



language of inclusion



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language of inclusion

Glossary of Key Terms

Affirmative Action: Any action taken by an employer, in compliance with federal law, to promote the employment and advancement of people who have been the traditional targets of discrimination.

Ageism: Discriminatory behavior related to age.

Alaska Native or Native American Indian or Native Indian American: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintain tribal affiliation or community attachment. It includes people who classify themselves as described below.

- *Native American / Native Indian American:* Includes people who indicate their race as “Native American,” entered the name of an Indian tribe, or report such entries as Canadian Indian, French-American Indian, or Spanish-American Indian.
- *Alaska Native:* Includes written responses of Eskimos, Aleuts, and Alaska Indians as well as entries such as Arctic Slope, Inupiat, Yupik, Alutiiq, Egegik, and Pribilovian. The Alaska tribes are the Alaskan Athabaskan, Tlingit, and Haida.

Ally: A person of one identity group who supports and advocates members of another group; typically a member of a dominant group standing beside member(s) of a targeted group.

Asian: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam. It includes “Asian Indian,” “Chinese,” “Filipino,” “Korean,” “Japanese,” “Vietnamese,” and “Other Asian.”

- *Asian Indian:* Includes people who indicate their race as “Asian Indian” or identify themselves as Bengalese, Bharat, Dravidian, East Indian, or Goanese.
- *Chinese:* Includes people who indicate their race as “Chinese” or who identify themselves as Cantonese, or Chinese American.
- *Filipino:* Includes people who indicate their race as “Filipino” or as Philipino, Philippine, or Filipino American.
- *Japanese:* Includes people who indicate their race as “Japanese” or as Nipponese or Japanese American.
- *Korean:* Includes people who indicate their race as “Korean” or Korean American.
- *Vietnamese:* Includes people who indicate their race as “Vietnamese” or Vietnamese American.
- *Cambodian:* Includes people who indicate their race as Cambodian or Cambodia.
- *Hmong:* Includes people who indicate their race as Hmong, Laohmong, or Mong.
- *Laotian:* Includes people who indicate their race as Laotian, Laos, or Lao.
- *Thai:* Includes people who indicate their race as Thai, Thailand, or Siamese.
- *Other Asian:* Includes people who indicate their race as Bangladeshi, Burmese, Indonesian, Pakistani, or Sri Lankan.



language of inclusion

Glossary of Key Terms

Assimilation: The process whereby a group gradually adopts the characteristics, customs and attitudes of the prevailing culture.

Bias: An inclination of preference, especially one that interferes with impartial judgment.

Bicultural: A person who is bicultural has the ability to function effectively and appropriately and can select appropriate behaviors, values and attitudes within either culture.

Bigotry: Prejudice carried to the extreme of overt hatred, often carried to the point of violence.

Biracial: Of, relating to, or involving people from two races; also having parents from two different races.

Bisexual: A person whose emotional, sexual, or romantic attractions are to both men and women. Bisexuals need not be “equally” attracted to, or have had equal sexual experience with, both sexes. Nor do they need to have attractions toward both sexes at the same time.

Black or African American: A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa. It may include people who indicate their race as “Black” or “African American,” or as “Afro American,” “Kenyan,” “Nigerian,” or “Haitian.” The term “African American” is considered to be the more professional and accepted usage.

Change Agents: Change agents are individuals within an organization, at any level. They are educated about managing diversity, and committed to facilitating change by modeling appropriate behaviors. They also take every opportunity to ensure that systems, policies and practices are flexible enough to work for everyone, modifying them as appropriate. Change agents include top leadership, management and employees at every level. Because managing diversity represents a major change in the management of human resources, without multi-level change agents implementation will stall. It requires support from leaders with vision, credibility and authority -- our champions. A managing diversity champion actively supports the organization's commitment to managing diversity and is seen by others as a valued member of the current culture and thus has credibility as the organization moves to the new vision.

Cisgender or Cissexual: A term that applies to the vast majority of people, describing a person who is not transgender. There are a number of derivatives of the terms in use, including cis male for "male assigned male at birth," cis female for "female assigned female at birth," analogically cis man and cis woman, as well as cissexism and cissexual assumption.

