BEST PRACTICES FOR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

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Content

Introduction

The PESGB is committed to be diverse and inclusive and to promote a work environment where there is a sense of belonging, where employees and members are encouraged to be innovative and creative and to bring forward ideas and views that will impact positively our current and future activities.

As a professional society, the PESGB appreciates and respects what makes employees and members different in terms of age, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, education, disability, cultural background and national origin. This document is intended for members of the PESGB to use themselves and be aware of the best practices in diversity and inclusion being used and tested in many organisations so members could use these for influencing the behaviour of their colleagues and organisations.

In this day and age, it is crucial for leaders to recognise the benefits of these differences and promote that all interactions between colleagues and peers are based on respect and value for each individual in order to build a better employee experience as organisational culture.

Every employee in an organisation brings with them a different set of beliefs, perspectives, thoughts, and ideas which helps employers have different views on various business challenges and opportunities.

Equality vs Equity

Equality means sameness. Under equality, every person gets exactly the same thing regardless of whether it is needed or not. Equality only works if everyone starts from the same place.

Equity on the other hand means fairness. Under equity, everyone has access to the same opportunities. Equity must be established before Equality can be obtained. Reference 1.

In October 2020, the PESGB President mentioned that the council is aiming to attract a diverse group of people, inviting members to stand as candidates for the council and so it is important that the diversity message is communicated to the members, implicit in the language as well as more explicitly during key opportunities and reinforce when elections are approaching. Inclusion on the other hand, implies organisational efforts to make employees and members of all backgrounds feel welcomed, and equally treated.
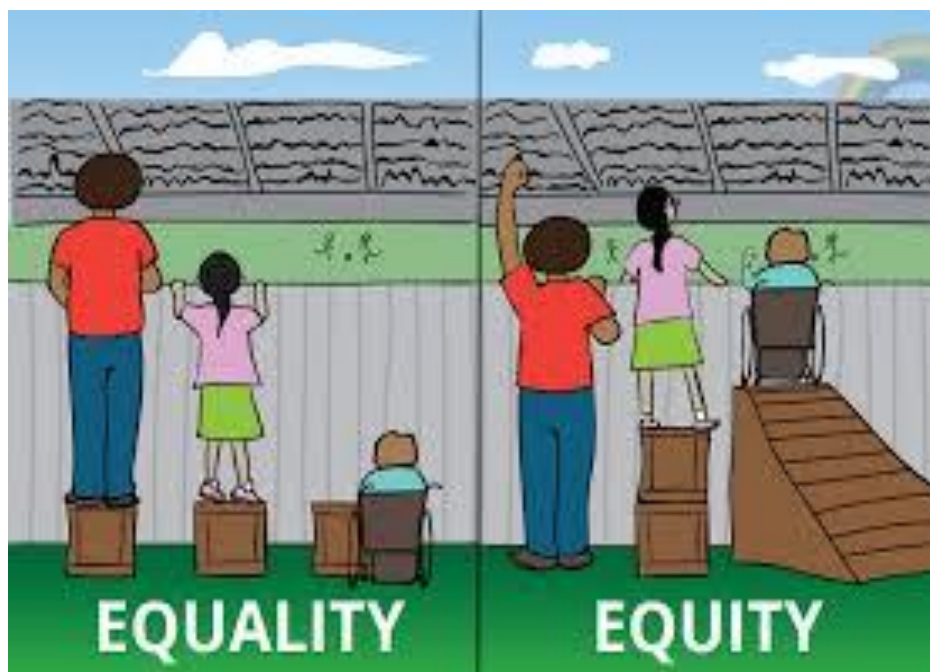
Top Advantages of Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace

A recent publication by the Financial Services Council for Inclusion in provides a good framework for best practices in the workplace and it is oriented towards working relationships in organisations; corporations and business decisions are the driving force, see Reference 2. These are the main considerations and purposes of establishing a culture of Diversity and Inclusion: Accelerate business growth and financial performance. McKinsey's research on diversity showed that companies with more diverse culture, gender and ethnicity outperform organisations that don't support diversity. Inclusive organisations make people much more committed to their work, more motivated and have higher levels of employee engagement and participation in the society's activities.

