

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Race in the Workplace



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" When we define ourselves, when I define myself, the place in which I am like you and the place in which I am not like you, I am not excluding you from the joining, I am broadening the joining."

*- Audre Lorde
Sister Outsider*



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Outline

- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- Key DEI concepts: Communication Toolbox
- Power and privilege dynamics
- Implicit bias and microaggressions
- Systemic Racism in the Workplace
- Tools for Managers

Equality



The assumption is that **everyone benefits from the same supports**. This is equal treatment.

Equity



Everyone gets the supports they need (this is the concept of "affirmative action"), thus producing equity.

Justice



All 3 can see the game without supports or accommodations because **the cause(s) of the inequity was addressed**. The systemic barrier has been removed.



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Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Communication Tool Kit

What do we need to
create a brave space and
a safe space?

- Take space and make space
- **Start from a place of understanding and assume the goodwill of others**
- Ask for clarification instead of making assumptions
- **Know your intent, attend to your impact**
- Speak from your lived experiences, not from anyone else's
- **Stay engaged and be willing to sit with discomfort**
- No one knows everything, together we know a lot
- **We are all learning, but recognize the impact of your learning on people who may have experienced identity-based oppression**
- Listen first, listen second, and then speak
- **A single person's experience is not a monolithic representation of all lived experiences for an identity group**
- Acknowledging that we each have intersecting identities of privileges and oppressions
- **We will make mistakes and that's okay, this is a lifelong learning process and nobody is perfect**



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Understand yourself as a racial/cultural being by making the “invisible” visible. Race, culture, and ethnicity are a function of each one of us, it’s not just a “minority thing”

- Parker McMullin Bushman, Founder of Ecoinclusive

Reflection: Understand your own identity and positionality.



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Dynamics of Power and Privilege in the Workplace: Identity

WHEEL OF POWER/PRIVILEGE



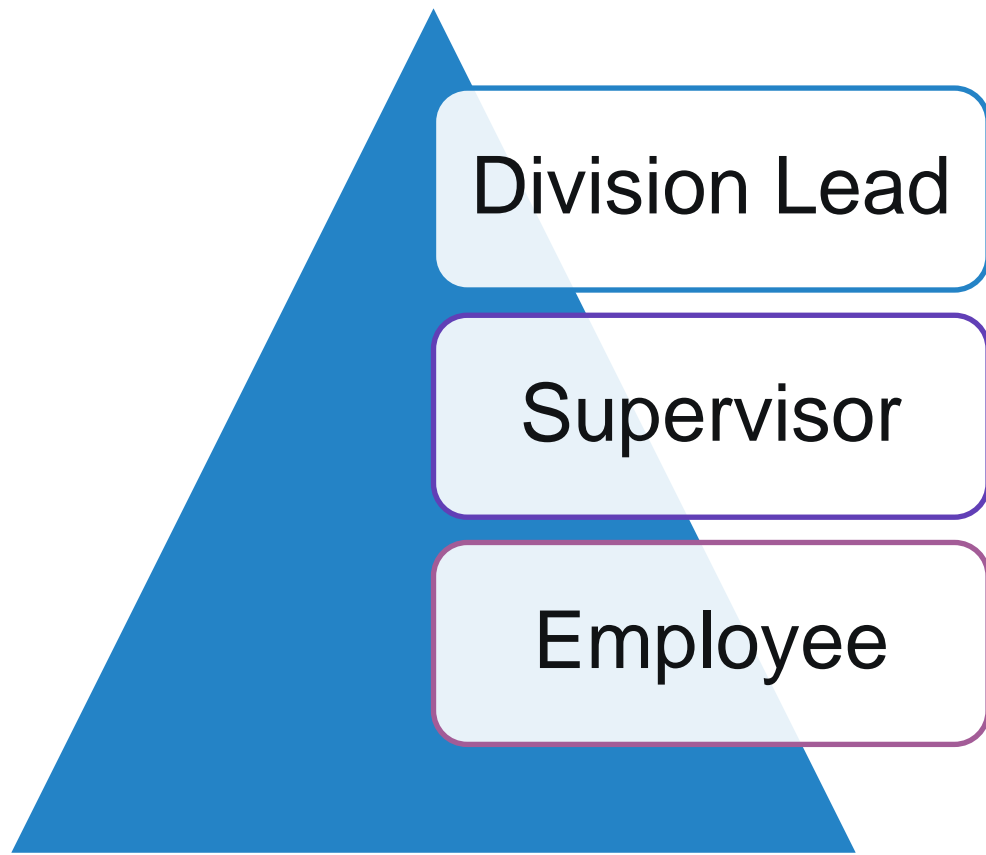
Adapted from ccrweb.ca

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**Dynamics of
Power and
Privilege in the
Workplace:
Hierarchy**





