



DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION PRACTICE GUIDE

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501 Commons Point of View

501 Commons is a capacity-building, management support organization that endeavors to amplify the strengths of nonprofits so they can deliver on their mission. This mission requires that we serve a wide range of organizations representing diverse points of view. Our only service limitation is a policy that allows us to refuse to serve an organization that advocates hate or promotes limiting the rights of others.

We believe strongly that our approach to client work should be mirrored by our internal practices, thus fully living in the value of diversity, equity and inclusion and serving clients in integrity with the practices we promulgate. **We build DEI best practices into our organization and see DEI best practices as a core aspect of capacity in the foundational infrastructure we seek to help our clients develop.** 501 Commons will in the near term weave a DEI emphasis into the services we provide at every possible juncture.

The organization places a high value on having a very diverse staff, volunteer corps, and board of directors. While we will act affirmatively to ensure that we have a diverse community, we will treat all people fairly and avoid discriminatory practices. Retaining a diverse community requires that we are diligent in promoting policies, practices, and behaviors that create an inclusive culture supportive of diverse staff, volunteers, and board members.

Our values are such that we support diversity, equity, and inclusion in our own internal practices and we seek to incorporate DEI best practices into our client-facing work where appropriate. As an organization, we view strengthening the individual components of DEI as an important, critical aspect of the overall capacity-building and consulting work we perform.

Strong organizations can be made stronger if we help them examine their ability to recruit diverse staff, volunteers, and board members, and to retain them through an inclusive culture. We can help organizations that have a strong internal orientation toward fairness and equity but are unsure how to institutionalize these value in the face of long-standing discriminatory patterns and systems. Additionally, we can help nonprofits explore ways to make their services more equitable or to reduce disparities in the benefits received by marginalized or oppressed people.

Definitions

Diversity can be defined as the presence of difference within a given setting. To many people, the first form of diversity that they think of is racial diversity. Our use of the term includes racial diversity but also age, sexual orientation, gender and gender identity, immigrant and indigenous status, social class, physical ability, veteran status, and more.

For the purpose of 501 Commons' work internally and with clients, diversity refers to aspects of a person's individual identity. Unless an organization is based in a particular community, we believe that

organization's should aspire to have staff members, board, and volunteers who mirror the diversity of the general populations of the communities they serve.

Equity can be simply defined as all people receiving fair treatment. This, however, is a much more nuanced item than a general sentiment of treating people fairly. Equity is advanced and maintained when an individual or organization deploys policies, behaviors, attitudes, and actions that result in people having equitable access, opportunities for advancement, greater agency (personal power), and outcomes equivalent to those with privilege.

Individuals who are members of target groups such as people of color or immigrants generally experience barriers, while those who are members of agent groups will tend to benefit from advantages or privileges. We will explore the concept of agent and target groups more thoroughly in this document, but for now, understand that these two groups describe belonging to groups of either agents or targets of oppression.

A fundamental aspect of equity is an understanding that that barriers and advantages exist and that some individuals experience significant barriers that are not experienced by others. Equity acknowledges that disparities exist that are unrelated to the person but are applied to the person through stereotyping, implicit and explicit bias, and other mechanisms that are both conscious and unconscious. Some examples of disparities are evident in who experiences the negative impacts of racial profiling, white privilege, and redlining. In other cases, the connection is less explicit, such as food deserts, home ownership rates, and pay disparity. Strategies that promote equity are often more complex than diversity or inclusion strategies because they often require systemic change so that everyone has the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

Inclusion, as 501 Commons defines it, means work environments where the inherent value of each individual is acknowledged, respected, welcomed, and supported. We strive to do this so that people fully participate in the life of the organization and so their power, agency, and opportunity are not limited by their identity. Inclusive organizations institutionalize and model behaviors that promote belonging and actively engage diverse viewpoints in decision-making. They engage in written, verbal, and non-verbal communication that demonstrates these traits.

Diversity does not automatically beget inclusion. Just because a workplace is diverse does not mean it is necessarily inclusive. It takes intention and goals around inclusion to ensure that all individuals feel a sense of belonging and have an opportunity to participate fully. An example of this not being the case is an organization having a very diverse staff roster, but with no representation by people with target or minority identities in leadership roles.

