Tea & Toast: Inclusion at work

Presented by: Kristen Gyorgak

Diversity then inclusion

Diversity and inclusion are not the same. If diversity is the *what*, inclusion is the *how.*

What makes you, you?

We like using the I-C-E-S model of diversity. It broadly defines all the aspects that make people diverse, unique individuals.

Identity	groups you connect with, formed by shared identities - either inherent or acquired
Cognitive	the way you think - your capabilities, processes and how you communicate what you're thinking
Experience	lived experiences - often connected to socioeconomic status - personal stories, values, traditions
Skills	what you bring to a situation - talents, skills, strengths, job roles, subject matter expertise

Our ICES 'imprint' is like a snowflake, we're each beautifully unique. And each of these four areas have associations that trigger our biases.

DIVERSITY IS BEING INVITED TO THE PARTY, INCLUSION IS BEING ASKED TO DANCE.

-VERNA MYERS

Beyond diversity

So the challenge is to make a group of diverse individuals feel included and valued.

The Diversity Council of Australia defines four elements of individual inclusion at work:

- **RESPECTED** for who they are and the ability to be themselves;
- **CONNECTED** to their colleagues and they feel they belong;
- **CONTRIBUTING** their perspectives and talents to the workplace; and
- **PROGRESSING** in their career at work (i.e. have equal access to opportunities and resources).

What makes inclusion hard?

It's tempting to slip into branding diversity, inclusion and equity as easy-fun-loving-rainbows-and-unicorns-and-flowers. But the truth is, creating inclusive environments takes hard work, effort, commitment and courage. *Why?* **A lot of reasons. Here are a few:**

Our lizard brains

The reality is the rules of our societies and organisations have progressed a lot quicker than our lizard brains have evolved. Our brains notices differences and threats as a matter of instinct. And we can confuse the two things. We have a bias for the status quo - especially when the status quo works for us.

In terms of creating a diverse and inclusive culture, the unconscious brain is one of the biggest challenges for organisations and leaders in the 21st century.
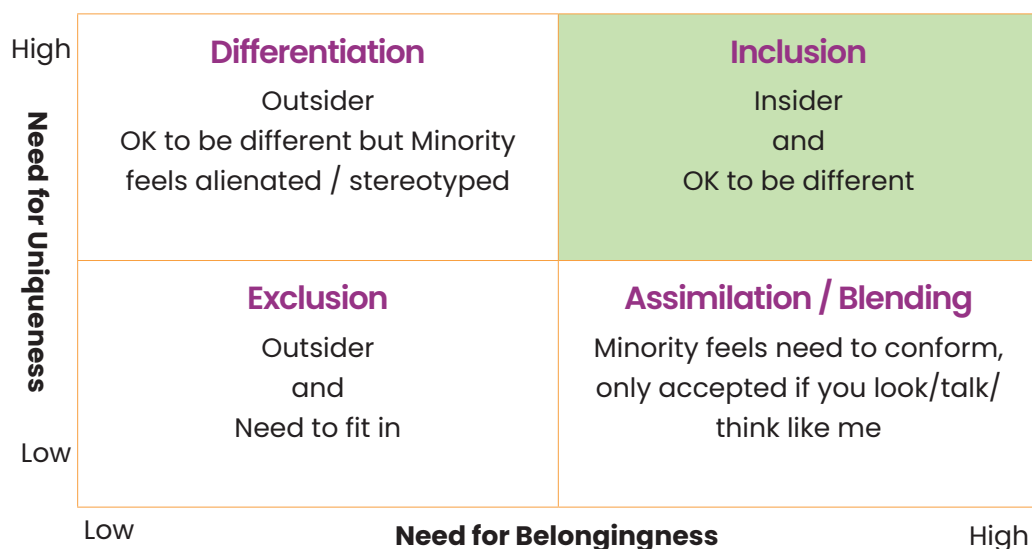
– Nielsen and Kapinski

The fluidity - context / perspective specific

Inclusion is a feeling. And that feeling is individual to the person and the environment. You may feel included in one project and excluded within another. What's inclusive for one group may not be inclusive for others.

