



# Inclusive Practices for Businesses / Organizations

*Because a welcoming environment for diversity improves outcomes for people and businesses/organizations.*

Inclusive Practice—Internal	Taking Action
Establish diversity, equity, inclusion, and culture of collaboration and respect as core values.	Incorporate into mission, vision, and core values. Create a diversity mission statement. Operationalize commitment to diversity in policies, goals, recruitment practices, and staff evaluation practices. Build diversity, equity, inclusion, and respect themes into décor, website, social media, and other publicity.
Demonstrate leadership.	Communicate to staff about diversity as a core value; include ethical and business case for diversity, equity, inclusion, collaboration, and respect. Establish goals (not quotas) for diversity at all levels. Incorporate diversity goals or awareness into performance reviews at all levels.
Ensure policies, procedures, and codes of conduct are inclusive.	Assess non-discrimination and equal opportunity policies, employment benefits, health insurance, forms, new hire and leadership training, performance metrics, supply chain and vendor guidelines, corporate giving guidelines, etc. to ensure they are inclusive for LGBTQ+ identities as well as other diversity.
Ensure facilities and resources are accessible.	Confirm that facilities and resources comply with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. Maintain a checklist of accommodations for people with disabilities, and review annually. Hold meetings and events in accessible spaces. Host speakers who are sensitive to all forms of diversity, regardless of event topic. Provide private or all-gender restrooms, locker rooms, etc.
Provide diversity orientation and annual diversity/anti-bias trainings.	Review diversity and non-discrimination policies (including pronouns) during new hire orientation. In ongoing trainings, cover unconscious bias, diversity awareness and sensitivity, overcoming barriers, etc.
Assume staff include all forms of diversity (even if not visible).	Many disabilities, LGBTQ+ identities, faiths, economic statuses, and other traits can be invisible. Assuming diversity forces you to think about inclusion, which will likely result in people feeling welcome. In contrast, assuming that people are alike results in some feeling bad—unseen, excluded, unwanted.
Use pronouns, respectfully.	Include pronouns on staff lists and in email signature lines. Model using pronouns during introductions. If uncertain of someone's gender, use gender-neutral pronouns (or ask).
Expect and value multiple opinions and viewpoints.	Live this expectation to help keep staff engaged (including those who historically felt undervalued), increase productivity, and fuel innovation – and to foster inclusion and loyalty.
Expect all work, products, and services to reflect diversity awareness.	Include objective evidence of diversity awareness in criteria for reviewing work, products, and services as well as job performance. Doing so improves relevance and appeal for diverse audiences.
Use objective criteria for evaluating job applicants and employee performance.	Unstructured conversational interviews to assess whether candidates are a “good fit” are associated with “in-group” hiring. Consistently using structured questions leads to more objective hiring decisions and greater diversity. Similar dynamics affect performance assessments and salary and promotion decisions.

Inclusive Practice—External	Putting Practice To Action
Ensure facilities and resources are accessible.	Confirm that facilities and resources are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and are affirming of all gender identities. Hold special events in accessible spaces. Host speakers who are sensitive to all forms of diversity, regardless of event topic.
Display your commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.	Integrate diversity, equity, inclusion, and respect themes into décor, website, social media, and other publicity—to demonstrate that you see and value all kinds of people. (This is also good advertising.)
Assume audience (clients, customers, members) include all forms of diversity (even if not visible).	Know that many disabilities, LGBTQ+ identities, faiths, economic statuses, and other traits are invisible. Assuming diversity helps you think about inclusion—while avoiding stereotypes and microaggressions—which will likely result in people feeling welcome. Assuming that people are alike results in some feeling unseen, excluded, and unwanted.
Treat <i>everyone</i> like they belong.	Treat everyone the way you would someone from your in-group.
Use pronouns, respectfully.	Include pronouns for staff listed on website (and other materials) and in email signature lines. If you are not certain of someone’s gender identity, use gender-neutral pronouns – or ask.
Assess offerings.	Update your portfolio of products, events, and services to encompass the needs of all demographics in your audience. As appropriate, add genderless offerings or items that appeal to specific cultural groups.

## Recognize Challenge Replace bias

Every moment, our brains take in vast amounts of information. To make sense of it, our brains automatically and unconsciously group and categorize the information to identify patterns and generalizations – leading to unconscious biases that influence how we treat each other. No matter how unbiased we think we are, we have unconscious positive and negative opinions about people based on their race, ethnicity, physical abilities, learning styles, age, gender, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, weight, height, dress, and much more. We overcome our biases when we recognize them, expose ourselves to ideas that challenge them, and consciously take steps to interrupt and replace them when they arise. In so doing, we create a more welcoming space that appeals to a greater diversity of people.

### Recognizing Bias

Take implicit bias tests: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>

When you have a negative reaction to someone:

- Pause to identify the negative reaction
- Identify the source of the negative reaction
- Determine if the person’s behavior warrants the reaction
- Name the type of bias that could be contributing to the reaction

### Challenging Bias

Expand your exposure to the out-group (books, movies, clubs, volunteering, cultural events, conversations)

When you have a negative reaction to someone:

- If you observe a negative behavior, attribute this to the individual (not the group)
- Consider whether you would react the same to the negative behavior if the person were in your in-group
- Pause to notice positive traits about the person

### Replacing Bias

Develop core values and objective criteria for evaluating people’s behavior and work

When you witness microaggressions and other bias-based actions, be an active bystander, break the silence, and hold people accountable

When you have a negative reaction to someone:

- Notice and set aside the negative reaction
- Provide full attention, respectfully ask questions
- Acknowledge the individual’s strengths and contributions