Partially adapted from resources on:

- <https://generalassemb.ly/blog/diversity-inclusion-equity-differences-in-meaning/>
- <https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/tools-resources/why-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-matter-nonprofits>
- <https://independentsector.org/resource/why-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-matter/>

Applying the Principles

Without deeper engagement in the components of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and knowledge of what each component means, the DEI acronym that is often used as shorthand within organizations can

render the concept shallow and meaningless. Using these terms as a slogan or using them to shield people who have power and privilege does harm to the effectiveness of the concepts. For this reason, 501 Commons is committed to a culture of constant learning where we align our behaviors with our words and are open to learning from people who experience oppression.

We focus on the following components. They may not be applicable in all situations.

Implicit Bias

Defining Implicit Bias

Implicit bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. These biases encompass both favorable and unfavorable assessments. They are activated involuntarily and without an individual's awareness or intentional control. Everyone, regardless of identity, has implicit biases. Residing deep in the subconscious, these biases are different from known biases that individuals may choose to conceal for the purposes of social and/or political correctness. Rather, implicit biases are not accessible through introspection.

The implicit associations we harbor in our subconscious cause us to have feelings and attitudes about other people based on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, age, and appearance. These associations develop over the course of a lifetime beginning at a very early age through exposure to direct and indirect messages. In addition to early life experiences, the media and news programming are often-cited origins of implicit associations.

Source: The Kirwan Institute at Ohio State University

A Few Key Characteristics of Implicit Biases

- Implicit biases are **pervasive**. Everyone possesses them, even people with avowed commitments to impartiality such as judges.
- Implicit and explicit biases are **related but distinct mental constructs**. They are not mutually exclusive and may even reinforce each other.
- The implicit associations we hold **do not necessarily align with our declared beliefs** or even reflect stances we would explicitly endorse.
- We generally tend to hold implicit biases that **favor our own in-group**, though research has shown that we can still hold implicit biases against our in-group.
- Implicit biases are **malleable**. Our brains are incredibly complex, and the implicit associations that we have formed can be gradually unlearned through a variety of debiasing techniques.

Credits:

<http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/research/understanding-implicit-bias/>

Demonstrating culturally proficient practices and anti-oppression behaviors

501 Commons is working to ensure that staff and volunteers provide inclusive and culturally proficient services and that we develop our capacity to act as an ally to people who have been targeted and marginalized. Our approach is based on the work of Leticia Nieto, the author of the book [Beyond Inclusion, Beyond Empowerment](#). This book lays out a pathway for people who have agency in aspects of their life to act as an ally to a person who is being oppressed. Characteristics of agency often stem from or are associated with the oppression of others. Examples of these characteristics are whiteness, cisgender maleness, and being able-bodied. The book also helps people who experience oppression to avoid internalizing that oppression or experiencing enduring negative impacts from the behaviors of others.

We strive to use the model to help us define a set of behaviors, attributes, and practices that enable our staff and volunteers to work effectively with people with varied personal characteristics and cultural backgrounds.

The categories below define “rank” in the United States. Rank is how society is organized to provide advantages to some people while marginalizing others. Nieto describes it as similar to a barcode that is scanned in all situations.

As a person starts to notice their own privilege and the privilege others hold that they do not, the systemic aspects of rank come into view. Society is set up so that playing at a playground or shopping at a grocery store is more difficult for people with some physical disabilities. It is easier for white movie directors to get a movie project funded than for directors who are people of color. People who are Christians are more likely to be elected to office than those who are not. These and thousands of other differences are structural, not accidental.

Most people belong to at least one target group. At a minimum, all of us have been youth and of low status because we were kids and – if we are lucky – we will have the opportunity to be of low status again because we are over 60. A critical element of this model is the recognition that we all need to learn the skills that help us respond to situations when we are either agents or targets.

The ADDRESSING Framework

Dr. Pamela Hays developed the ADDRESSING Framework that describes the relationships and relative power of individuals or groups defined as either agents or targets of oppression. Professor Leticia Nieto of the St. Martin’s University College in Lacey, Washington has adopted the framework in her work to help build awareness of these dynamics and the knowledge of unearned privileges and advantages possessed by Agents.