The Me vs. The We

We're complicated! Researchers Nisha Nair and Neharika Vohra discuss our need to celebrate the individual (me) within the group (we). That's hard stuff. And requires flexibility, an open mindset, and the safety to learn and grow.

	Low → Need for Belongingness → High	
High Need for Uniqueness	**Differentiation** Outsider OK to be different but Minority feels alienated / stereotyped	**Inclusion** Insider and OK to be different
Low	**Exclusion** Outsider and Need to fit in	**Assimilation / Blending** Minority feels need to conform, only accepted if you look/talk/ think like me

Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad

People appear to have the two opposing needs of belongingness and uniqueness in group settings. When individuals feel too similar to other group members, they try to set themselves apart in order to feel unique. And on the other hand,when they feel too different from group members, they feel they don't belong and may try to assimilate and become more similar... When both uniqueness and belongingness needs are met, the individual feels inclusion.

–Nisha Nair and Neharika Vohra

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What stops inclusion

What stops people from feeling respected and connected or blocks them from contributing or progressing?

This varies. Inclusion is fluid. People either feel included, or they don't. And this can change in different situations.

When people don't feel included there's something triggering that. And the impact of exclusion is massive.

Ignorance

We like to work on the assumption that people aren't intentionally nasty or terrible. But sometimes, regardless of intent our ignorance hurts others. The more we learn, the better it is.

Stereotypes and Discrimination

Stereotyping is an oversimplified opinion, prejudiced attitude, or uncritical judgment of a certain group. When we stereotype someone or something we create a standard mental picture of members of a group and that represents. This not only becomes an unfair expectation but also leads to discrimination and unjust treatment of certain people.

Fear

In our last webinar, Hilary described fear as the enemy of the human-centred workplace.

In workplaces with a high fear culture people hold back on telling the truth, wrongdoing is punished, order is maintained. Often the result is people hide their humanity, warmth and empathy.

None of these things help inclusion. In fact, if there's fear in the workplace it's going to actively hinder people from being involved.

Think about it - if you can't openly ask questions or discuss differing ideas safely, then you'll stop doing both. And that's the exact opposite of what we want.

Sticking Points

Every identity we have has a dominant culture. Each dominant culture has associated success metrics, norms, attitudes, behaviours, values, and traditions.

Our intersectionality is how all of our different identities and diversities show up individually.

These differences are great advantages but it can lead to tension.

For example, below are twelve generational sticking points identified by Haydn Shaw. In reality, these sticking points show up in identities outside of age as well:

communication	decision-making	dress code
feedback	fun at work	knowledge transfer
loyalty	meetings	policies
respect	training	work ethic

Shaw, Haydn. *Sticking points: how to get 4 generations working together in the 12 places they come apart.*

Covering

Covering is downplaying or hiding certain aspects of yourself so you don't appear different. It's a defense mechanism to avoid exclusion.

Please can cover aspects of themselves in multiple ways:

Appearance
Individuals change how they look and behave to blend in with the mainstream.

Affiliation
Individuals may avoid behaviours widely associated with their identity, culture or group.

Advocacy
Individuals may avoid engaging in advocacy on behalf of their group.

Association
Individuals may avoid associating with other individuals in their own group (or participate in criticism of a group they belong to, thus disassociating).

Humanise inclusion

He aha te mea nui o te ao? He tangata he tangata he tangata. |
What is the most important thing in the world, it is the people, the people, the people.

Damien Hooper-Campbell, eBay's first Chief Diversity Officer, strongly encourages us to humanize diversity and inclusion efforts.

Of course - because in short, we're people, not resources.

So what do we know about people?