It's important for organisations to have resources focused on training efforts towards attracting the right employees with the best minds, skills and experience. In today's competitive hiring landscape, this may challenge employers to look beyond the traditional talent acquisition and recruitment methods.

Increase innovation and creativity

Workplace diversity is essential for innovation and creativity within organisations. Companies can bring different views and ideas into the everyday business by having employees from different backgrounds.

Improve our organisation's reputation

Organisations that concentrate on promoting diversity in the workplace are nowadays perceived as more human and socially responsible organisations. Also, encouraging diversity and inclusion is proof of organisation's morale, empathy, and fairness. These characteristics are usually very sought and expected by younger generations.

Make more informed business decisions

In addition to flattening the org chart and developing an agile organisational culture, diversity is one of the critical factors for better business decision making and for attracting high-quality employees. According to Deloitte, 67% of people looking for jobs use diversity as an important factor when considering companies and job offers.

Decrease employee and membership turnover

Diversity and inclusion in the workplace creates an environment where everyone feels accepted, respected, and valued. As the result, employees and members feel more fulfilled and ultimately stay longer with the organisation. Businesses with diverse workforces generally have lower turnover rates.

Top Diversity and Inclusion Best Practices

Many businesses are not knowledgeable of some of the best actions to follow, even though they are trying to create and manage diverse workplaces. Below are some of the most effective diversity and inclusion best practices.

Establish a feeling of belonging

Building the sense of belonging is imperative for employees to bring the best out of them. Possessing a sense of belonging is one the most powerful psychological needs that must be met in order for employees to feel united with their employers and companies.

Be fair towards all employees

Balance is one of the fundamental necessities for employees to feel valued and accepted. Unbalanced salaries and benefits packages for employees from different backgrounds can lead to toxic workplace culture and a shortage of diversity.

Offer equal growth opportunities

Opportunity to advance is one of the main determinants that attract and keep talent within companies. Therefore, employers need to be careful about offering fair and equal growth and career advancement opportunities to their employees.

Job descriptions and job ads

The language you use in job posting makes a big difference in bringing in more diverse talent. Research on job postings found that using more masculine words like "ambitious" and "dominate" was less appealing to female applicants. Offering flexible work locations and hours helps you attract and retain more diverse employees.

Support innovation and creativity

If innovation and creativity are not one of your principal company goals, it will be hard to develop and sustain workplace diversity. In order to create a diverse workplace, companies must encourage creativity inside their organisations.

Support teamwork and collaboration

Teamwork and collaboration are what employees expect from their employers to support. Therefore, in order to attract and keep a more diverse workforce within your organisation, collaboration should be one of your main company core values.

Considerations in the recruitment process

Focusing on what company candidates worked at or what school they went during the recruitment process can often lead to a decrease in the diversity of the candidate pipeline. But, a reliable and valid personality assessments is a great instrument to gauge candidates' character traits, motivations, and talents.

Promote and communicate diversity and inclusion at all levels of the organisation

In order for diversity and inclusion initiatives to work, all levels of your company's hierarchy need to understand and support it. It's crucial to have a solid employee communication strategy in place in order for the company's diversity and inclusion plan to thrive. Every employee should be on the same page when it comes to understanding the advantages of having a diverse workplace. The organisation's diversity and inclusion leadership should also be shared with employees since they can act as ambassadors.

Upper-level management being aware of what diversity and inclusion means for business success and the company's reputation isn't enough. Employees need to be educated about the benefits and best practices regarding diversity and inclusion in order to support its initiatives and allow it to work in the organisation. When your own employees share content externally on how you promote diversity, you can set your company apart from your competitors and it will support your goal of attracting more talent.

Best ways to measure Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives

Even though diversity and inclusion efforts are not easy to measure or scale, some of the most popular success metrics include:

- Employee engagement
- Employee morale
- Employee productivity

Management and executive leadership teams are being held responsible for their diversity and inclusion programs performance through:

- Business/department reviews
- Salary increases
- Performance reviews
- Bonuses
- Promotions and learning and development programmes

Training and Development

Line management have an important role to play in career progression especially as it relates to training and development. Businesses need to ensure that line managers have adequate training to facilitate one to one discussion about training and development needs, as well as career aspirations for employees. Line managers have to match training with developmental roles whenever possible and appraisal and promotion should be based on job related criteria and not unrelated information about the employee such as race, ethnicity, gender or disability. Reference 3.