The ADDRESSING Framework

Cultural Influences	Agent/Privilege Status/Dominant Group	Target/Limited Privilege Status/Nondominant/Minority
Age & generational differences	Young/middle aged adults	Children, older adults
Developmental or other Disability	Nondisabled people	People with cognitive, intellectual, sensory, physical and/or psychiatric disabilities
Religion and spirituality	Christian and secular	Muslims, Jews, Hindus, Buddhists & other religions
Ethnic and racial identity	European Americans	Asian, South Asian, Latino, Pacific Islander, African, Arab, African American, Middle Eastern & multiracial people
Socioeconomic status	Upper & middle class	People of lower status by occupation, education, income or inner city/rural habitat
Sexual orientation	Heterosexuals	People who identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual
Indigenous heritage	European Americans	American Indians, Inuit, Alaska Natives, Metis, Native Hawaiians, New Zealand Maori, Aboriginal Australians
National origin	US born Americans	Immigrants, refugees & international students
Gender	Men	Women and people who identify as transgender

Hays, P.A. (2016). *Addressing cultural complexities in practice: Assessment, diagnosis, and therapy* (3rd ed.). Washington DC: American Psychological Association.

Each of the agent categories conveys privilege, which must be recognized when entering into relationships with people who are targeted because they have the characteristics on the right side of the table. In order for 501 Commons staff and volunteers to develop effective and trusting relationships with colleagues, with clients and those we interact with outside of the organization, we need to engage in continuous learning and reflection. This will help each of us gain an understanding of our own culture, identity, and implicit biases so that we can understand the impact on our relationships with others.

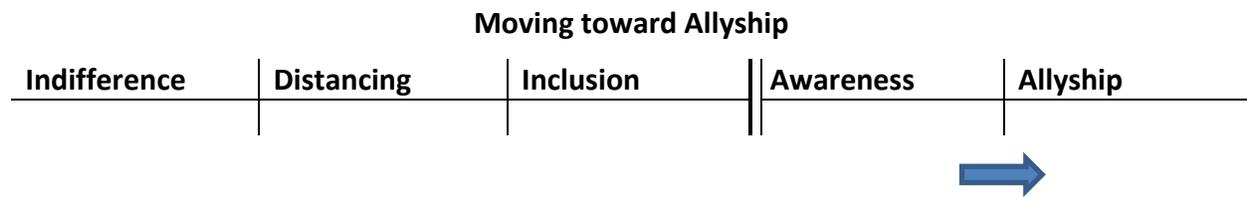
If you are white, it is helpful to [read](#) or watch webinars or videos on the topic of white privilege in order to understand that white privilege is not about attitude or belief systems, it simply is bestowed in US society on people who are white, especially those who are white and have other agent memberships.

The Agent Skills Model

When engaging with clients it is helpful for 501 Commons staff and service corps members to reflect on your own agent or target membership and your own cultural frame of reference and consider how you can use the Agent Skills Model taught to staff by Dr. Leticia Nieto to develop skills that allow us to behave in an anti-oppressive manner.

This picture describes the five stages of this model. The stages are not developmental. You do not leave indifference behind and live always in a state of allyship. The model asks us to try to identify

opportunities for us to interact more often as an ally with those in target groups. However, the model recognizes that even with the best intentions, most agents will act from indifference or distancing most of the time.



Our goal is to increase the frequency of people who are agents acting in the state of allyship.

501 Commons is committed to helping staff members find ways to move into awareness and allyship behaviors more of the time. We know this work is difficult, not easily learned and that we need to rely on each other to contextualize this framework into our day to day work.

The Five Stages of Agent Skills

The following five stages are not meant to be developmental. A person who sometimes holds agent status in one or more ways will use all of these skills. All have a psychological purpose. The intention is to help people more often use higher skills, and ultimately, to have the use of allyship skills become more "second-nature."

