Understanding DEI in the Workplace

Letter from
Leadership

As a healthcare organization founded on family values, we believe fostering Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) is a fundamental principle for success. Tom Shields frequently encouraged employees to treat patients "like their own mother." This same approach should be modeled in all of our interactions and relationships. As a company, we are committed to inclusion and enhancing our DEI initiatives.

Our goal is to recognize underrepresented members of our team and the diversity across our organization, our partners, and our patients.

This handbook was created to provide guidance for all Shields Health employees. The following pages include Shields Health DEI Committee Information, Inclusion Guidelines, and DEI Educational Information.

Shields Health believes that bringing together people with different backgrounds and life experiences makes us stronger and drives our success. We are committed to continuing to grow and learn in this area and are thankful to those willing to commit time on the DEI Committee to help us in that endeavor.

We know DEI is a daily practice and not an item to check off of our to-do list. In fact, it is a life-long journey! We are willing and committed to ongoing learning, growth, and constant improvement and we hope you will join us.

Shields Health
Leadership Team

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Introduction

Shields Health is a company built on family values and a commitment to provide high-quality, low-cost care to patients across New England. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed longstanding inequities in healthcare. It also highlighted ongoing injustices for many across the United States and the world. As a result of these external factors as well as internal conversations surrounding diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), Shields Health decided to take action. The DEI Committee was formed in 2022 in an effort to enhance DEI in more intentional ways, ultimately providing a safer and more equitable place for all employees, patients, and external stakeholders.

Readers note: Throughout this handbook, a variety of terms are used to describe identities, including racial and ethnic groups. There is often not consensus about the best term to use (for example, Latino, Latina, Latinx, Hispanic). Wherever appropriate, this handbook includes the terms used in original source material. Readers will also find the glossary helpful, as it provides an extensive list of definitions and descriptions for many DEI terms.

About the Shields DEI Committee

The DEI Committee was formed in 2022 in an effort to enhance DEI at Shields in more intentional ways, ultimately providing a safer and more equitable place for all employees, patients, and external stakeholders.

Our Mission

Our mission is to advise, educate, and nurture accountability around company-wide DE&I values so that:

- All employees can come to work as their most authentic selves and can do their best work.
- DE&I principles, including psychological safety, are intentionally embedded in every structure, system, and process in the company and with external stakeholders, including patients.
- Employees at every level and in every function play an active role in advancing DE&I.
- Human connection, which advances DE&I progress, is prioritized throughout the organization.

Our Activities to Date

In 2022, in addition to the creating the DEI committee and crafting a mission statement, we launched two initiatives in partnership with HR. The first was a series of workshops to teach people managers more about DEI. They learned about important facts and terms, what it means to be an ally for others, and how they personally could take action to nurture inclusion on an individual and organizational level. The second 2022 initiative – Making a Personal Connection with Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion – is a webinar series for all employees. It was offered twice in 2022 and continues to be offered in 2023.

We have also launched the first Shields Employee Resource Group – Women's Initiative Network at Shields (WINS) – a group dedicated to supporting and empowering underrepresented groups, including women, while also advancing inclusion and the professional and personal development of Shields' women.

For more details on the committee's latest work, please visit the DEI page on the InfoHub.

About the Shields DEI Committee

Oversight

Shields' CHRO maintains executive responsibility and oversight for DEI at Shields, working closely with the senior executive team and the DEI Committee.

How to Get Involved

The DEI Committee is continuously growing and open to new members to sustain progress and fulfill our mission. The shared responsibility of all DEI committee members makes everyone's workload manageable.

We would like to see all parts of the company represented on the committee. If you are interested in joining, please email DEICommittee@shields.com with a brief statement of why you are motivated to join the team. Your voice and your views matter and we would love to hear from you!

Committee members must commit to:
- Advancing the mission of DEI at Shields
- Attending monthly committee meetings (1 hour per month)
- Working outside of meetings on research, co-leading projects, & representing the committee at events

Want to learn more?