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Implicit Bias

- **Implicit Bias is often informed by lived experience and stereotypes which affect perceptions and behaviors**
- **Implicit bias can be marked by subtle language and behavioral queues which negatively impact those who have experienced identity-based oppression based on race, gender, sexual orientation, class, age or protected class**



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Implicit Bias & Microaggressions

- Microaggression is a comment or action that subtly and often unconsciously or unintentionally expresses a prejudiced attitude toward a member of a marginalized group, such as a racial minority. (Merriam Webster).



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Microaggressions

What do I do if I unintentionally commit a microaggression?

C alm Yourself	Take a deep breath	Resist defending yourself	Remember this feels scarier than it is
P ractice Humility	Elevate the harm you cause over your own comfort	Take responsibility for your actions	Focus on the impact of your words rather than your intent
R epair	Center the relationship, not your feelings or reputation	Ask what you can do	Accept that repairing the relationship might take time

Responses that do more harm:

"I didn't mean it like that so you shouldn't be offended"

"You're just being sensitive"

"I was just kidding, it's not a big deal"



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Strategies for Addressing Microaggressions in the Workplace

What do I do if I personally experience a microaggression?

- Talk directly with the person who committed the microaggression *if you feel comfortable doing so*
- Speak with your direct supervisor (assuming they are not the one to commit the microaggression)
- Seek support from colleagues (Employee Resource Groups)
- Consult or seek support from mentors or individuals in your network - MES faculty and staff for example
- Speak with Human Resources
- Report through an anonymous reporting system (if available)
- Connect with an Employee Assistance Program (typically run by an external entity)

What do I do if I hear someone commit a microaggression towards another community member?

- Ask for clarification - talk with the person who committed the microaggression
- Check in with the person who received the microaggression
- Talk to your direct supervisor *if you feel comfortable doing so*
- Seek support from colleagues
- Speak directly with your division manager
- Report through an anonymous reporting system (if available)
- Connect with an Employee Assistance Program (typically run by an external entity)



Systemic Racism in the Workplace

Issues of systemic racism in the workplace

- People of color do not receive promotion opportunities and/or are not hired into management positions
- Professional development opportunities or important projects are not available or offered to people of color
- The workload is not evenly distributed across the workplace where people of color are disproportionately assigned a heavy workload
- Tokenism in the workplace – one individual is asked to speak on, or represent perspectives from an entire racial or ethnic group
- Inappropriate comments and/or microaggressions in the workplace based on racial or ethnic identity
- People of color are not paid equally for the same work as white colleagues
- The cultural climate does not allow everyone the ability to come to work authentically and requires employees to cover or code-switch to assimilate with the dominant culture



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Systemic Racism in the Workplace

What if racism is pervasive and you and/or colleagues are not being heard?

- Lookup the process for incident reporting at your workplace
 - Do they want you to report to an Executive Diversity Officer instead of Human Resources for example
- Report to your union representative, or look into unionizing
- Create an Employee Resource Group or Affinity Groups (if not already available)
- Whistleblowing

In almost all scenarios, these steps must involve upper management to proceed but the employee support systems seek to address the power dynamics that may be present



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Steps for Managers

As a manager, you may have the ability to positively influence cultural shifts towards greater diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace!

- Examine current workplace policies and practices through an equity lens and eliminate those that are discriminatory or inequitable
- Hire diverse staff, work to ensure representation is present at all levels of the workplace
- Cluster hiring (Dr. Ebony McGee)
- Create opportunities for professional development and advancement for your staff and in particular, your staff of color
- Support staff in their desire to create Employee Resource Groups or Affinity Groups
- Affirm staff experiences when they come to you with issues of racism or identity-based discrimination and take actionable steps to address it such as
 - Talking with the individual(s) who caused the harm
 - Bringing in a mediator to facilitate discussion
 - Hold those who cause harm accountable
- Organize and host regular DEI trainings
- Create Diversity/Equity Action Plan to hold your workplace accountable to the cultural shifts
- Have transparent and equal salaries
- Foster belonging in the workplace
- Real problems, real numbers, real consequences (Janet Stovall)