1. **Indifference:** The existence and experience of targeted groups is out of view or regarded as not relevant. We do not notice people's membership in a target group or consider that membership in any way in our interactions with them.
2. **Distancing:** We notice people in a target group but we label them as "other" than ourselves. We notice how they are not like us. Sometimes this shows up as denigrating remarks or stereotypes or assigning universal positive qualities to members of a group. For example, saying that all men are brave.
3. **Inclusion:** We focus on the ways people in target groups are like us and view them positively. The limitation of this skill is that it places a requirement on the target group to conform to our way of doing things and to come into our world where we are above them. Inclusion also does not see and accept responsibility for the level of oppression of the target baked into our society.
4. **Awareness:** In this stage, you realize how much you have benefited from the systems of oppression. You feel guilt - and you feel discomfort. You begin to notice and reflect on all the ways you have been overvalued and targets have been undervalued. This is a point when busy staff can easily turn away and move back to indifference. At this stage, it is helpful to have resources and people who help you stay committed to acting more often as an ally. Getting people to this stage and working with them in this stage is the focus of the work ahead of us.
5. **Allyship:** In this stage, the person still has awareness but is able to develop skills that act against oppression and support targets. This does not remove the discomfort of realizing the impacts oppression have on people or our role as agents in maintaining oppression or benefiting from it.

However, in this stage, we take that awareness into action by speaking out against oppression, listening more to Targets and being willing to help other agents gain skills toward allyship.

The Target Skills Model

Individuals in target groups experience ongoing stress in conforming to the expectations of the mainstream, agent group. This model provides a potential framework as to how members of targeted groups can move actualize their individual potential by moving past survival or coping techniques, recognizing that members of agent groups have privileges, and coping with the anger that comes with the acknowledgment of the injustice that exists. Once these individuals accept the anger and share with others in their target group, they become empowered to learn about and respond to the injustice perceived. They then begin to strategize how to make the best use of their available psychic energy, and how to respond effectively in a variety of situations. Finally, self-actualized individuals can achieve a large degree of freedom from oppression by engaging in anti-oppression work, providing leadership, and choosing to use the most productive skills that are most effective in any given moment.



The Five Stages of Target Skills

1. **Survival:** Survival skills enable us to stay alive and in relative safety by conforming to Agent expectations. To survive, we have two options. Either we start to move, think and talk like a person who has Agent membership. We unconsciously attempt to meet the goal of this skill set, which is to make members of the Agent group comfortable and to meet demands based on the Agent group's definition of what is normal or okay. Or, we simply try to fit the stereotype that the Agent group has of our Target group: to move, think and talk in conformity with Agent expectations for our group.
2. **Confusion:** Confusion skills arise when we notice how exhausting it is to use Survival skills, and begin to realize that something is amiss. We notice that some people are valued differently than we are, that we are encountering oppression. Using our Confusion skills, we may contradict ourselves and doubt the evidence of our senses. We say things like, "That doesn't seem fair, but there must be a good explanation. As long as our skill repertoire is limited to only Survival and Confusion skills, we remain subject to internalized and horizontal oppression.
3. **Empowerment:** Empowerment takes an enormous amount of energy from within and without. It can be helpful to spend time in an Empowered Target-only space, a place where people who

share a common Target membership get together to talk about what we face, how it feels and what do to about it. In Empowered Target-only space, Targets listen and talk about our common experience, what happens to us every day, our experience of oppression, and especially the subtle but constant marginalizations. We may also seek out information about the history of oppression that we face, Express solidarity with other members of our group. We may express anger at Agent norms, Agent institutions and individual Agent members. The energy of Empowerment helps us mobilize to resist oppression, take action, learn everything there is to learn about the nature of supremacy and how to counter injustice. Constant focus on the dynamics of oppression is often exhausting; we can't sustain the energetic demand of constantly confronting oppression head-on.

4. **Strategy:** In this stage, we begin to evaluate what works and what doesn't, and to make more conscious choices about when to bring up the issue, when to walk away, when to concentrate on other matters.
 - We start to choose our battles and sort out the most effective action;
 - when to work with other Targets,
 - when to make demands of social institutions,
 - when to confront individual Agents,
 - when not to act.
 - We align ourselves with the best values and norms of our own Target group and spend less time reacting to the Agent group and Agent expectations.
 - Strategy skills free us to make choices that support our group and ourselves.
 - Strategy skills conserve our energy and maximize our effectiveness in anti-oppression work.

5. **Recentering:** As we continue to use Strategy skills, we begin more and more to discern our own optimal, liberating norms and values from oppressive, dehumanizing ones, and to support members of our own and other Target groups. We acknowledge the significance and impact of inequity due to Rank memberships and make increasingly congruent and adaptive choices. We find more ready access to our true Power, and are able to bring it to bear on our daily lives. We call these the Re-Centering skills.
 - We collaborate with other Targets and with ally Agents to challenge system of oppression in the most effective, humanizing and streamlined ways.
 - We use our understanding of systems of oppression to move into leadership roles in our social-change work.
 - The goal is not to always use a certain skill set, but rather to use the skills that are most functional in a given moment.

