of ways, and the level of impact can range from minimal to extensive. In some cases, a person's disability is a minor inconvenience, something that is controlled through medication, or requires some simple adaptations. In other cases, a person's disability plays a major role in their lives, impacting their ability to earn a living, to participate in activities in the community, and to do many of the things that many non-disabled people take for granted in their daily lives.

Disabilities are often not apparent. Learning disabilities, psychiatric disabilities, epilepsy, and multiple sclerosis are just a few of the many disabilities that are often hidden. Never presume that someone doesn't have a disability just because you can't see it.

Disability is a natural part of the human existence. Plain and simply: disability is only one part of a person's identity. It is not something to be fixed or looked down upon. People with disabilities have the same right as anyone else to full participation in society.

Legal definitions vary considerably. A person may be considered disabled under the Americans with Disabilities Act but not by their state's vocational rehabilitation agency. Also, particular conditions specify the criteria that a

person must meet in order to have that condition. For example, not all people who wear glasses have a visual impairment. The following are some important legal definitions of disability:

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

• A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individual;

• A record of such an impairment; or

• Being regarded as having such an impairment.

Social Security

• The inability to engage in any substantial gainful activity by reason of any medically determinable physical or mental impairment(s) which can be expected to result in death or which has lasted or can be expected to last for a continuous period of not less than 12 months.

Rehabilitation Act of 1973

The term individual with a disability means any individual who:

• Has a physical or mental impairment which for such individual constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment and

• Can benefit in terms of an employment outcome from vocational rehabilitation services.

Dispelling Myths

Have you heard some of the common misconceptions about hiring individuals with disabilities? Industry reports consistently rate workers with disabilities as average or above average in performance, attendance, and safety (DuPont report). When it comes to employee retention and reduced turnover costs, research has found that workers with disabilities are not "job hoppers." On the contrary, they are inclined to remain in their jobs longer than the general workforce.

The following dispels some of the common myths.

Myth: Individuals with disabilities do not have the right skills for business. Employees with disabilities have strengths, traits and qualities that make them valuable to the workforce, including perseverance, problem solving, goal setting and determination. Often their unique characteristics and skills are well-suited to a particular business. For example, while some employees may find repetitive work boring, others thrive on routine and predictability. Often, too, there are many untapped educated minds in the pool of candidates with disabilities.

Employees with disabilities can take advantage of many training opportunities to help them acquire the skills needed. In addition, some people with disabilities can benefit from job developers and job coaches who assist them while they are learning.

Additionally, a Harris poll discovered that 82 percent of managers said it isn't any harder to supervise employees with disabilities than it is employees without.

There are extensive benefits to a company that employs people with disabilities, such as having reliable and loyal workers, diversifying the talent pool and even saving money.

Myth: Supports in the workplace would be too costly. According to the National Center on Workforce and Disability (NCWD) the majority of employees— at least 73 percent—don't require any type of accommodation. Of the ones that do, 51 percent cost less than $500. For some excellent examples of accommodations, visit the National Center on Workforce and Disability (NCWD). And as an added bonus, these accommodations have been found to benefit other employees without disabilities.

The most requested accommodation is a flexible work schedule, which costs nothing.

According to Bradley Bellacicco of the Salisbury Area Chamber of Commerce, "Any operation that has more than a handful of workers is going to have to make accommodations. This might include not asking an employee with a

bad back to lift a heavy box or not requiring an employee with poor eyesight to read fine print. You're not doing something unusual. You're accommodating the people you work with without even thinking about it."

Finally, the federal government offers tax incentives to help employers pay for any accommodations or modifications that will make their businesses accessible to persons with disabilities. (Studies indicate, however, that the number one reason employers hire people with disabilities is NOT the tax credits or incentives; it is because employees with disabilities are loyal, dependable and remain on the workforce longer than other employees.)

Myth: Employees with disabilities can be easily offended. Common etiquette can avoid hurt feelings. Many people worry that they may say the wrong thing to a person who has a disability, but people with disabilities know that others may not know the appropriate language. People with disabilities are people first. Using language that puts the individual first (i.e., person with a disability, not the disabled; or someone who uses a wheelchair, not wheelchair-bound) is common sense. If you are unsure, don't be afraid to ask the individual what he or she prefers.

There are a number of things employers can do to include people with disabilities in your workforce. The Employer Assistance and Resource Network on Disability Inclusion (EARN) recommends several strategies including:

• Conduct training for employees including discrimination prevention and ADA-specific training for managers and supervisors.

• Committing to diversity and equitable employment for all individuals regardless of their disabilities.

• Surveying employees to understand their perceptions of inclusion or bias.