Training schemes subscribed to by businesses as well as budgets for employee development need to be transparent. Employee entitlements to these schemes also need to be fair and tied to identified employee development needs.

For that reason, unconscious bias training and inclusive leadership training and are the best way to reflect on these topics and create awareness that starts to show results.

What is unconscious bias?

Bias is a prejudice in favour of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another usually in a way that's considered to be unfair. Biases may be held by an individual, group, or institution and can have negative or positive consequences. Reference 4.

There are types of biases
- Conscious bias (also known as explicit bias) and
- Unconscious bias (also known as implicit bias)

Unconscious bias occurs when people favour others who look like them and/or share their values. For example, a person may be drawn to someone with a similar educational background, from the same area, or who is the same colour or ethnicity as them. Reference 5.

Everyone has unconscious biases. The brain receives information all the time from our own experiences and what we read, hear, or see in the media and from others. The brain uses shortcuts to speed up decision-making and unconscious bias is a by-product. There are times when this sort of quick decision making is useful, for example if faced with a dangerous situation, however it is not a good way to make decisions when dealing with recruiting or promoting staff. Reference 6.

Bias in Organisations

Organisations have biases determined by the company culture and distribution of power (Kandola, 2009, Reference 7). The way power is distributed in an organisation has a major impact on the organisation's propensity to discriminate against individuals. A dominant group will tend to promote the flow of rewards towards people who are similar to its own members. When someone from an underrepresented group joins an organisation at a lower level, they will have less access to powerful mentors that someone from a well-represented group. They will be given less advice and support and will not learn what they must do to gain promotion or involvement in high status projects.

People who are similar to those who occupy senior positions find it easier to locate an engage mentors. If you work in an organisation where you share the same characteristics as the dominant group, say white males for instance, your interactions with senior people are more likely to be relaxed and productive than those of women or non-white people, because you are seeing someone like yourself and you can assume certain shared values and experiences.

Another bias is "Organisational fit", this occurs when in the recruitment process companies look for individuals that are a good fit between individuals and the organisations. Fit meaning the individual's ability to understand the culture of the organisation and willingness to display behaviours that consistent with that culture. People feel that they will understand their fellow group members

better, will feel more comfortable being with them and experience increased trust. Since biases are primarily activated by visual cues, people are most likely to make erroneous judgments about fit based purely on the physical characteristics of people rather than on their beliefs. Cultural biases also have an impact. If someone behaves in a way that challenges the norms of an organisation, for example by being too direct, or asking for a different work pattern, individuals are perceived as detached from the group and even labelled as troublemakers, judged as not fitting in. This in turns affects their promotion opportunities.

People with foreign accents, different norms or cultural mannerisms feel less comfortable in an organisation than those who conform to characteristics of the majority. Unconscious bias makes people believe that those who are more like the existing majority group will make a greater contribution than those who are less than the majority. This in turn reduces opportunities for people who are not in the majority.

Here are some recommendations by Lattice (Reference 8) on how to reduce bias in the workplace:

Learn what unconscious biases are. Make your organisation aware of what Make your organisation aware that biases exist.
Assess which biases are most likely to affect you. Tools like Harvard's Implicit association test can help identify which of your individual perceptions are most likely to be governed by unconscious bias.
Understand where biases are likely to affect your organisation. Biases affect who is hired, who gets promoted, and who gets what kind of work. Biases need to be considered when important decisions are made on those areas.
Make your hiring process bias proof. Wording in job descriptions can discourages women from applying to certain positions. Rework job descriptions so you are able to draw from a wider pool of applicants. Judge candidates blindly, i.e. not looking at anyone's name, gender, or nationality.
**Let data inform your decisions.** If your management team is only staffed by white men, unconscious biases would determine which employees are promoted. Diversify your management team so more voices and backgrounds are represented.
Bring diversity **to hiring decisions**. Establish diverse hiring teams.
Encourage employees to speak **up about biases.** Create a culture that encourages open dialogue.
Hold employees accountable. Track whether decisions being made about people are influenced by unconscious bias.
Set diversity & inclusion goals. This ensures your organisation makes progress towards building a diverse team.
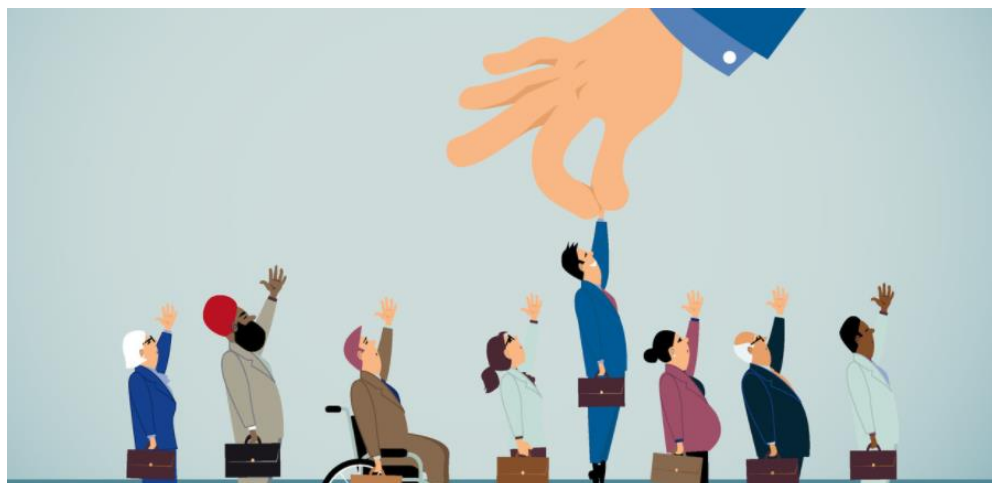
UNCONSCIOUS BIAS BY SONIA BOYCE

Inclusive Leadership

A recent publication on the Harvard Business Review by Deloitte consultants describe that what leaders say and do makes up to a 70% difference as to whether an individual reports feeling included. Inclusive leadership is emerging as a unique and critical capability helping organisations adapt to diverse workforce, markets and talent. Leaders share a cluster of six signature traits:

1. Visible commitment: They articulate authentic commitment to diversity, challenge the status quo, hold others accountable, and make diversity and inclusion a personal priority.
2. Humility: They are modest about capabilities, admit mistakes, and create the space for others to contribute.
3. Awareness of bias: They show awareness of personal blind spots, as well as flaws in the system, and work hard to ensure a meritocracy.
4. Curiosity about others: They demonstrate an open mindset and deep curiosity about others, listen without judgment, and seek with empathy to understand those around them.
5. Cultural intelligence: They are attentive to others' cultures and adapt as required.
6. Effective collaboration: They empower others, pay attention to diversity of thinking and psychological safety, and focus on team cohesion.

Jennifer Brown explains in her book "How to be an inclusive leader" that leaders are in a continuum as they become aware of issues in organisations, take action and then become advocates for change, and this is a continuous process as explained below.

THE INCLUSIVE LEADER CONTINUUM. J. BROWN, 2019

Inclusive Language

Inclusive Language acknowledges diversity, is sensitive to differences, and promotes equitable opportunities. Inclusive language allows you to address and impact more audiences by speaking and writing in more impartial ways.

Principles to remember

Put people first: It is essential to put the person first — to focus on the person, not their characteristics, e.g., instead of "a blind woman" or "a woman salesperson," use "a woman who is blind" or "a woman on our sales team." We are more than our descriptors, so putting people first keeps the individual as the essential element. Only mention characteristics like gender, sexual orientation, religion, racial group or ability when relevant to the discussion.

Recognize the impact of mental health language: "Bipolar," "PTSD," "OCD" and "ADD" are real mental health diagnoses that people possess. Using these terms to describe everyday behaviours underplays the impact of someone's experiences with a mental disorder. Also, avoid derogatory terms that stem from the context of mental health, like "paranoid," or "psycho."