Our brains are constantly on the lookout for threats and rewards. When we experience a social threat our brain triggers the same responses as a physical threat. Dr. David Rock from the NeuroLeadership Institute developed the SCARF model to describe the five social needs are brains are constantly responding to: *Status, Certainty, Autonomy, Relatedness, Fairness.*

Exclusion is a threat to all five of these needs.

If you have a brain, you have bias. Our brains are doing a lot. To conserve energy and make meaning from our surroundings our brains take shortcuts. These shortcuts mean we're inclined to favour or discriminated against certain ideas, people and processes. It's worth knowing our unconscious thinking (defined as System 1 thinking by psychologist Daniel Kahneman) controls about 85-95% of our responses and actions.

We each create our own version of reality. Wouldn't it be great if everyone shared the same version of reality? Or maybe it wouldn't. Either way our realities are a mixture of what our brain takes in and how that mixes with our beliefs and perceptions.

We're always emotional and sometimes logical. Sometimes we try to logic bully people into thinking our way. And go into business case mode - quoting statistics and research. While this may help motivate people it's not the most effective. Instead win the hearts and make an emotional case for inclusion. Sharing stories about personal experiences is an amazing way to do this. Just knowing something is not enough. We need to actively understand WIIFM (what's in it for me?) and have the time and space to process what change means.

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Measuring inclusion

Organisations are putting more time and resources into creating inclusive and equitable workplaces. This is a direct result of the social conversations happening more widely.

But first how do you first define success and then how do you measure it? And in a time when metrics are king (*watch our webinar: Tyranny of Metrics*), this is increasingly important.

Embrace analytics

Actually, embrace the *right* analytics. Get to the heart of what inclusion looks and feels like. Success metrics of inclusive organisations can include employee productivity, morale and engagement.

Gartner's Inclusion Index

Gartner's research identified seven key dimensions of inclusion: *fair treatment, integrating differences, decision making, psychological safety, trust, belonging, diversity*.

The more employees agreed with these statements, the more inclusive the organisation:

1. **Fair treatment:** Employees at my organisation who help the organisation achieve its strategic objectives are rewarded and recognized fairly.

2. **Integrating differences:** Employees at my organisation respect and value each other's opinions.

3. **Decision making:** Members of my team fairly consider ideas and suggestions offered by other team members.

4. **Psychological safety**: I feel welcome to express my true feelings at work.

5. **Trust:** Communication we receive from the organisation is honest and open.

6. **Belonging:** People in my organisation care about me.

7. **Diversity:** Managers at my organisation are as diverse as the broader workforce.

But inclusion, and a work environment where all people feel respected, accepted, supported and valued, allowing all employees to fully participate in decision-making processes and development opportunities within an organization, is even more of a challenge to measure.

– HBR: *How to Measure Inclusion in the Workplace*

Another measurement

These statements are from Goffee and Jones, (Creating the Best Workplace on Earth, Harvard Business Review, May 2013) and refer to belonging.

- I'm the same person at home as I am at work. (There are some cultural issues with this question.)
- I feel comfortable being myself.
- We're all encouraged to express our differences.
- People who think differently from most do well here.
- Passion is encouraged even when it leads to conflict.
- More than one type of person fits in here.

How many can you answer positively?

Rate these on a 1–5 agreement scale (*1 = strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree).* T

Then have share this with your team. Do they feel the same as you? What can be done to improve?
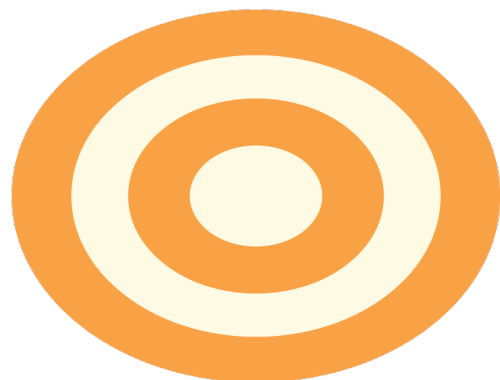
Inclusive organisations

There is a strong business case for inclusion. Limeade Institute and Artemis research highlights this:

Employees who feel included:			Inclusive workplaces:	
28%	**19%**	**43%**	**6x**	**2.3x**
more engaged at work	greater well-being in their lives	more committed to their company	more likely to effectively respond to change	higher cash flow per employee over 3 years

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to inclusion. Your organisation's mission and purpose, strategies, values, size, operating model, customers, etc. all impact on what inclusion will look like in your workplace.

