Diversity and Inclusion - Beyond Legislation (Manager Module)

5

Learning outcomes:

- Recognise the business case for diversity and inclusion.
- Discover or Review unconscious bias.

What you will need:

- Handout 7 – More or less?
- If being used - infographic link: www.jaluch.co.uk/unconscious-bias-infographic

You will need access to the internet to project the infographic onto a screen OR you could ask delegates to access the infographic via their own mobile devices.

Content and suggested timings:

What is diversity and Inclusion?	15 mins
Unconscious bias	*10 mins
More or less? - activity	25 mins
Summary	10 mins
Total duration:	**60 mins**

*You will need to allow longer if managers did not attend the employee session which allowed them to view and discuss the infographic. Alternatively, managers can view this as a pre-course activity.

What is diversity and inclusion?

Having covered the legal reasons for diversity let's now consider diversity and inclusion more widely.

It's about showing professional courtesy and not about being politically correct!

P

Aside from ensuring protection from legal claims, organisations tend to be interested in diversity and inclusion for the following reasons:

i

- Recognising the commercial/organisational value in having a diverse workforce that reflects a diverse customer base and that brings strength to team working, decision making and leadership.

- Accessing (and also retaining) the widest possible talent pool in order to gain competitive advantage.

- Corporate social responsibility and public perception of their organisation.

- Responding to employee expectations/pressures.

PLEASE NOTE: This is a one-page sample only. If you would like to download a full one-hour module and you are a new customer, then email us: help@trainingwizard.co.uk and we will provide you with a discount code so you can download any module for £5+VAT.

There are many other reasons of course, but these are typically the reasons why Boards agreed to the investment of time and money on diversity and inclusion.

Just thinking about diversity, conflict can easily arise between people when working together, especially when they are not like-minded, with different ideas, backgrounds, views, experiences and perspectives.

Diversity initiatives in organisations often aim to develop a culture of respect for individuality. But easier said than done! Much diversity training centres around the legislation and whilst that is important the whole issue is far more complex than checking off the protected characteristics.

Discussions about inclusion have only recently been incorporated into diversity training. A decade ago training in this area was often called Equal Opportunities Awareness and focussed on eliminating discrimination in the workplace. Nowadays organisations seek to go way beyond just eliminating discrimination and have developed their own strategy of inclusion.

This often means seeking to create a business culture that both recognises and values the differences between people. The culture that many organisations are seeking to develop is often one that seeks to avoid stifling or inhibiting individual styles or traits. In recognising and valuing differences organisations hope to be able to draw on an immense variety of styles and personal strengths.

Going further than training around diversity and inclusion, some training now incorporates a session on gender intelligence. Delegates interested in reading about this might read a recently published book called Work with Me by Annis and Gray.

Supporting diversity and inclusion in the workplace

Discuss with delegates their ideas for things that can support diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

If delegates have a good response it may be appropriate to flipchart their answers. Once ideas begin to flow the trainer can prompt delegates to some of the answers below by saying 'what about…?' Delegates may use different words and terminology. Ensure that the themes below are covered:

▶ Recruitment from a culturally diverse pool of talent.

▶ An employer brand and imagery that reflect a wide demographic.

▶ Published values which highlight their ethics and values.

▶ Clear policies – diversity and inclusion, bullying and harassment etc.

▶ Encouragement of team working, internal and cross departmental working, sharing ideas and good practice.

▶ Community activities that encourage employees to integrate with the local population.

▶ An appropriate response to inappropriate, discriminate or offensive behaviours at work.

One thing that can hold organisational change back (including diversity initiatives) is when 'group thinking' dominates decision making. Discuss the impact of **'group thinking'**. Explain that this occurs when management teams are so comfortable and familiar with each other there can be a tendency for everyone to agree all the time. This means no one challenges the thinking or strategies in the business.

Organisations that want to encourage innovation often achieve this by having a diverse team. The diversity within a team is likely to produce very different results to a team where everyone has the same background, education, religion etc. If you have a diverse customer base then you need diverse thinking and a diverse offering to best service that customer base.

Diversity and inclusion isn't about the fluffy stuff any more. This is serious business and many organisations who have successfully harnessed diversity and inclusion see results in faster growth and higher profits.

Some points for consideration:

▶ Organisations that have actively increased numbers of staff aged over 50 years have seen increased staff loyalty, decreased staff turnover and greater customer satisfaction.

▶ Organisations that recruit to reflect the international markets they operate in report improved customer relations as a result of improved communications and cultural understanding.

▶ Organisations that have three or more women on the Board are often able to show a significant increase in profits and equity value.

Recruitment and retention

Having opened their minds (and doors) to recruitment from a wide range of global and culturally diverse people, organisations then need to retain the good staff they have gone out of their way to recruit:

▶ Improving retention rates is good commercial sense. In staffing terms it reduces the cost of employing and training up new staff. In customer terms, satisfaction and customer retention improves - due to less disruption in service, caused by departing staff and better service from dealing with knowledgeable and experienced staff.

▶ Improving employee relations by focussing on creating an inclusive culture increases productivity and reduces management time required to manage staff issues. Improved employee relations also results in reduced absence and improved attendance rates. This improves productivity and also reduces sick pay costs and also, in some businesses, overtime and temp agency bills.

Diversity 'ignorance' can lose sales, lose customers and limit entry into market places your competitors are already entering.

Discuss with delegates why managers (and boards) deliberately or otherwise, ignore diversity and inclusion issues. Answers may include:

- ▶ Apathy
- ▶ Belligerence
- ▶ Lack of understanding of how it can create competitive advantage
- ▶ Fear of changing the status quo
- ▶ Lack of vision and strategic thinking
- ▶ Risk aversion so great within the organisation that it regularly stalls change.