Growth mindset: Individuals who believe their talents can be developed (through hard work, good strategies, and input from others) have a growth mindset. They tend to achieve more than those with a more fixed mindset (those who believe their talents are innate gifts). When entire companies embrace a growth mindset, their employees report feeling far more empowered and committed.

Ask if you aren't sure: Inclusive language is nuanced and used to reflect an individual's or group's personal style and preference. If you're not sure, ask your colleagues and students how they talk about themselves.

Terms that can be derogative

Every day we often, unconsciously, use phrases that contain two types of expressions: gendered or exclusive terms that will decrease the likelihood of attracting a targeted candidate profile; and everyday phrases with racist origins. Addressing individuals or an audience with awareness of these suggestions will go a long way. A few examples are given below:

Guys: Using "guys" to address all people is gendered languages that may insinuate that men are the preferred gender at your organisation. Instead, use gender-neutral language such as; folks, people, you all and teammates.

Girl/Girls: For anyone over 18 years old, woman or women is a better choice.

Females: To many English speakers, "females" sounds like a scientific designation one would use for animals or plants. Try "women" instead.

Handicap: Some disability advocates believe this term is rooted in a correlation between a disabled individual and a beggar, "who had to beg with a cap in his or her hand because of the inability to maintain employment." Better alternative: Disabled

Ladies: Terms like "ladies" or others can feel patronizing to some. Try women instead, or "people" for mixed-gender groups.

Man: As a synonym for work — as in "man hours," "man the inbox," "man the conference booth," —

this is unnecessarily gendered language. Try using work instead. More inclusive: Folks, people, you all, teammates

Mental Disability: The use of this phrase implies that someone that may struggle or have a psychiatric diagnosis is disabled and unable to do their job. This is likely to make them feel stigmatized and unwelcome in the workplace. Many people that struggle with mental health problems are great at their jobs, despite adversity, and supporting them can make them an even greater asset to your workplace.

Meritocracy: Belief in the flawed idea that hard work and talent alone are all that's needed to achieve success. Challenges like implicit bias, structural inequality and varying degrees of privilege or disadvantage mean meritocracy isn't currently a reality.

Minority: The word is sometimes used as a blanket term for people from underrepresented groups including people with African, Asian, Hispanic or Indian origin or mixed races. Instead say, people/professionals or students from underrepresented backgrounds or specify a specific ethnic group if required.

Identity and Preferred Gender pronouns

When we speak or write we send out messages these aren't restricted to the subject of the conversation or the memo but also expresses a great deal about the author and how they want the recipients to understand both the message and the sender. For example, the classic oil-patch statement "Shape up or Ship out!" sends both an instruction and expresses an attitude which is absolutely clear. We all know how easy it is to say or hear something that unintentionally causes discomfort. We've all thought "I wish I had put that differently". The idea of changing the language isn't some "1984" style plan to make people think identically, it's to avoid making other people uncomfortable or unhappy by thinking before speaking or writing. It's simply good manners.

There are a few benefits to using gender-neutral pronouns. First, in the English language, "He" has often been used as an automatic fill-in for generic individuals. By using gender-neutral language, you're ensuring your sentences are inclusive for everyone. See Reference 9.

Second, "he and she" are two extreme binaries that don't leave room for other gender identities. This can be hurtful for individuals, such as transgender or gender queer communities, who don't identify with "he" or "she". If someone shares their pronouns with you, it's meant to disrupt the culture of making assumptions, and to provide you with the information you need in order to refer to them appropriately. Just because someone appears feminine or masculine doesn't mean they are a man or woman -- they could be agender, non-binary, or uncomfortable identifying with "he" or "she". The graph below shows the most common gender-neutral pronouns, shown in contrast with the binary pronouns:

GENDER NEUTRAL PRONOUNS (MYPRONOUNS.ORG)

Typically, you won't use one of these gender-neutral pronouns unless a colleague asks you to identify them as such. However, there are more traditional gender neutral pronouns you can introduce into your everyday conversation, regardless of the individual. These include "Them", "They", "Their", "Everyone", and "That Person". When in doubt, refer to someone by their name, rather than "him" or "her". It's a natural substitute, but can go a long way towards creating a more inclusive office culture.