Here's what research shows works (and doesn't work) in organisations.

What traits do inclusive organisations share?

They're learning organisations. And no, we aren't just saying this because we're an Organisational Learning and Development consultancy. It's true.

> We found that one particular culture style differentiated the diverse and inclusive organisations from those that were not: a learning-oriented culture.
>
> **J. Yo-Jud Cheng and Boris Groysberg**

Learning cultures emphasise:

- flexibility
- open-mindedness
- exploration
- independence
- openness
- creativity

According to HBR's research, organisations which were not diverse and inclusive were much more likely to have cultures that emphasised authority (dominance, decisiveness) and safety (stability, preparedness).

What works? What doesn't?

To mandate or not to mandate?
It might be tempting to show your support for creating more diverse and inclusive workplaces by mandating and requiring certain activities. However these can be seen by people as a massive autonomy threat.

Instead, create programmes, conversations and resources that people *want* to engage with. Starbucks COO, Rosalind G. Brewer, has instituted this approach for their inclusion and diversity with much success. She states that by making their inclusion material open-sourced, engaging and real it's empowered employees to not only have the conversations at work and also at their homes.

Let's give them something to talk about.
Yes you should've sung this like Bonnie Raitt! Honestly though, you cannot have inclusion without conversations. And workplaces which shy away from conversations about culture, values, diversity, biases, etc will have a hard time making people feel included, as all of these concepts interlink.

Leader-led?
Leaders absolutely need to lead by example. Inclusive leadership is seen as one of the most critical skills for leaders of the future. But this doesn't necessarily mean leaders have to led or drive the bus on every conversation. In fact, by doing so it may unintentionally indicate the leader has more to contribute to these conversations than others. And we know that's not true.

There needs to be a balance between leaders creating the environment, time and space for these conversations and everyone else having the safety and space to fully contribute and share in these conversations.

Avoid the tyranny of metrics.
Diversity metrics are not enough. These can and do get gamed. For example, you can track how many people *xyz* people join the organisation - but ignore how quickly or frequently they leave. This isn't helpful.

Refer back to the *Measuring inclusion* section to look at helpful metrics which better tell your inclusion story.

Review the status quo with an inclusion lens.
Again, we want everyone to feel respected and connected and that they have the safety to contribute and progress. Unfortunately this isn't the case across the board. And the dominant culture and standard way of doing things may exclude people.

Organisations which want to be more inclusive should review their people, policies, processes and products to identify if there are any barriers for people.

Does Unconscious Bias training help?
Yes, but not in isolation. In fact, research shows that when unconscious bias training was done as a one-off, unsupported activity is could actually lead to more bias and discrimination.

We cannot expect people to go on a three-hour course and become magically inclusive. It's a learning journey. And the concepts and discussions need to be supported more broadly through the organisation's strategy and values. Additionally, unconscious bias is just one of many topics people at work should be learning about. Building social and emotional intelligence, cultural awareness, leadership and critical thinking is all fundamental to inclusion.
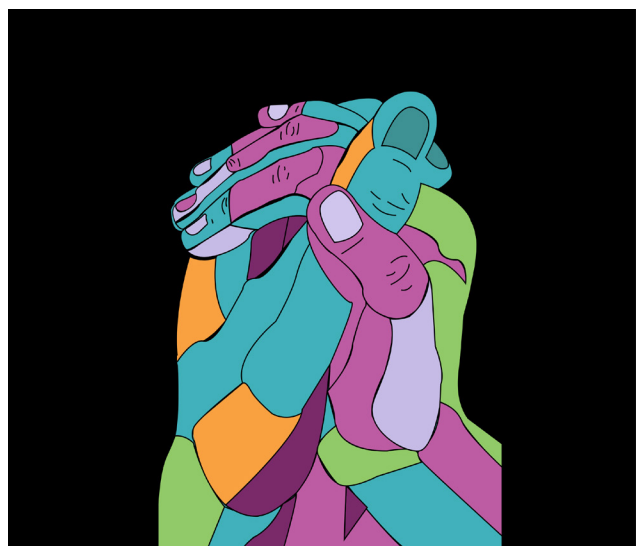
Inclusive Leadership