This last point is an interesting one, for serious risk aversion can stop you from making your organisation more diverse and inclusive, however, it has got to be a far greater commercial risk to let your organisation stand still, whilst the community and world is changing around you.

One last thought...

A business with 150 staff was typically paying around £480K a year to recruitment agencies. An audit identified that nearly 50% of new recruits were leaving within a year (in fact the majority left within three months) because they didn't like the culture and management style.

After working on diversity and inclusion issues, just one year later they had reduced their agency bill to just £20K! And they didn't even put a value on what the improved retention rates meant to the business in terms of client satisfaction, employee productivity and employee morale etc.

Unconscious bias

Despite endless equality legislation over decades, increasingly people are asking why so little progress seems to have been made. On the surface it appears that improvements have been made in respect of diversity and inclusion, but scratch the surface and you might think that not a lot has changed, but why?

The reality is employment legislation is more often than not simply a stick to beat employers with, if they don't toe the line in respect of what is currently considered to be required behaviour. It is rare that employment legislation educates or changes below the surface behaviours of organisations, their managers and their employees.

Whilst very little research has been done in the UK into why bias continues, HR consultancy Jaluch recently pulled together some of the research on unconscious bias that has been done around the world, to help understand how people really behave when it comes to diversity in the workplace.

In the employee session, delegates were asked to look at an infographic on unconscious bias. If managers did not attend this session, you may want to run through the infographic at this point and discuss the content, which deal with issues of:

▶ Beauty – appearance

▶ Battle of the sexes – competency and salary

▶ Height (of men)

▶ Sexual orientation –job prospects and salary

▶ Board membership – it states 36.3% of the population is from an ethnic minority (for the US), in the UK this is less than 20%

▶ Weight – BMI – differences between men and women

▶ Accent – based on UK cities

▶ Age – remember we have an aging population!

Alternatively, ask delegates to look at the infographic outside of this session (pre or post course) and move to the next activity - which is complex and more challenging for managers requiring them to consider their own unconscious bias.

More or less?

In years gone by, we had a strong class system and people will often refer back to when 'people knew their place'. What did that mean exactly? Presumably we are talking about times when money meant power and when land owners called all the shots?
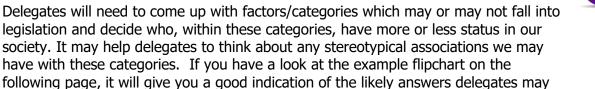
We live in a very different society now. In theory, everybody can get on in the world, we all have a voice and with social mobility and higher than ever entrepreneurship, we should all have the same opportunities.

Divide the delegates into two teams (or more if you have time available and want to get into really meaningful discussion).

Issue **Handout 7**

Delegates will need to come up with factors/categories which may or may not fall into legislation and decide who, within these categories, have more or less status in our society. It may help delegates to think about any stereotypical associations we may have with these categories. If you have a look at the example flipchart on the following page, it will give you a good indication of the likely answers delegates may come up with.

Discuss the first one as a group. The example we have given is wealth. Identify that the rich generally have more status and the poor, less status.

Allow delegates to continue, providing prompts if necessary. Give 10 minutes to start to really explore some of the less considered discriminators in life.

Take 15 minutes to debrief the activity using a flipchart, split the page into three columns and title the second and third columns, 'more' and 'less'. Go through delegate responses which should be similar to those overleaf, although you may be surprised that this is not how everyone may see it.

Trainer guidance

Factor	More Status	Less Status
Wealth	Rich	Poor
Education	Public school/university	State education
Gender	Men	Women
Occupation	Professional	Unskilled
	Lawyer, Doctor, Banker	Factory, retail, services
	Owner/Manager	Unemployed
Health	Well, thin, sporty	Unwell, overweight
Ethnicity	White	Non-white
Age	Mid-life (35-55)	Young/old
Ability	Able bodied	Disabled
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual	Gay, bisexual
Transport	Big car	Public transport
Clothing/Shops	Suits/Harrods	Casual/Primark
Looks	Attractive	Unattractive
Height	Tall	Short
Housing	Private detached	Housing authority/flat
Club membership	Golf/Freemasons	Football/Working men's club
Accent	'Queens English'	Strong dialect
Working Hours	Full time +	Part time/flexi time
Culture	South/Western	North/Eastern
Family set-up	Married with children	Lone parent, civil partnership

Summary

Summarise by highlighting the attributes of the centre column: rich, white, tall, attractive, university educated, (male), who is a professional full-time manager, able bodied, heterosexual, driving a big car and owning a detached house!

Do these people exist in your workplace? Is it you? Do they have greater status? Do they get the bigger pay rises, better bonuses, first options on promotions, the best office, better jobs?

Ask delegates to challenge why some of those in the 'more status' column should have more status in the workplace. Are some attributes/factors more relevant to the workplace than others, or are none of them really relevant?

If delegates feature several times in the 'more status' column, how would they feel if their higher status was immediately removed? What difference would it make to them and their lives at work?

You might want to compare some of the information in the 'more status' column with the research presented in the infographic.

Now ask groups to consider the attributes of those in the right-hand column. Although many of these characteristics themselves are not detrimental to people's existence, life can sometimes be more challenging because of how other people view them. As a result, they may feel they need to work harder to succeed in the workplace. This will be particularly the case if someone falls into several 'less status' categories.

Ask those who feature several times in the 'less status' column to choose one attribute from the 'more status' column that they believe would make the greatest difference to their working life/career.

More or Less?

Factor	More Status	Less Status
e.g. Wealth	Rich	Poor