There are additional sets of pronouns that some people might use (e.g. ze/zir, per/pers, ey/em, xe/xem, etc.). Note there are also nonbinary, gender-neutral titles (e.g. "Mx." usually pronounced like "mix" instead of "Mr." or "Ms.").

To continue to build a culture which is inclusive of all genders, you can avoid wording that assumes there are only two genders; instead of "ladies and gentlemen", say "everybody", "colleagues", or "friends and guests". Instead of "men and women", say "people".

Mentoring Programme

"People who have strong mentors accrue a host of professional benefits including more rapid advancement, higher salaries, greater organisational commitment, stronger professional identity, and higher satisfaction with both job and career." Harvard Business Review (Reference 9).

Individuals can have space for personal development through coaching, sponsorship and mentoring related to differing situational requirements. Mentoring specifically fills the role of supporting individual development and broadening horizons and can be delivered in various different forms.

Mentoring Approaches

- Traditional 1-2-1 Mentoring
- Reverse Mentoring
- Mentoring Circles
- Peer Mentoring

This range of approaches is seen in use in large operators, industry bodies and membership societies. Emphasis is often placed on a particular group or demographic, for example: YPs, mid-career, gender group, BAME.

When executed well, mentoring offers growth opportunities and benefits to both mentor and mentee.

Mentoring to Fill the Gap

As change in the oil and gas sector is accelerating, so is the importance of diversity and inclusion as the sector is reshaped for the future. For many SMEs D&I best practice or mentoring systems and career progression coaching is not offered. Smaller

or medium sized supply chain companies are less likely than operators and larger companies to have a strong D&I culture. (Reference 12).

Mentoring offerings of different products and approaches provide variety and access to a wider, more diverse range of mentors than any employee can find within a corporate environment. The advantage of a safe external space outside company reporting lines also allows for an open mentor – mentee relationship unobstructed by career progression concerns. There is a space for the PESGB's mentoring scheme in support of the D&I best practice the industry needs and providing an expansive view of the future energy sector.

Levelling the Mentoring Advantage

To develop the highest impact mentoring to the widest group requires accessibility, inclusivity, and quality.

In the corporate environment it is typical that mentoring offerings can bias towards identified talent and those with the confidence to ask. Often, race or gender minorities are underrepresented in the relationships that could potentially support advancement (References 10 & 11).

As with inclusive leadership and recruitment best practice, the same approaches can influence the diversity of mentoring groups. Attracting the widest range of mentees and mentors can include accessibility, diverse and flexible offerings, inclusive language and access to a diverse range of mentors.

The place of intentional mentoring allows specific challenges or common ground to form the basis for the offering e.g. career mentoring, YPs, gender,

which can have the positive impact of attraction and accessibility for mentees who identify with the topic. This does however leave gaps. In the recent OGUK D&I survey (Reference 12) a key finding is to focus efforts on the 31-40's age group; our next leaders. This important mid-career stage often pulled in multiple directions and is an area for industry talent loss at these pivotal stages.

Safeguarding the quality of mentoring is a challenge, even when a mentoring scheme has been designed to meeting a specific niche.

The failure of mentoring programmes can lie in the mentor and mentee pairing. HBR (Reference 9) describes unsuccessful schemes where "prospective mentors are randomly selected with little or no training. Organisations that want to improve their mentoring programs should start with who they select to be mentors".

Setting expectations, briefing with clear mentor and mentee roles, a code of conduct and even a mentoring charter are ways in which best practice expectations can be set to promote mentoring quality. The use of blind pairing for the mentor-mentee relationship can reduce bias that can come from a mentor selecting a mentee, and encourage expansive thinking.

To promote an inclusive approach the D&I SIG has offered collaboration with the YP SIG to add an overview session on mentoring approaches as part of the current YP mentoring programme. To attract the widest variety of mentee and mentor diversity an approach to ensure this offering feels accessible, not solely to YPs and very experienced mentors, could include new members to the PESGB being offered mentor or mentee roles on joining the society.

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