● **For questions about the DEI committee or DEI topics, please reach out to DEICommittee@shields.com.**

Shields Inclusion Guidelines

Shields inclusion guidelines reflect our values when it comes to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). By using them as a guide for our everyday interactions and decisions, we nurture a culture where all employees feel that they have a voice and they are valued. Inclusion guidelines are imperative for Shields employees and our work with patients and all stakeholders.

1. We value each other's unique, intersecting identities.
   None of us lives by one identity. We all hold multiple, intersecting identities that shape our lived experiences. Our varying identities include gender, race, sexual orientation, ethnicity, culture, religion, age, language, health, ability, class, marital status, parental status, and much more. We leverage diverse identities to be a better, more innovative, and more inclusive organization.

2. We communicate clearly, honestly, and respectfully.
   Good communication increases workplace connections and employee engagement, and it reduces unhealthy conflict and misunderstanding.

3. We consider others' thoughts, motives, feelings, and actions before we act.
   Compassion is at our core. We care about each other.

4. It's okay for us to disagree with respect and kindness.
   We avoid creating a "culture of nice," where intentions are good but we avoid open disagreement. Honesty and kindness are not mutually exclusive!

5. We use mistakes as opportunities to learn instead of blaming or shaming ourselves or others.
   We apologize for our mistakes when we need to. We self-reflect on why we made a mistake and what we learned. We put the lessons learned into practice.

6. We step up as allies for ourselves and others.
   We take risks by interrupting microaggressions or acts of exclusion that might hurt people personally and/or professionally. We actively support others whose identities are different than ours.

7. We seek feedback from others about our own behavior.
   Giving and receiving feedback helps us grow professionally and personally. It helps create a feedback culture, where we have access to each other, we build relationships, we provide constructive criticism, and we celebrate others' accomplishments.

8. We understand the difference between intent and impact.
   When our intent is good but our impact is hurtful, we apologize and reflect on how to avoid repeating the same mistake. We believe the other person if they tell us our well-intentioned words or actions have hurt them. And we also approach every interaction assuming good intent in advance.

9. We continually work to expand our knowledge and self-awareness.
   We practice "both/and" thinking. This means that multiple things can be true at the same time and that everybody has a right to their experience, regardless of what someone else is experiencing.

10. We nurture a culture of trust and psychological safety.
    We feel safe to be ourselves. We feel safe to learn and contribute. We feel safe to make mistakes and admit them. We feel safe to challenge the status quo. Mutual trust is core to psychological safety.

Diving into Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

What does DEI stand for?

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, though combined and often referred to as DEI, actually refers to three distinct culture components in an organization:

- Diversity refers to all of our wide and varying human differences. Gender and race often come to mind first, but it's important to think much more broadly to include sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, social class, physical and mental health, profession, age, religion, veteran's status, educational background, marital status, language spoken, and much more!
- Equity recognizes that everyone does not start in the same place. It's about the fair and just treatment of everyone, regardless of identity.
- Inclusion means people feel a part of the community. They feel valued. They know they have a voice and that they matter. Belonging is often used along with DEI.

Why is DEI Important?

Ample research has established the business case and human case for a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace culture. It fosters creativity, innovation, and understanding. It can lead to new ways of solving problems, developing products and services, and increasing engagement and productivity. Here is some compelling data:

- **Inclusive organizations** are 2 times as likely to meet or exceed financial targets, 3 times as likely to be high-performing, 6 times more likely to be innovative and agile, and 8 times more likely to achieve better business outcomes. (Source 1)
- **Employees in inclusive organizations** are 50% less likely to leave, 56% more likely to improve their performance, 75% less likely to take a sick day, and up to 167% more likely to recommend their organizations as great places to work! They also feel more happiness at work and are much more likely to go above and beyond for their employer. (Source 2)

Diving into Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) *ctd.*

Understanding Lived Experiences Based on Identity

Unfortunately, people don't always feel included. Often, workplace experiences related to identity can make people feel isolated, excluded or marginalized. Here is a sampling of the data:

- Almost 80% of Black professionals (3 times the rate of white peers) say they experience discrimination or that they fear they or their loved ones will. (Source 3)
- Asian Americans confront the model minority myth, being seen as more successful than other racial groups, effectively denying that they experience racism. (Source 4)
- About 75% of Latinx people say they have to cover aspects of their authentic identity at work. (Source 5)
- Nearly 50% of LGBTQ+ employees are closeted at work (they haven't told people they are LGBTQ+). (Source 6)
- 50% of veterans leave their first post-military job within a year based on difficulty navigating a different culture. (Source 7)
- People with disabilities are unemployed at 3 times higher rates. (Source 8)
- 45% of Black women say the place they most often experience racism is at work. (Source 9)
- 1 in 2 people globally hold ageist attitudes. (Source 10)
- Women's judgement is questioned more often than men's and they are interrupted far more often than men. This is compounded for women of color. (Source 11)
- LGBTQ+ women face greater rates of sexual harassment and discrimination. (Source 12)
- 80% of Trans employees report having to take steps like quitting a job to avoid mistreatment. (Source 13)

Diving into Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) *ctd.*

Because Shields is a part of the healthcare industry, it's important to recognize some of the healthcare experiences of underrepresented populations. Here is a sampling of the data:

- 80 million people have low health literacy, and more than 6 percent of those come from minority communities. (Source 14)
- The average life expectancy among African American people in the U.S. is four years lower that that of White people. These disparities sometimes persist even when accounting for other demographic and socioeconomic factors, such as age or income. (Source 15)
- People with low incomes are up to three times more likely to experience depression and anxiety. (Source 16)
- Women report higher rates of stress levels and mental health concerns than men. One analysis showed that 55 percent of women reported "a significant impact from COVID-19 related income loss," compared with 34 percent of men. Similarly, the analysis shares that 27 percent of women experienced increased mental health struggles, compared with 10 percent of men. (Source 16)
- Asian Americans are 51 percent less likely to use mental health services than their White counterparts. Latino people are 25 percent less likely, and Black people are 21 percent less likely. (Source 17)
- Black and other underrepresented racial groups in the U.S. experience more illness, worse outcomes, and premature death compared with White people. (Source 18)
- In the U.S., Black women are three times more likely to die after giving birth than White women. (Source 19)
- Workers who identify as LGBTQ+ are more likely to experience mental health challenges such as anxiety, depression, and burnout and to say that their work or work environment has had a negative impact on their mental health. (Source 20)
- During the height of the global pandemic, Massachusetts patients from lower income communities represented a larger share of COVID-19-related inpatient hospital admissions. (Source 26)
- In 2021, 46% of Massachusetts adults delayed or skipped care due to cost. Examples include medical procedures, reduced and skipped medication doses, not filling a prescription, and dental care. (Source 26)

Understanding Bias and Why it Matters

To grow as inclusive individuals and as an organization, it's important to understand some underlying issues that can impede progress toward greater inclusion. Unconscious bias and microaggressions top the list.. Often, workplace experiences related to identity can make people feel isolated, excluded or marginalized. Here is a sampling of the data:

What is unconscious bias?

Unconscious bias refers to social stereotypes we form outside of our conscious awareness. Inclusion strategist Vern Myers refers to bias as, "the stories we make up about people before we know who they are." Bias can show up as the unfounded positive or negative assumptions we make about someone based on their gender, race, ethnicity, religion, age, education, class, health, disability, body type, the way they dress, the way they speak, or so much more.

Why are we biased?

Bias results from our lived experiences and our human brain's wiring. We all carry bias (but this isn't an excuse – we need to understand it and then learn how to interrupt it):

- **Our lived experiences** – like the stories we were told as a child, the way we were treated, where we live, and what we have been exposed to – shape the bias we carry. For instance, if the only female role models while growing up were homemakers who didn't have jobs outside the house, they might be more likely to think of women as homemakers and men as stronger professionals, even once they entered the workplace. And this feeling might not be overt, but subconscious.

- **Our human brains** are wired to operate quickly. Thanks to the work of behavioral economist Daniel Kahneman, we understand that fast thinking is called "System 1" and slow thinking is referred to as "System 2." Human's System 1 thinking is efficient and can be lifesaving. Imagine jumping away from a speeding car. That's our brain's best form of fast thinking. However, fast thinking gets us in trouble when it comes to bias, because we make quick assumptions too quickly. Sometimes, this results in hurtful statements or behavior towards others, which are called **microaggressions**. In order to interrupt unconscious bias and microaggressions, we have to intentionally change our brains from their System 1 mode to their System 2 mode!