What it will take to be a great leader in the future? That's the question authors Bernadette Dillon and Juliet Burke from Deloitte, set out to answer. Their answer: Inclusive leadership. As our workplaces continue to diversify, it's a capability that will help leaders and teams thrive.

Cognizance
Because bias is a leader's Achilles' heel

Curiosity
Because different ideas and experiences enable growth

Courage
Because talking about imperfections involves personal risk-taking

Cultural intelligence
Because not everyone sees the world through the same cultural frame

Commitment
Because staying the course is hard

Collaboration
Because a diverse-thinking team is greater than the sum of its parts

The six signature traits

Commitment	Courage	Cognizance
Give inclusion the time, energy and resources it needs	Act on convictions and principles even when it requires personal risk-taking	Mindful of personal and organisational blind spots, self-aware and understanding
Curiosity	**Cultural intelligence**	**Collaboration**
Open-minded, desire to understand other perspectives, and a tolerance for ambiguity	Understand the motivation, cognitive, metacognitive and behaviour of cultures and cross-cultural interactions	Empower individuals as well as create and leverage the thinking of diverse groups

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Become a better listener

An effective way to connect, understand and acknowledge people's perspectives is by listening. But all listening is not created equal.

What level do you listen at? Here is Stephen R. Covey's take on it from his book *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People.* **Habit #5: Seek first to understand, then to be understood.**

1	IGNORING	Not really listening, just waiting for your turn to talk, not paying attention, already decided what you're going to say.
2	PRETENDING	Acknowledgement someone else is talking, nonverbal cues like nodding, but not really paying attention.
3	SELECTIVE	Not listening for the whole meaning, but just the parts that interest or impact you. Listening to respond, judge, or criticise.
4	ATTENTIVE	Fully focused on the speaker, concentrating on what they're saying, allowing them to finish, asking follow-up questions
5	EMPATHISING	Fully focused on the speaker, listens to the words, messages, and emotions the speaker is sharing. Talks less, listens more. Active, engaged, and connected to the speaker.

And there are even different levels of empathising. Daniel Goleman, often credited as the father of Emotional Intelligence breaks it down like this:

Cognitive empathy

You understand how they other person thinks. This means you get their perspective and their motivations and you know how to communicate and phrase things so they'll understand it.

Emotional empathy

Emotional empathy is deeper. It means you can sense what the other person feels. Your body picks up the messages. It's fundamental to rapport.

You can have both cognitive empathy and emotional empathy and not care at all about the other person. Both of these things can be used negatively to manipulate someone else and get what you want. If we take a harsh perspective - it's exactly what advertisers and marketers use to make you want to buy their products. Even sociopaths can have high cognitive and emotional empathy. These alone are not enough.

Empathetic concern

Empathetic concern is the highest level of empathy. It means truly caring about the well-being and happiness of the other person. This is wanting the best for the other person and is the basis of compassion.

Concepts you and your workplaces should be discussing

Inclusive workplaces don't shy away from the hard conversations. In fact, they intentionally lean into these topics and any tension they illicit. Whether these topics are addressed and discussed outright or not, they're affecting everyone.

Have you reflected on these topics? What impact do they have in your teams and organisation?