• Offering mentoring opportunities and including employees with disabilities.

• Focus recruiting and retention efforts on employees with disabilities.

• Include diversity and inclusion effectiveness as part of supervisors' job responsibilities.

Myth: Coworkers may not want to work with people with disabilities and their productivity will decrease. People with disabilities who have overcome challenges and who demonstrate a strong commitment and loyalty to the employer are often a positive influence on their coworkers.

Myth: Getting information on hiring and working with people with disabilities is expensive and time consuming. There are a number of available financial resources for employers. Although most employers do not consider financial incentives and tax credits as their main reason for hiring individuals with disabilities, employers that hire individuals who have a disability can trim their labor costs through many available workforce and economic development programs through their respective states. Employment-based tax credits may also save your business money by cutting federal or state tax liability. In addition, The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) is a federal tax credit that benefits businesses that hire and retain workers with various barriers to employment.

Myth: Hiring people with disabilities makes businesses vulnerable to litigation. There is no evidence that supports this, as very few businesses experience disability-related claims.

Myth: Supporting people with disabilities can adversely affect the business's bottom line. It's actually the opposite. Hiring people with disabilities provides businesses with a competitive advantage. Research has shown that people have a more favorable view of businesses that employ people with disabilities and would prefer to patronize these businesses. People with disabilities are also customers who spend billions of dollars annually on purchases. Disability friendly businesses earn the patronage of individuals with disabilities, their families and their friends. In addition, some of the accommodations that benefit people with disabilities, such as automatic door openers, talking ATMs and accessible websites also benefit people without disabilities, and as our population ages, the need for greater accessibility also increases.

Myth: Hiring workers who have disabilities increases workers compensation insurance rates. Insurance rates are based solely on the relative hazards of the operation and the organization's accident experience, not on whether an employer has hired workers with disabilities.

Improve Your EmployAbility

When you're looking at hiring qualified employees with disabilities, here are some tips from successful employers to help you get started:

• Learn about local available resources for training, awareness and support.

• Create opportunities for job shadowing where a new employee can learn the job by watching and working alongside a coworker who can teach him or her.

• Conduct informational interviews.

• Host a Disability Mentoring Day.

 • Participate in the U.S. Department of Labor's National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM).

• Embed disability components into training for HR and new employees, and include disability in diversity training.

• Participate in job fairs.

• Create internships.

• Join the Business Leadership Network in your state.

• Connect with Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies in your state and work with them on how you can participate; distribute position announcements to them.

Helpful Websites

• US Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy (www.dol.gov/odep/)

• Americans With Disabilities Act (www.ada.gov/)

• Think Beyond the Label (www.thinkbeyondthelabel.com/)

• AskJAN (www.askjan.org/)

 • Disability.Gov   (www.disability.gov/resource/national-disability-institute-ndi/)

• Institute for Community Inclusion (www.communityinclusion.org/)

• National Center on Workforce and Disability (NCWD) (www.onestops.info/article.php?article_id=59)

• Employer Assistance and Resource Network on Disability Inclusion (EARN) (www.askearn.org/)

• Northeast ADA Center @ Cornell University (www.northeastada.org/)

• Internal Revenue Service ([www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/tax-benefits-for-businesses-who-have-employees-withdisabilities?_ga=1.205889808.2068179500.1435337635](http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/tax-benefits-for-businesses-who-have-employees-withdisabilities))

Accessible and Authentic Interviews for Candidates with Disabilities

Employers are increasingly interested in diversifying their workforce. Companies who are actively pursuing a more inclusive workforce that includes people with disabilities, often report challenges in finding qualified candidates. While employers are looking for candidates with the right mix of skills, qualifications, and experience, candidates themselves are also looking for organizations that meet their criteria for an inclusive workplace.[1] The interview experience is a major factor in whether talent joins your company or moves on.

Standardizing the Interview Approach for All Candidates

Job interviews can be stressful for both the employer and candidate. Some employers may find themselves to be a little nervous or uncomfortable when interviewing candidates with disabilities. It's important to ensure that your company has standard processes in place to ensure equal opportunity for all candidates. Standard approaches ensure everyone is held to the same expectations and standards. Company practices that help to create standard interview practices include:

Create Process

- Ensure that your application and interview portals are accessible to all.

- If your company provides any digital pre-employment testing, these processes must be accessible to all applicants.

- Standardize the process for the opportunity to self-identify as a person with a disability in the application and interview process. Where possible, build that process into HR portals to ensure confidentiality.

- Standardize protocol for inviting applicants for an interview. Ask all applicants if they need anything to fully participate in the interview process.