Understanding Bias and Why it Matters *ctd.*

What are microaggressions?

Microaggressions are subtle acts of exclusion that are usually, but not always, unintentional. They result when unconscious bias is not interrupted. Often referred to as microinequities or micro exclusions, they are like small pinpricks or paper cuts. All of us are targets and actors when it comes to microaggressions. Here's the problem: those experiencing microaggressions feel marginalized or demeaned, and they are more likely to be people who are underrepresented. So, people from underrepresented groups are more deeply impacted by microaggressions. The ultimate result of ongoing workplace microaggressions is that employees withdraw, become less engaged or less productive, and they often leave their organization.

It's important to understand what microaggressions can look like. Here are just a few examples:

- A woman who is a strong leader is seen as aggressive.
- A woman who is mild-mannered is told she lacks executive presence.
- A younger person is consistently spoken over.
- A quieter, introverted person is not given a chance to speak.
- A gay man is asked if he has a wife.
- A person with a disability is viewed as "less than" and needing help they might not need.
- A person who is "the only" or one of a few is tokenized (expected to speak on behalf of an entire group).
- A Trans person is told they should just "make do" with binary choices for bathrooms.
- An LGBTQ+ woman is openly harassed.

Common verbal microaggressions:
- You speak English well – I hardly hear your accent.
- When I see you, I don't see color.
- There is only one race, the human race.
- Where are you from...really from?
- Do you even know what TikTok is?
- Male to female: Your handwriting is so good...will you take the notes?
- The way you deal with your disability is so inspiring.
- I can't tell that joke...we're in mixed company.
- Race and gender don't play a part in who we hire... I just believe the most qualified person should get the job.
- I'm not a racist. I have Black friends.
- Male to female: You're so emotional.
- White to Black: Don't be so aggressive.
- I'm not biased...I treat everybody the same.

Finally, it's important to know that intersecting identities can compound microaggressions. For instance, Black women are far more likely to be labeled as angry or aggressive in the workplace. Asian women are often sexualized and expected to be demure.

Allyship Makes all the Difference in Creating an Inclusive Culture

What is allyship?

Definitions vary. Traditionally, allies are individuals from a "dominant group" identity who actively work to advance a culture of inclusion by supporting coworkers who might be marginalized, underrepresented, or face microaggressions at work. However, anyone can be an ally – or advocate – for another person. Some of the most powerful allyship dynamics occur when two people of different identities intermittently serve as allies for each other.

Allies play a powerful role in creating inclusive and respectful workplace cultures. Allyship is an ongoing process. It's about having someone's back, even when they aren't in the room. It's about taking risks to speak up for someone or to amplify their voice when they aren't hear. It's about humility. It's about stretching to learn more about people who are different than you. It's about admitting mistakes and apologizing.
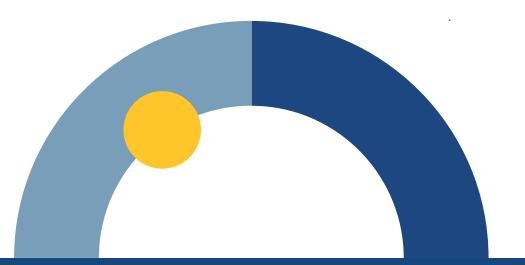
Some relevant facts...

