Facilitator Guide

Diversity: Moving Beyond Tolerance

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| Time to complete this lesson: 60 minMaterials needed: * Blue Tape or Masking Tape
* Handout and pen/pencil (1 per person)

Room setup:* Tape a line down the middle of the room for this activity. If there isn’t enough room inside, consider using a hallway or moving outside for the activity.
* Participants will need somewhere to write, so provide tables or notepads for them to use.

Space/Movement Requirements:* Participants will begin sitting in a large group or in small groups.
* During the activity, participants will be stepping to either side of the line and will need space to move around.
* At the end of the activity, participants will gather back as a group(s) for discussion and a written reflection.

*This lesson is learner-centered. Instead of lecturing, try asking questions to elicit participation.* *Keep participants on track, but do not provide answers or tell them what they are supposed to learn.* |
| **Instruction** | **Notes** |
| **Intro and Ground Rules** (3 min)Briefly say your name and why you are excited to teach this topic today.**Say:**If it’s alright with the group, I’d like to establish three ground rules for this lesson:1. Talk about ideas, not people.
2. Be willing to stretch your mind.
3. If you opt out, remain engaged.
 | Write these rules and post them in the room for participants to view. |
| **Overview** (2 min)**Say:**Diversity isn’t about ignoring differences or tolerating “the other.” It is about a positive attitude and openness; working effectively with people of different perspectives, abilities, disabilities, religions, races, ages, lifestyles, and social, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. As leaders, it is not enough for us to be passive around diversity. Instead, we must promote inclusiveness. We cannot merely respect diverse backgrounds, we should strive to find value in diverse backgrounds and traditions. |  |
| **Diversity** (5 min)**Ask:**What does diversity look like in your organization?**Ask:** Finish this sentence: I know you honor diversity because I see you \_\_\_\_\_\_ [doing what]? | Pick 2-3 participants to answer each question.  |
| **Considering Diversity** (5 min)**Say:**Imagine you are in charge of putting together a team to create a mentorship program for your organization. What kinds of things would you consider when putting together your team?**Ask:**When it comes to diversity, is it better to focus on what’s different or what’s the same? Why?Think about the people in this room. What are some of the obvious commonalities: the things that are easy to identify?**Say:**Outside of these obvious things, there are literally hundreds of things we can find in common with others. Let’s explore some of them. | Wait for a few answers before asking the next question. |
| **Get Off the Fence Activity** (30 min)**Say:**Everyone will line up with one foot on either side of the tape.I will call out two words or phrases. I will then ask you to pick a side.If you like or agree with the first word, you’ll “get off the fence” to your left. If you like or agree with the second word, you’ll “get off the fence” to your right.I will stand in front and help point to left and right. You must pick a side. You cannot stay on the fence.Does everyone understand?**Have participants line up and say the first word pair (list below).****Once they have all picked a side, ask one person from each side to say at least one thing they value about the side they did not choose.** **Try to pick a different person each time.**Word PairsQuiet / LoudHot / ColdCascade Mountains / Olympic MountainsRainforest / TundraRide / DriveGlue it / Tape itReuse / RecycleSlow and steady / Sprints with stopsPlan it / Wing itExtra gear / UltralightSunrise / Sunset**Have participants return to their seats.** | Redirect participants if they start to defend their choice. This is not about defending your side; it is about valuing the other side.If it ends up with no one on one of the sides, the facilitator should step to the empty side to keep the activity moving.Move through as many pairs as you can in the time allotted for the activity. |
| **Reflection** (10 min)**Ask:**Did anyone end up on the same side or with the exact same people the whole time?Which of the word pairs that we explored might create conflict?Which of the word pairs we explored might have the most impact in your organization?When might we seek out differences (people from the other side of the line)?When might we seek out commonalities (people from the same side of the line)?What is the value in discovering some of these less-obvious commonalities? | Guide the conversation by asking these questions and allowing time for participants to contribute and/or process each question.As the facilitator, you may point out an observation from the activity, but you should not provide answers. |
| **Transfer** (5 min)**Distribute the handout to the participants.****Say:**Even though there’s value in differences, it’s often easier to seek people who are the same as us. This can prevent us from having the best experience or being the best leaders.**Ask:**How can you use what you’ve learned about diversity to improve your leadership?**Ask:**Is anyone brave enough to share their action plan? |  |
| **Closing**Thank participants for attending and encourage them to put their action plans into practice. |  |

Participant Handout

Diversity Action Plan

Diversity isn’t about ignoring differences or tolerating “the other.” It is about a positive attitude and openness; working effectively with people of different perspectives, abilities, disabilities, religions, races, ages, lifestyles, and social, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. As leaders, it is not enough for us to be passive around diversity.

Instead, we must promote inclusiveness. We cannot merely respect diverse backgrounds, we should strive to find value in diverse backgrounds and traditions.

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| Where do my challenges lie in this area? |  |
| What are my strengths in this area? |  |
| What is one thing that I want to change in order to improve my competency in this area? |  |
| What will be different as a result of this change? |  |