- Assign the reasonable accommodation request and follow up process within the company. Create protocols for ensuring any requested accommodations are implemented.

- Ensure all documents needed for the interview process are accessible by assigning the task. Send accessible documents as a matter of course to all applicants.

- Identify and use accessible interview locations across your company (to include access for people in wheeled mobility devices, nearby parking, proximity to an accessible restaurant, and an accessible path of travel to and from the interview).

- Ensure digital accessibility for online interviews.

- Standardize positions that require an employment tests such as those that measure aptitude, physical agility or specific skills. Ensure that they are designed to test the essential functions of the position. Ask all candidates to complete the test.

- Create a protocol to ensure that hiring managers share the same expectations and descriptions of jobs with all candidates during the interview process.

- Create a process to ensure that HR screens interview questions put together by a hiring committee to ensure that no illegal questions (questions that might illicit disability information) are asked.

- Review and update the job requirements so they are an authentic and current representation of the job. EARN's *Encouraging Applicants with Disabilities: Job Descriptions and Announcements* checklist and accompanying explainer may be helpful in this process.

Educate Hiring Managers

Whether or not a manager is comfortable with disability can shape the experience of the job candidate during the interview process. Providing some basic training about disability etiquette, the impact of assumptions about what a person with a disability can and can't do, and company policies that might help a new employee with a disability feel welcome in their new role can be extremely helpful. Here are some recommendations around educating hiring managers:

- Ensure hiring managers understand disability etiquette to increase the comfort level of both managers and job candidates. This might include a discussion on how certain candidates may present during the interview process (i.e., failure to make eye contact).

- Ensure hiring managers focus the interview on the merits of the candidate not whether or not they have a disability. Unfounded assumptions about what a candidate with a disability can and can't do can lead to discrimination.

- Teach hiring managers about the reasonable accommodation process and other programs that may benefit employees.

- Ensure hiring managers understand that all applicants are to be held to the same standard.

- Educate hiring managers about what they can and can't ask during the interview process as it relates to disability. Practice disclosure conversations during an interview so they are aware of what to do should the issue of disability come up during the interview.

Accessible Interviews: What You Need to Know

Companies have an obligation to make reasonable accommodations during the hiring process to enable candidates with disabilities to participate in the interview process. A reasonable accommodation should not be viewed as "special treatment," rather accommodations level the playing field for those who may need to approach the interview a little differently in order to best demonstrate their skills and abilities. Remember that the goal of the interview is to accurately assess the candidate's skills, qualifications, and experience for the position they are applying to. A checklist of best practices to ensure accessible interviews is provided below.

- Ensure any accommodations requested prior to the interview are in place before the candidate arrives.

- Visit the interview location prior to conducting the interview to ensure it meets the candidates access needs.

- Check in with the candidate to see if they have what they need to fully participate in the interview now that they are on-site.

- Allow service animals to accompany the candidate to the interview. Do not pet or otherwise distract the dog.

- Ask job-related interview questions and those relevant to job functions. Focus on how the person plans to be effective in the position.

- Remember that you can't ask any questions that are likely to reveal a disability. Instead ask, can you perform the essential functions of this job with or without a reasonable accommodation.

- Any candidate can be asked how they would perform a particular job task. If the candidate requires accommodations to do so successfully, ensure that they are provided.

- Remember to relax. Everyone's a little nervous in an interview situation, don't let the fear of making a mistake in etiquette impact your ability to connect with the candidate.

Resources

Job Accommodation Network (JAN) 1-800-526-7234 (V/TTY)

JAN is a no cost, confidential service from the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) that provides information on job accommodations for people with disabilities, the employment provisions of the ADA and other related legislation.

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) 1-800-669-4000 (V); 1-800-669-6820 (TTY)
The EEOC enforces the ADA's employment provisions and provides resources that can answer employers' questions about how to ensure their hiring process is inclusive of people with disabilities.

Employment Tests and Selection Procedures: www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/employment-tests-and-selection-procedures

Job Applicants and the ADA: https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/job-applicants-and-ada

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Encouraging Applicants with Disabilities: Job Descriptions and Announcements

Job announcements and descriptions can play an important role in creating a pipeline of candidates that includes qualified people with disabilities. When done well, these documents serve as the first opportunity to communicate a culture of inclusion and workplace flexibility. Nevertheless, job announcements and descriptions often contain language or unnecessary details that may prevent people with disabilities from applying.

Encouraging diverse applicants requires more thought and intention than simply including an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) statement in the job announcement, because true equal opportunity for employment is more than just a tagline. This practice tool contains examples and suggestions to help construct high quality job announcements and descriptions that may increase the number of qualified applicants with disabilities your organization attracts.

