


Project 2021-1-BG01-KA122-ADU-000035679 Safety and success, Erasmus+  Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION BEST PRACTICES FOR CHANGING YOUR CULTURE

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ESTABLISH A SENSE OF BELONGING FOR EVERYONE

For everyone to bring their best self forward, a sense of belonging must first be established. Having a connection to an organization or group of people that makes you feel you can be yourself not only results in greater engagement and creativity and this is a psychological need.

It's not a one-size-fits-all approach, either that's why it's so important to share best practices and be open to trying new things. The good thing is that as you're working on diversity, you can also work on inclusion, and vice versa. It's all interconnected.

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EMPATHETIC LEADERSHIP IS KEY

Diversity and inclusion are often treated as a single initiative. But for real change to happen, every individual leader needs to buy into the value of belonging both intellectually and emotionally.

Part of this process requires tuning in to empathy; each person remembering a time when they were excluded, shamed, interrupted, and so on, so they can apply those lessons outwardly.


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A TOP-DOWN APPROACH ISN'T ENOUGH

Top-down approaches drive compliance, not commitment. From leaders to every individual must see and understand their role in group culture. This means identifying differences in persons experience and values so that change can be made relevant for each person and knowing that lasting change must activate different parts of the system top down, bottom up, and middle out in different ways.


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QUOTAS DON'T AUTOMATE INCLUSION

Goals may boost diversity numbers, but this won't automatically create an inclusive culture. Too often, people focus on diversity and inclusion efforts disproportionately on quality of connection, but the experience continues far beyond an invitation. That also means understanding how group work best, and when tension and discord are beneficial. Recognize that sometimes the easy and fast way is not necessarily the right way, and that sometimes teams function best when there is a bit of tension, disagreement, back-and-forth. Obviously, you cannot let things devolve into personal attacks, but know the difference between a healthy, stimulating exchange of every person's idea and a situation where people are being disrespectful because of who another person is.


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INCLUSION IS ONGOING — NOT ONE-OFF TRAINING

It isn't enough to teach people what it means to be inclusive. Like any form of behavior change, inclusion requires individuals to identify key moments in which to build new habits or "microbehaviors" (daily actions that can be practiced and measured). And when these habits are put into action in an environment that supports honest conversations and healthy tension, real change becomes possible. One way to do this is to identify change cohorts within the group or organization. Then, you equip them with the skills and information to help them champion change within their departments, teams, working groups. This is much more effective than one-off training sessions which don't move the needle; you want people to incorporate these ideas and beliefs into their daily lives.

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MAXIMIZE JOY AND CONNECTION, MINIMIZE FEAR

People are wired to react with fear and distrust when their beliefs are challenged. While fear can be a powerful motivator, it also encourages people to narrow their perspective the opposite desired effect for creating a more inclusive workplace. Finding ways to frame challenges through a lens of possibility and elevating the power of shared experiences and storytelling to do so creates greater potential for positive change.

Then you can focus on creating moments that continue the momentum. You need to not only point out where there's room for improvement but spotlight the moments of success and celebrate them.

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ACTIVITIES OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

It encompasses different significant factors like personality, education, interests, hobbies, and sexual orientation. Race, talents, cognitive styles, and abilities follow the list. People from different backgrounds and cultures come together to strengthen the society.

To cope with the ever-increasing competitive edge, it is inevitable to retain diverse. That's where the concept of inclusion comes in. It refers to the efforts that help a people feel like an essential part of the mixed teams, irrespective of the differences. It focuses on creating an environment where diverse employees are accepted and appreciated. Without inclusion activities, diversity is meaningless.


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DO THE DIVERSITY BRIEFINGS

It is the first vital activity to promote diversity and inclusion. Team can arrange monthly seating to discuss and design the different diversity acts. For example, people with different backgrounds can brief what holy days or holidays are essential to them. Accordingly, they can be offered time off. It spreads historical and cultural knowledge. It also increases interpersonal understanding with the fewest possible side effects.

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DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN FLOWER PETALS

This recreational activity needs 4-10 members in each group, and it is one of the best ways to learn more about each other. All the members should be encouraged to make the best of their creativity and ideas. Here's how to proceed

- All the groups should get a large art paper and some colorful markers.
- Each group must draw a giant flower. It should have a round center and an equal number of petals to the number of participants in their group.
- After discussion, each participant should fill the petals with something unique about themselves- anything that makes them stand out from others. However, physical characteristics should be ignored.
- Everyone should fill the center of the flower should be filled with their 'common' something.
- Each team should share the flowers with the other groups to discuss the differences and similarities.

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PUT UP THE SNAPSHOT BOARD

Photos can make for great conversation icebreakers. A board full of memories related to personal important life events can create the right spark of communication.

The display of such personal mementos can speak volumes about the different aspects of group experiences. It helps the participant to see the perspective of others and embrace it, which finally leads to mutual respect and dignity.

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DISH-TO-PASS POTLUCK

What can be better than celebrating diversity with food? Organize a fun potluck lunch party where everyone should bring in dishes from or inspired by their culture and heritage.

It starts from appetizers and main dishes to sweet courses. Potluck offers a welcome chance to try the all-time best cuisines across kitchens. But it is undoubtedly more than that. It is because food is one of the best conversation starters. It gives a favorable occasion to share and connect

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MINI EVENTS

You can make better use of the office cafeteria or lounge area. These common areas for office people can be made available for small events and representations of different art and culture. Discussions on various topics appreciating diversity encourage participants to ask questions and share feedback, inspiring others to speak up for their rights. Such opportunities can generate interesting and open conversations, which are true diversity and inclusion efforts.

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WRAPPING IT UP

Diversity and inclusion activities should exist in the lifeblood of every group. It's up to that company's strategy how it leads to earning a competitive advantage. The above activities can execute the inclusion uncompromisingly.

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