Classism: Any attitude or institutional practice which subordinates people due to income, occupation, education and/or their economic condition.



language of inclusion

Glossary of Key Terms

Coming Out of the Closet: The process of self-acceptance and disclosure of sexual orientation to others. People can disclose to none, some, or all of the people they know.

Cross-cultural: The interaction, communication, or other processes between people or entities from two or more different cultures.

Cultural Appropriation: The adoption of elements of a culture by a member of another culture without permission. This includes traditional knowledge, religious symbols, artifacts or any other unauthorized use of cultural practice or ideation.

Cultural Competence: The ability to function effectively in a society of culture variation.

Cultural Conditioning: The unconscious process by which we are socialized to adopt the way of thinking of our own group.

Cultural Diversity: Developing organizational processes that are inclusionary rather than exclusionary for cultural conformity.

Cultural Mosaic: The mix of ethnic groups, languages and cultures that coexist within society without the requirement of assimilation.

Culture: The collective behavior patterns, communication styles, beliefs, concepts, values, institutions, standards, and other factors unique to a community that are socially transmitted to individuals and to which individuals are expected to conform.

Discrimination: Illegal treatment of a person or group (either intentional or unintentional) based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, handicap, veteran's status and in some states, sexual orientation. The term also includes the failure to remedy the effects of past discrimination.

Making decisions in prejudicial manner that may exclude or deny opportunity; making distinctions based on racial, ethnic, or distinguishing features such as usage, religious identification of disability.

- Combination of prejudice (superiority/inferiority belief system) and institutional power, the power to impose that system on others.
- Without power, we all have about the same ability to be prejudiced.
- Destructive "isms" (racism, sexism, ageism, ethnocentrism, handicapism, homophobia, etc.)
- Use of institutional power to reinforce biased belief systems and to disadvantage others.



Glossary of Key Terms

Diverse Supplier: A Minority-owned business that is at least 51 percent owned, managed and controlled by one or more African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Indian Americans / Native Americans, Asian Indian Americans or Asian Pacific Americans. Acceptable certifications are provided by the National Minority Supplier Development Council and by Federal, State and Local Governments.

Diversity: Diversity is the similarities and differences of people found in our workforce, our customers, and in the community in which we serve. Diversity includes many characteristics that may be visible such as race, gender, and age, and it also includes less obvious characteristics like personality style, ethnicity, ability, education, religion, job function, life experience, life style, sexual orientation, geography, regional differences, work experience, and family situations that make us similar to and different from one another.

Diversity Disconnect: Refers to tension, misunderstandings, or conflicts caused by cultural differences in perceptions, values, beliefs and experiences. A diversity disconnect is often caused by the misinterpretation of a statement or a behavior.

Domestic Partner: Unmarried partners who share living quarters.

EEO (Equal Employment Opportunity): Basing terms and conditions of employment, as well as management decisions, on job-related factors without regard to age, color, disability, national origin, race, religion or sex.

Ethnic: Of or relating to people grouped according to a common racial, national, tribal, religious, linguistic, or cultural origin.

Ethnicity: Refers to shared cultural practices, perspectives, and distinctions that set apart one group of people from another. The most common characteristics distinguishing various ethnic groups are culture, religion, language, or the like.

Frames of Reference: A particular way of perceiving and making sense of the world around us. A set of filters through which thoughts, actions and decisions pass.

Gay: A common and acceptable word for male homosexuals, but sometimes used for both genders.

Gender: This term refers to the external, socially constructed rules, roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a society considers appropriate for women and men; gender categories are “women” and “men.”



language of inclusion

Glossary of Key Terms

Gender Expression: How an individual manifests a sense of femininity or masculinity through appearance, behavior, grooming, and/or dress.

Gender Identity: One's inner sense of being a woman or a man, regardless of biological birth sex; different from sexual orientation.

Gender Role: Rules assigned by society that define what clothing, behaviors, thoughts, feelings, relationships, etc., are considered appropriate and in- appropriate for members of a given sex.

Glass Ceiling: Barriers, either real or perceived, that affect the promotion or hiring of protected group members.

Harassment (Ethnic And Racial): Words or conduct communicated with malice and with the intent to intimidate or harass another person in a way that is associated with that person's race, ethnicity, color, religion, ancestry, or national origin.