- Women of color who make it to the top cite the importance of supportive mentors and allies. (Source 21)
- Allies are three times more likely to intervene than other people when they witness microaggressions against an LGBTQ+ employee. (Source 22)
- People with disabilities are more likely to disclose if their supervisor is supportive and open, their workplace is disability-friendly, and there is evidence of active recruitment of people with disabilities. (Source 27)
- Straight participants involved in allies programs are twice as likely to recognize discrimination compared with employees at organization without an allies program in place. (Source 23)

Allyship Makes all the Difference in Creating an Inclusive Culture *ctd.*

Little things can mean a lot

While significant and sustained organizational efforts to nurture allyship – including active advocacy programs – are important, smaller actions and initiatives can have a big impact. Here are just a few ways you can step up as an ally in your day-to-day interactions:

- Amplify others' voices by acknowledging what they say, repeating good ideas that are overlooked, etc.
- Interrupt bias/microaggressions in the moment.
- Sometimes, a question works. "Can you tell me more?" "Did you mean to say...?"
- Sometimes, you want to express your feelings about what you are observing. "When you speak over Jayla, I feel...."
- Start meetings with check-ins or end them with check-outs, to make sure everyone is recognized.
- Use inclusive language. One example is using pronouns in your signature to indicate support for gender identity.
- Instead of seeking culture fit on your team, shift to "culture add."
- Connect with people who are different than you.
- Have coffee with someone you don't know to learn more about their lived experience.
- Mentor someone whose identity is different than yours.
- When a highly publicized act of violence against a marginalized group occurs (consider hate crimes against Asian Americans, killings of Black Americans, crimes targeting the LGBTQ+ community, antisemitic acts of aggression, etc.), be sure to let co-workers from those groups know that you care. A simple but heartfelt, "I'm thinking of you today," can go a long way.
- Celebrate diversity by recognizing and appreciating the multitude of differences among team members.
- Educate yourself about different identity groups by reading, listening to podcasts, or watching movies and documentaries

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A DEI Glossary of Terms

This glossary contains definitions that should be helpful in holding conversations about diversity, equity, and inclusion. Please note that there is often disagreement about terms and their usage. An example is whether and when to use the terms Hispanic, Latina/Latino, or Latinx. Inclusion in this glossary is not an endorsement for usage.

AAPI (Asian American and Pacific Islander): This term is used to describe a diverse and fast-growing population of 23 million Americans that include roughly 50 ethnic groups with roots in more than 40 countries. This includes all people of Asian, Asian American, or Pacific Islander ancestry who trace their origins to the countries, states, jurisdictions and/or the diasporic communities of these geographic regions. (Source 24)

Ableism: Discrimination of and social prejudice against people with disabilities based on the belief that typical abilities are superior.

African American: Refers to people in the United States who have ethnic origins in the African continent. While the terms African American and Black are often used interchangeably in the United States, it is best to ask individuals how they identify. (Source 25)

Ageism: Stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination towards others or oneself based on age.

Ally (Allyship): A person who works actively to create equitable environments that affirm diversity and inclusion. A visible advocate, usually in the dominant group, for those who are underrepresented.

Asexual: Sometimes called "ace" for short, asexual refers to a complete or partial lack of sexual attraction or lack of interest in sexual activity with others. Asexuality exists on a spectrum, and asexual people may experience no, little, or conditional sexual attraction.

Asian American: The U.S. Census Bureau defines Asian as people having origins in any of the original peoples of Asia or the Indian subcontinent. It includes people who indicate their race or races as Asian, Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Korean, Japanese, Vietnamese, or Other Asian. (Source 25)

Belonging: A sense of acceptance, inclusion, and identity resulting in an employee feeling secure and supported at work.

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

BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color): This term recognizes the collective experiences of systemic racism and is meant to emphasize the hardships faced by Black and Indigenous people in the United States and Canada and is also meant to acknowledge that not all People of Color face the same levels of injustice. (Source 24)

A DEI Glossary of Terms

Bisexual: A person emotionally, romantically, or sexually attracted to more than one sex, gender, or gender identity though not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way, or to the same degree. Sometimes used interchangeably with pansexual.

Black: A racialized classification of people that is usually a political and skin color-based category for people with dark skin and for people of African descent. However, not all people considered Black have dark skin. Contemporary scientists view the concept of a "Black race" as a social construct. Preferences for being referred to as Black or African American often vary. (Please also see African American.)

Caucasian: An obsolete racial classification of people who are white-skinned and primarily of European background, but also from Western Asia, South Asia, North Africa, and the Horn of Africa. It was based on a now-disproven theory of biological race. (Source 28)

Cisgender: A gender identity term used to describe people who identify as the gender/sex they were assigned at birth.