*** adapted from *Understanding Oppression* article by Leticia Nieto and Margo Boyer from *ColorsNW Magazine*, October 2006

Approach to client work

The following steps help a staff member or volunteer understand and remember behavior that they want to demonstrate with working with clients.

The Value of Self-Reflection

Step 1: Recognize your own cultural frame and identity.

- Consistently pay attention to your own assumptions and cultural background.
- Reflect on how it may affect your interactions with people and their interpretation of the information you provide.
- Use the Agent Skills Model below to attempt to enter into a relationship of allyship with people.

Step 2: Familiarize yourself with the organization and the history and culture of the people with whom you will be working.

When working with an organization or a person from one of the "target" categories, examine how you are influenced by stereotypes, biases, or your assumptions. All people have implicit biases, the goal is to be a person who examines those biases so that they do not cause misunderstandings, show disrespect, or cause you to make incorrect decisions.

- Become familiar with the history and characteristics of client agencies, including the ethnic and racial makeup of the staff, board, and clients.
- Examine both the assets and the needs of the agency and people with whom they work.
- Build bridges across your cultural differences, recognizing that there are individual differences within cultural groups.

Step 3: Demonstrate the following elements of a culturally proficient, anti-oppression service **delivery and consulting practice:**

- Frame issues and the service/consultation process in a way that values multiple perspectives.
- Review and assess 501 Commons service/consulting approaches to ensure that they are culturally responsive, inclusive, and effective.
- Create emotional safety and build trust by treating people with respect and by communicating clearly. Listen to people.
- Respect and value other cultures and identities and demonstrate an appreciation for various ways of learning.

Increasing Cultural Proficiency

Definitions

- **Culture:** The system of shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviors, and artifacts that the members of society use to cope with their world and with one another, and that are transmitted from generation to generation through learning. As understood in sociology, a **subculture** is a set of people with a distinct set of behavior and beliefs that differentiate them from a larger culture. The subculture may be distinctive because of the age of its members, or by their race, ethnicity, class and/or gender, and the qualities that determine a subculture as distinct may be aesthetic, religious, political, and sexual or a combination of these factors.
- **Cultural proficiency:** Cultural Proficiency is the level of knowledge-based skills and understanding that are required to successfully interact and work effectively with colleagues from a variety of cultures. This results from holding all forms of cultural difference in high esteem; a continuing self-assessment of one's values, beliefs, and biases grounded in cultural humility; an ongoing vigilance toward the dynamics of diversity, difference and power; and the expansion of knowledge of cultural practices that recognize cultural bridges as going both ways. Culturally proficient services require that both the individual and the institution be culturally proficient.

Cultural Proficiency Continuum

This continuum represents the various levels of cultural proficiency, from the least proficient to most proficient.

- **Cultural destructiveness:** The elimination of other people's cultures. (Genocide to Majority-conformity approach) *See the difference, stomp it out.*
- **Cultural incapacity:** Belief in the superiority of one's own culture and behavior that disempowers another's culture. (Ethnocentrism, acts of discrimination, internalized inferiority) *See the difference, make it wrong.*
- **Cultural awareness gaps:** Acting as if the cultural differences one sees do not matter or not recognizing that there are differences among and between cultures. "I don't see color I only see another human being". *See the difference, act like you don't.*
- **Cultural pre-competence:** Awareness of the limitations of one's skills or an organization's practices when interacting with other cultural groups. *See the difference, respond inadequately.*
- **Cultural competence:** Interacting with other cultural groups using the five essential elements of cultural proficiency as the standard for individual behavior and school practices. *See the difference; understand the difference that difference makes.*
- **Cultural proficiency:** Knowing how to learn about individual and organizational culture; interacting effectively in a variety of cultural environments. Proficient use of the five elements of cultural proficiency and the ability to successfully adapt teaching and service in response to cultural diversity at individual and institutional levels. *See the difference and respond effectively and affirmingly.*

Five Strategies for Demonstrating Cultural Proficiency

Using the following strategies will help a service provider build and demonstrate cultural proficiency.