Accurate Information Can Improve Job/Candidate Fit

Thorough and accurate job descriptions can yield a larger number of candidates who are a good fit for the position. In addition to the purpose of a position, people with disabilities may be more likely to apply for a job if they are able to get a sense of:

The specific activities the job entails. Conducting a task analysis can help to identify all of the components of a job, and to glean information helpful for delineating between "marginal" and "essential" job functions.

The work environment. Identifying specific information about the work environment can help a potential applicant make a decision about job fit. Is the environment loud, quiet, bright, dark, cramped, hectic, or fast-paced? Is the workspace open or do people have offices? The answer to these questions can be an important factor in a job seeker's decision to apply.

The workplace culture. Workplace culture plays a large role in employee engagement, which in turn influences employee fit and retention rates. Corporate values and commitment to diversity should be evident in the job announcement and description.

The potential for workplace flexibility. The job description should be as clear as possible about the possibility of flexible scheduling or remote work, worksite location options, opportunities for rotational assignments, and particular benefits like paid time off.

Physical requirements. Certain jobs require some degree of physicality to complete. Employers should be very clear about those requirements, but avoid overestimating physical tasks (e.g., an office manager who must be able to lift 50 lbs.) Use of a task analysis process can improve accuracy in estimating physical requirements. People with disabilities need accurate information to determine if they can perform physical functions of the position, *with or without* accommodations.

Words Matter

The words used to describe job functions can be the difference between whether or not a person with a disability chooses to apply. Consider the following examples of simple language changes, which decrease the likelihood of unintentionally ruling out otherwise qualified applicants with disabilities. An effective job description will describe *what* needs to be done, not *how* the applicant needs to do it:

Old Description	New Description
Must be able to drive between multiple locations for client appointments	Must be able to travel between multiple locations for client appointments
Must have strong written and oral communications skills	Must be able to communicate with others effectively
Must be able to stand for long periods of timez	Ability to remain at work station for long periods of time
Must be able to see hazards and hear directions in a hectic environment	Must be able to respond quickly and effectively to directions and safety hazards

Be sure to mention the process for requesting an accommodation during the application and interview phase in the job announcement, and include contact information for making the request.

Marginal vs. Essential

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)[1] provides guidance on determining whether a job function is *essential* or *marginal*. A candidate with a disability could request to have marginal functions waived or reassigned as a form of reasonable accommodation, but all candidates must be qualified to perform essential functions, *with or without* an accommodation.

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1 EEOC, 1991. The ADA: Your Responsibilities as an Employer. Retrieved from https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/ada-your-responsibilities-employer

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There are many factors to consider when determining essential functions, including:

- The amount of time dedicated to the task
- The degree of skill required
- The impact of reassigning the task
- Employer judgement of task importance

- The frequency of the task
- The amount of time it takes to perform the task

Each task is measured against all of these factors and perhaps more, as meeting a single criterion may not be sufficient to determine whether it is essential. For example:

- A marketing professional might frequently stuff envelopes for mass mailings. However, the task could be easily reassigned to an administrative support professional.

- A program manager might be responsible for developing a departmental budget once every year. The task is infrequent, but requires a specifi skill set and would be very cumbersome to reassign to another employee.

Minimum Qualification Standards

People with disabilities experience bias and other barriers to employment, which can result in fewer professional opportunities compared to their non-disabled peers. Employers who are willing to emphasize "skills for employability" over standardized minimum experience qualifications are likely to receive a more diverse pipeline of applicants. In some cases, it is possible that skills for employability are more important than a specific degree or years of experience. It is often true that job-specific skills can be taught on the job, but other skills cannot, such as:

- Interpersonal skills
- Systems thinking
- Critical thinking
- Teamwork

- Problem solving
- Innovation
- Time management

In some cases, a job description might include these types of skills in lieu of a specific number of years of experience in similar positions, or a certain degree.

An employer is never required to hire anyone who is not qualified for the job, but it is possible to attract a more diverse pool of qualified candidates, including those with disabilities, with small changes to the way in which open positions are defined, announced, and described.

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Resources

EEOC Guidance: Job Applicants and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/job-applicants-and-ada

Job Accommodation Network: Accommodation and Compliance: Job Descriptions: https://askjan.org/topics/jobdesc.cfm?csSearch=2589127_1

Employer Assistance and Resource Network on Disability Inclusion (EARN) Topics: Job Descriptions: https://askearn.org/topics/recruitment-hiring/job-descriptions/

U.S. Department of Education: Employability Skills Framework: https://cte.ed.gov/initiatives/employability-skills-framework

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