Harassment (Malicious): Intentional intimidation associated with a person's race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, or mental, physical, or sensory handicap that causes physical injury to another person; or by words or conduct places another person in reasonable fear of harm.

Harassment (Sexual) See Sexual Harassment.

Heteronormative: Cultural rules (including social, family, and legal) that pressure everyone to conform to a heterosexual standard of identity.

Heterosexism: The attitude that heterosexuality is the only valid sexual orientation. Heterosexism denies, denigrates, and stigmatizes any non-heterosexual form of behavior, relationship, or community. Heterosexism often takes the form of ignoring or discriminating against LGBT individuals or discounting their experiences altogether.

Heterosexual/Straight: A person whose emotional, sexual, or romantic attractions are primarily to members of the opposite sex.

Hispanic or Latin: People who identify with the terms "Hispanic" or "Latino" are those who classify themselves in one of the specific Hispanic or Latino categories—"Mexican," "Puerto Rican," or "Cuban"—as well as those who indicate that they are "other Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino." Origin can be viewed as the heritage, nationality group, lineage, or country of birth of the person or the person's parents or ancestors before their arrival in the United States. People who identify their origin as Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino may be of any race.



language of inclusion

Glossary of Key Terms

Homophobia: The irrational fear of homosexuals, homosexuality, or any behavior, belief, or attitude of self or others, which doesn't conform to rigid sex-role stereotypes. It is the fear that enforces sexism and heterosexism. The extreme behavior of homophobia is violence. The hatred, hostility, disapproval, or fear of people who are identified as, or assumed to be, lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender.

Homosexual: A person who is emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted or committed to members of the same sex. Gay is another common and more acceptable word for male homosexuals, but sometimes used for both genders.

Inclusiveness: The act of encouraging belonging.

Institution Racism: A variety of systems operating within an organization that have attitudes, behaviors, and practices that subordinate persons or groups because of race or ethnic background.

Ism: Power plus prejudice.

Internalized Oppression: The process by which a member of an oppressed group comes to oppression: accept and live out the inaccurate myths and stereotypes applied to the oppressed group

Intersex: The status of having physical, hormonal or genetic features that are: (a) neither wholly female nor wholly male; or (b) a combination of female and male; or (c) neither female nor male.

In The Closet (Closeted): LGBT individuals who do not openly disclose their sexual orientation to others. People can disclose to none, some, or all of the people they know.

Lesbian: A woman whose emotional, sexual, or romantic attractions are primarily to other women.

LGBT: This is the acronym most commonly used in the United States to address the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community. The acronym can vary in a number of ways, including GLBT and GLB, and can include additional letters, such as Q (queer; also questioning); A (straight ally); and I (intersex).

Managing Diversity: This is a comprehensive managerial process for developing an environment that works for all employees. This process takes into account the need to change organization systems to sustain the organization's ability to get from all employees everything they have to offer. It means approaching diversity at all three levels: Individual, team or department and organizational. It deals with the way managers do their jobs. It requires a fundamental change in the culture and the way things are done. It is a change in the corporate way of life.



language of inclusion

Glossary of Key Terms

Melting Pot: A place where immigrants of different ethnicity or culture form an integrated and homogenous society.

Mentor: The relationship between two people for the purpose of developing themselves or their careers in navigating the workplace or a particular field. More often than that, the relationships are mutually beneficial, with both partners learning in a purposeful way and benefiting from their relationship in sharing knowledge and experience.

Micro-inequities: Small, sometimes unspoken, often unconscious messages we constantly send and receive that have a powerful impact on our interactions with others. They can be either positive or negative. Some common examples include a wink of understanding from across the table; a distracted glance at the ceiling or watch while someone is speaking.

Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) — a business that is at least 51 percent owned/operated/controlled by:

- African American (ethnic origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa)
- Hispanic American (ethnic origins in any of the Spanish-speaking areas of Latin America or the following regions: Mexico, Central America, South America, and the Caribbean basin only)
- Asian-Pacific American (ethnic origins in Japan, China, Taiwan, Korea, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, the Philippines, Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Trust Territories of the Pacific, or the Northern Mariana Islands)
- Asian-Indian American (ethnic origins in India, Pakistan, or Bangladesh)
- Native American (a person who is American Indian, Eskimo, Aleutian, or native Hawaiian, and regarded as such by the community of which she or he claims to be a part)

Multicultural: The co-existence of many distinct cultures within a given context, such as community or nation.