Elements that affect inclusion	Questions / Reflections
Dominant organisational culture - the strongest and most widely accepted ideas, customs and social behaviours of your organisation	
Privilege - a special right, advantage or immunity granted or available only to a particular person or group	
Power - the capacity or ability to direct or influence the behaviour of others within the organisation	
Our brains and bias - If you have a brain, you have bias. Our cognitive biases are our inclinations in favour or against an idea, person or thing.	
Discrimination - unfair or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of one of their identity groups.	
Intersectionality - the way we show up based on interconnected nature of social categories / identities (*i.e. I am a Pakeha, 30-year-old-female immigrant from America*)	
Systematic vs. personal experience - defining what's happening holistically on a system level vs. what an individual's experience is.	
Microaggressions - daily verbal, behavioural, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory or negative slights and insults towards people (often minorities).	

"We want all our people and the people that we work with, and for, to feel valued, supported and respected. And we want our Public Service to reflect, value and understand the communities we are here to serve in Aotearoa New Zealand."

Te Kawa Mataaho | Public Service Commission, 2021

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Actions

- Grow your self-awareness - talk about what makes you, you. Understand how that shows up in the workplace

- Make the time and space to get to know others and connect with them outside of work

- Seek out new perspectives - and challenge yourself not to dismiss them immediately

- Listen, really listen generously, not defensively

- Flex where you can *(anything that won't lose customers, funding, health/safety, or money can be flexed!)*

- Embrace the learning journey - find out how intersectionality shows up in the workplace, how our brains work, what barriers different people might face at work

- Lean into the challenging, tense conversations

- Ask people to share their values and what's shaped them - then connect these to the work

- Have a strengths mindset - and look for what each person can add to the environment

- Send out agendas and discussion items in advance so people can prepare in their own ways

- Be vulnerable enough to ask questions and be open-minded enough to listen to different answers

- Celebrate successes and give credit where it belongs
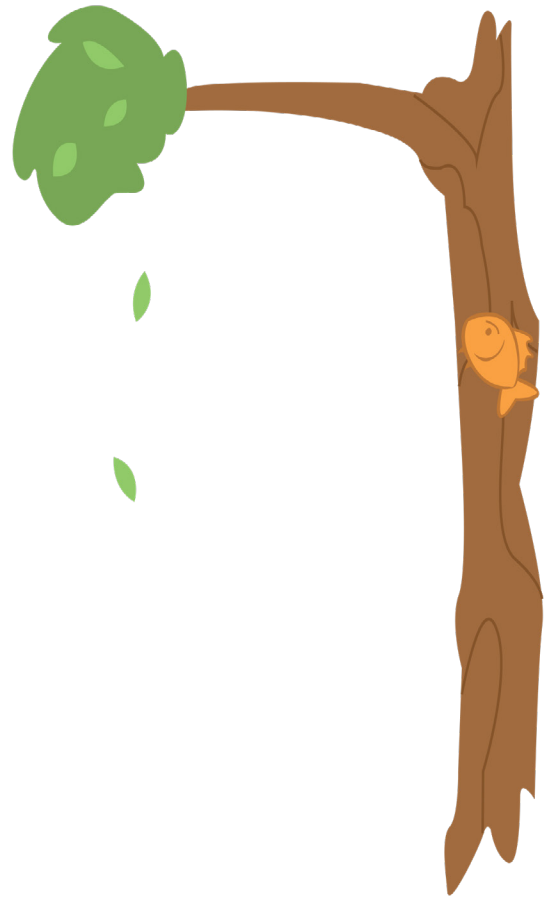
"Everyone is a genius. But if you judge a fish on its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid."

ALBERT EINSTEIN

Thanks for coming!

From The Training Practice team - *Kristen, Hilary, Dinah, James and Kiera*

Check out our refreshed website, with our latest thinking and events: trainingpractice.co.nz

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RSVP to our September Tea & Toast:
Why agility is more than the Agile Manifesto

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