1. Value diversity

Celebrate and encourage the presence of a variety of people in all activities. People who value diversity welcome, accept, and feel enriched by their experiences with people who differ from them. In relationships with people different from ourselves, we must come to expect and respect that their customs, thoughts, ways of communicating, values, traditions, and institutions may differ from what is familiar to us.

The choices that individuals make are powerfully affected by culture. Cultural experiences influence choices that range from recreational activities to subjects of study. Accept that each culture give different importance to various values and behaviors. Understanding diversity is not only limited to race and gender but these factors are powerful because the cultural norms are so different across and within communities. Diversity within cultures must be also be recognized.

One has to reprogram automatic responses and learn to see difference as welcome and valued diversity, rather than as people who represent a risk or who are expressing inappropriate responses to the environment. It is important to understand that "different" does not mean "wrong" in cross-cultural interactions. Valuing diversity means adopting a stance in your life that seeks to live in a pluralistic community rather than on striving to maintain your life in a community of people like yourself.

2. Develop the capacity for cultural self-assessment

Awareness of your own culture and the effect it may have on people whose backgrounds are different from yours. Understanding how the culture of your organization affects those whose culture is different. Learning to recognize your own biases. Identification and acceptance of the reality of privilege and entitlement are critical and most often the most difficult aspect to address. The assessment must be done both at the individual and institutional level.

3. Manage the dynamics of difference

Being conscious of the dynamics when cultures interact, requires we understand that power and privilege have a big impact on these. A person who has power or privilege in the interaction may not feel they are responsible for putting that imbalance in place. It is critical, however, that we become knowledgeable about the historical, social, and institutional dynamics that result in the inequitable distribution of power and privilege in society. You do not have to feel responsible for all of the harmful actions of the past or present that create oppression in order to feel accountable for the power and privilege those harmful actions have awarded to you. Understanding these dynamics then allows us to begin to be able to manage them.

Interacting across profound differences is not always easy. It is important to recognize that conflict is a normal and natural part of life. Develop skills to manage conflict in a positive way. One of the most underused skills in this regard is an apology. Even if you are not fully aware of how you have caused concern or offense, a heartfelt apology should be offered. Learn to expect that people are acting with good intentions and seek to always act in a way that does not put yourself "above" others.

It is helpful to understand how prejudice and stereotypes develop and how they are perpetuated. These beliefs and behaviors are so much a part of the backdrop of life that it can be overwhelming when you

start to pay attention to them. You can begin to avoid the conflict that often occurs when different cultures interact not by clamming up or turning away from people but by beginning to remove barriers and develop opportunities to enjoy and learn from people who differ from you.

4. Adapt service delivery to the culture of the client

Cultural proficiency is a life-long learning process. As that learning occurs, it provides the insight needed to create ways more culturally effective client services and workplace behaviors and norms. Explore how you can change the way things are done to recognize different ways of working and learning among our staff members or client organizations.

Develop skills for cross-cultural communication so that you can explore with the people you work with or with staff members or clients how to change practices in order to remove barriers created by inequitable past and current practices. Do not worry if your idea seems small or specialized for a specific setting. Small steps can weave the fabric of inclusion and can contribute to a more equitable future.

5. Institutionalize cultural knowledge and resources

Integrate changes you make to your own behaviors and to work or service delivery approaches into staff development, customization of client services and processes and systems. They may not work as standard practice but could be effective in a variety of cross-cultural situations.

Develop institutional policies and practices that are informed by the guiding principles of cultural proficiency.

Be conscious of the unintended message about what is normal, exemplary or desirable since our evaluative processes are rife with prejudice and stereotypes. Program materials should reflect positive images of all people, and be valid for use with each group.

Incorporate cultural knowledge into the mainstream of the organization. Teach the origins of stereotypes and prejudices. Create opportunities for diverse groups to learn about one another and to engage in ways that honor who they are and challenge them to be more.

It is important to understand cultural proficiency is never fully realized, achieved, or completed; rather cultural proficiency is an ongoing lifelong learning process.

Resources

Based in part on Cultural Proficiency, A Manual for School Leaders, 2nd Ed. Lindsey, Robins, and Terrell, 2003.