Myth: An ill-founded belief, usually based on limited experience, given uncritical acceptance by members of a group, especially in support of existing or traditional practices and institutions.



language of inclusion

Glossary of Key Terms

Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands. It includes people who indicate their race as “Native Hawaiian,” “Guamanian or Chamorro,” “Samoan,” and “Other Pacific Islander.”

- *Native Hawaiian:* Includes people who indicate their race as “Native Hawaiian” or who identify themselves as “Part Hawaiian” or “Hawaiian.”
- *Guamanian or Chamorro* — Includes people who indicate their race as Chamorro or Guamanian.
- *Samoan:* Includes people who indicate their race as “Samoan” or who identified themselves as American Samoan or Western Samoan.
- *Other Pacific Islander:* Includes people who indicate their race as a Pacific Islander group such as Tahitian, Northern Mariana Islander, Palauan, Fijian, or a cultural group such as Melanesian, Micronesian, or Polynesian.

Non-LGBT: Anyone who does not identify as part of the LGBT community; most commonly refers to straight/heterosexual individuals.

Organizational Assessment: Organizational assessment involves discovering where the organization is today. This process examines systems, policies and practices to ensure they are flexible enough to support the future state environment. This phase is at the heart of "managing diversity." It involves data collection to assess the organizational climate. It consists of surveys (Employee Opinion Surveys) which are attitudinal in nature to get a sense of what the work environment is like, cultural audits (which look at the organization's roots that drive its systems), assessments of written and unwritten organization policies and procedures, and reviews of complaint and grievance data. Change to support the effective management of diversity must take place at a root level to be lasting.

Organizational Culture: "Underlying values, beliefs and principles that serve as a foundation for the organization's management system, as well as the set of management practices and behaviors that both exemplify and reinforce those principles." (Cox, Taylor Jr., Cultural Diversity in Organizations: Theory, Research & Practice, Berrett-Koehler: San Francisco, 1993, p. 161)

Out Employee: An employee who discloses his or her LGBT identity to a few, some, or all of his or her coworkers.



Glossary of Key Terms

Persons of Color: People of non-European ancestry. All persons self-identifying by the general categories of African-American or Black; Hispanic, Latino or Chicano; Asian or Pacific Islander; American Indian or Native American or Alaskan Native.

Physical Abilities:

- Disabled (disAbled, disABLED). This is the most currently appropriate term.
- Vision Impaired (Limited Vision)
- Blind (No Vision)
- Hard-of-hearing (Limited Hearing)
- Deaf (No Hearing)
- Hidden Challenges (e.g., High Blood Pressure, Heart Disease, Diabetes, etc.)
- Little People

Pluralism: A system that holds within it individuals or groups differing in a basic background experiences and cultures. It allows for the development of a common tradition, while preserving the right of each group to maintain its cultural heritage.

Prejudice: Implies a preconceived idea, judgment, or opinion, usually an unfavorable one marked by hatred, and is directed toward a racial religious, cultural, or ethnic group.

- Judgments about others that reinforce superiority/inferiority belief systems.
- Exaggerate value/worth of a particular group while diminishing worth for other group(s).
- Reinforced supported by stereotypes.

Privilege: A special right, advantage, or immunity granted or available only to a particular person or group of people.

Queer: A fluid term with numerous meanings. It is commonly used to describe sexual orientation and/or gender identity or gender expression that does not conform to heterosexual norms. The term is often used to refer to the general LGBT community. It can be either a positive or a negative term, depending on the context in which it is used.



language of inclusion

Glossary of Key Terms

Race: As a biological concept, it defines groups of human beings based on a set of genetically transmitted characteristics, i.e., physical characteristics, including color. The concept of race as a socio-cultural concept is being replaced by the more appropriate concept of ethnicity. The concept of race as used socio-politically by the U.S. Census Bureau reflects self-identification by people according to the race or races with which they most closely identify. The latter socio-cultural and socio-political categories include both racial and national-origin groups.

Racism: An assumption that there is an inherent purity and superiority of certain races and inferiority of others. It denotes any attitude, behavior, or institutional structure that subordinates persons or groups because of their race or ethnic background. Such practices can be intentional or unintentional.

Self-Esteem: How a person feels about herself or himself; pride in oneself. Self-esteem is linked to family traditions, language, social customs, economic background, and other aspects of one's cultural environment.

Sex: This term refers to the biological characteristics that define an individual; sex categories are “female” and “male.”

Sexism: A system of beliefs or attitudes, which relegates women to limited roles and/or options because of their sex.

Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors (quid pro quo) and other verbal or physical conducts of a sexual nature when:

- submission to such conduct is made either implicitly a condition of employment;
- submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or
- such conduct has the purpose of effect of unreasonably interfacing with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile working environment. (This definition is according to Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) guidelines.)

Sexual Minority: Individuals who do not identify as part of the sexual majority or cultural mainstream (e.g., straight). Individuals can identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer, for example.

Sexual Orientation: A term commonly used to refer to a person's emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to individuals of a particular gender (women or men).



language of inclusion

Glossary of Key Terms

Some Other Race: Includes all other responses not included in the “White,” “African American or Black,” “American Indian or Native American and Alaska Native,” “Asian,” and the “Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander” race categories described above. Persons identified as multiracial, mixed, interracial, or a Hispanic/Latino group (for example, Mexican, Puerto Rican, or Cuban) in the “Some other race” category are included in this category.

Sponsor: Usually someone at a more senior level and/or an individual with strong influence within an organization that assists a protégé in gaining visibility for particular assignments, promotions or positions. The role is often recognized as having a career, job or opportunity-related purpose with some inherent degree or accountability on the sponsor's part.

Straight Ally/LGBT Supporter: An individual who identifies as non-LGBT and who supports the LGBT community in a direct way, such as attending LGBT group meetings, acting as an executive sponsor, or volunteering at an LGBT group event.

Straight/Heterosexual: A person whose emotional, sexual, or romantic attractions are primarily to members of the opposite sex.

Stereotypes: The belief that all people of a certain racial, ethnic, or cultural group are the same and behave in the same way.

Transgender: People who identify with the characteristics, roles, behaviors, or desires of a gender different from the one they were assigned at birth. This is an umbrella term that can be used to include transsexuals, cross-dressers, and other gender-variant people.

Transsexual: Transsexuals change (or seek to change) their physical characteristics to a gender different than what they were assigned at birth—for example, individuals born as males seek to change their sex to female. These changes can include sex reassignment surgery and/or hormone therapy.

Two or More Races: “Two or more races” refers to combinations of two or more of the following race categories:

- White
- African American or Black
- American Indian or Native American and Alaska Native
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander
- Some other race



language of inclusion

Glossary of Key Terms

Understanding Differences: Understanding differences is the awareness and acceptance of differences among and between people both on an interpersonal and personal level. It encompasses myriad dimensions such as race, sex, age, thinking style, religion, sexual orientation, professional degrees, and functionality. This can also refer to organizations and systems (for example, field offices versus headquarters). The objective is to enhance interpersonal or inter-functional relationships.

Values: Values are our subjective reactions to the world around us. They guide and mold our options and behavior. Values have three important characteristics. First, values are developed early in life and are very resistant to change. Values develop out of our direct experiences with people who are important to us, particularly our parents. Values rise not out of what people tell us, but as a result how they behave toward us and others. Second, values define what is right and what is wrong. Notice that values do not involve external, outside standards to tell right or wrong; rather, wrong, good or bad are intrinsic. Third, values themselves cannot be proved correct or incorrect, valid or invalid, right or wrong. If a statement can be proven true or false, then it cannot be a value. Values tell what we should believe, regardless of any evidence or lack thereof.

Valuing Differences: Refers to systemic, organizational and personal development work (not a program) that focuses on all employees, clients, customers, and investors feeling valued (not just tolerated).

White: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa. It includes people who indicate their race as “White” or as Irish, German, Italian, Lebanese, Near Easterner, Arab, or Polish.

Woman Business Enterprise (WBE): A business that is at least 51 percent owned/operated/controlled by a non-minority woman.