These five elements should be manifested at every level of an organization including policymaking, administration, and practice. (Cross, et al. 1989)

<https://rcs.instructure.com/courses/797875/files/29797768/download?wrap=1>
<https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=11&ved=2ahUKEwjN6tiF9YLfAhUSLXOKHSyoCLwQFjAKeqQICBAC&url=https%3A%2F%2Frcs.instructure.com%2Fcourses%2F797875%2Ffiles%2F29797768%2Fdownload%3Fwrap%3D1&usq=AOvVaw2IEIuf6AWuq4MKcmDCfr6R>
<http://www.sjeccd.edu/discover-sjeccd/board-of-trustees/board-policies>
San Jose-Evergreen Community College District

Client-Serving Approaches

Examples of Opportunities for DEI Optimization

Some examples, followed by the letters **D, E & I** to denote which category is most appropriate to describe the potential activities:

Human Resources

In our HR practice area, there are many ways that DEI principles can be introduced. Practices, policies and procedures can be strongly informed by DEI best practices.

- Creation of an employee handbook - **E**: There are many opportunities to incorporate DEI approaches in this work. We would want to recommend that as standard practice, organizations develop an equity statement and articulate this near the beginning of the handbook to let staff know where the organization stands. This can lead the organization to develop inclusion practices that pathways for persons with marginalized identities to move up in the organization. This in turn can develop a staffing profile that equitably represents the general population, or at least the population of persons served.
- Policies - **E**
- Procedures - **E**
- Practices - **E**
- Avoiding scheduling events on major religious holidays from religious traditions other than Christianity - **D, I**
- Allowance for holiday day exchanges (can be important for non-Christians) - **E, I**
- Making a room available for religious observances - **E, I**
- Considerate behavior regarding displays of food and recognition of the impact of observation of fasting in staff member's religious traditions - **E, I**
- Listing salary ranges on job posts - **E**
- Degree requirements and certifications are kept to those that are necessary to the performance of the job - **E**
- Preferred and required job characteristics are clearly delineated - **E**
- Background checks are used only as a contingent part of a hiring process. Not asking about felony convictions until a hiring process has been initiated. - **E**
- Behavioral expectations are documented in the Team Charter - **E**
- Job performance expectations are clear - **E**
- Annual performance evaluations and regular check ins with supervisors - **E**
- Providing flexible schedules to the extent feasible and work at home options to support work/life balance - **E, I**
- Proactive legally compliant disability accommodations - **E, I**
- 501 Commons seeks to provide an inclusive and supportive work culture - **E, I**
- Creating an Equal Opportunity Statement - **E**
- Creating an Inclusive Workplace Statement - **I**

Technology

- Helpdesk support:

- Enhance the ability to provide service people for whom English is a second language, by being patient with word pronunciation and potentially limited knowledge of technical language - **E, I**
- Endeavor to improve service to individuals with diverse intellectual and perceptual abilities - **E, I**
- Field IT support
 - Recognizing, acknowledging and working with the diverse communities we serve and being adaptive to them through our service - **E**
- Workstation set-up:
 - Visual, auditory, mobility, disability - **E**
- Salesforce: design of fields. How can DEI inform instance design? - **E, I**

Management Consulting

- Diverse boards - **D, E, I**
- Executive coaching - **E**
- Strategic plans – how can DEI goals be woven into the strategic plan? - **D, E, I**
- General cultural sensitivity in client situations - **D, E, I**

What Likely Cannot be DEI-Optimized

The way we serve our clients can be informed by viewing our methods of approach through a DEI lens. It is obviously not possible to completely DEI-optimize a large portion of our best practices due to the exacting technical nature of a large part of the work we do. For example, it would be difficult to envision how we could possibly DEI-optimize the following:

- Setting up a server
- Performing an Office 365 migration
- Incorporating state and federal labor laws in an employee handbook
- Completing a 990 tax return
- Running payroll
- Creating a chart of accounts

This being said, it doesn't mean that we can't employ DEI principles in the performance of our work and for example, strive to use language and descriptions that help the client understand the work being done in consideration of their English linguistic ability and level of technical knowledge.

Resources

Leticia Nieto viewpoint:

<https://beyondinclusionbeyondempowerment.com/>

1. [Strategies in Addressing Power and Privilege \(article 1 – pdf\)](#)
2. [Skill Sets for Target Group Members \(article 2 – pdf\)](#)
3. [Skill Sets for Agent Group Members \(article 3 – pdf\)](#)