Class: Widely used metrics for accountability. Prioritizes one's position in the economic hierarchy that is determined by wealth, income, education or access to education, and geographic background.

Code switching: Adjusting one's style of speech, appearance, behavior, and expression in ways that optimize the comfort of others in exchange for fair treatment, quality service, and opportunities. Research suggests that code-switching often occurs in spaces where negative stereotypes run counter to what are considered "appropriate" behaviors/norms for a certain environment.

Cognitive diversity: The wide variety of ways employees think and solve problems. The term recognizes the spectrum of styles by which individuals acquire knowledge. Embracing cognitive diversity results in appreciation and acceptance of employee differences in perceiving, reasoning, and problem solving.

Confidence Gap: The difference in confidence that often exists between men and women and impacts women's ability to succeed or thrive in their careers.

Covering: A strategy through which individuals manage or downplay their differences. Covering can prevent an individual from bringing their authentic selves to work and hinder an organization from creating a true culture of inclusion.

Cultural competence: Understanding one's own cultural identity and possessing the competency to work effectively across cultural difference.

Culture Fit: Attributes that align with an organization's mission, goals, and values. Hiring for culture fit sometimes presents a challenge resulting from bias: hiring managers can conflate culture fit with "I like being with this person," which can lead to too much homogeneity in an organization.

DEI: Acronym for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.
(Also: DEIB includes Belonging)

Disability: A condition or function judged to be significantly restricted, in reference to the social systems that make it harder to function with a particular impairment rather than the impairment itself.

Discrimination: Unfair treatment and actions based on prejudice; can include violence, threats, slander, and exclusion.

Diversity: Differences in race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, age, gender, class, disability status, size, sexual orientation, personality type, communication style, education, and life experience, among many other aspects of identity that are present within, among, and between people.

Double Bind: Refers to gendered societal expectations. Women often face backlash or negative career consequences when they are unable to display both warmth and competence, while men do not.

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs): An affiliated subgroup of employees within an organization who share distinctive qualities, interests or goals.

Equality: Treating everyone the same way, often while assuming that everyone also starts out on equal footing or with the same opportunities. Contrasted with equity.

Equity: Ensures equal access to opportunity, often in a workplace. Recognizes that everyone does not start at the same place.

Gaslighting: Psychological manipulation that creates doubt in victims, particularly around sexist or racist aggression, making them question their own memory and sanity. This tactic is designed to invalidate someone's experience.

Gay: A person who is emotionally, romantically, or sexually attracted to members of the same gender. Men, women, and non-binary people may use this term to describe themselves.

Gender binary: A system in which gender is constructed into two strict categories of male or female. Gender identity is expected to align with the sex assigned at birth; gender expressions and roles fit traditional expectations.

Gender expansive: A person with a wider, more flexible range of gender identity and/or expression than typically associated with the binary gender system. Often used as an umbrella term when referring to people still exploring the possibilities of their gender expression and/or gender identity.

Gender expression: External appearance of one's gender identity, usually expressed through behavior, clothing, body characteristics or voice, and which may or may not conform to socially defined behaviors and characteristics typically associated with being either masculine or feminine.

Gender fluid: A person who does not identify with a single fixed gender or has a fluid or unfixed gender identity.

Gender identity: One's innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both, or neither – how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. One's gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth.

Gender non-conforming: A broad term referring to people who do not behave in a way that conforms to the traditional expectations of their gender, or whose gender expression does not fit neatly into a category. While many also identify as transgender, not all gender non-conforming people do.

Health disparities: Preventable differences in the burden of disease, injury, violence, or opportunities to achieve optimal health that are experienced by populations that have been disadvantaged by their social or economic status, geographic location, and environment.

Health equity: The state in which everyone has a fair and just opportunity to attain their highest level of health. Achieving this requires ongoing societal efforts to: address historical and contemporary injustices, overcome economic, social, and other obstacles to health and health care, and eliminate preventable health disparities.

Hispanic: Describes people, descendants, and cultures of Spanish-speaking countries, including many Latin American countries and Spain. The term is not synonymous with Latino/Latina/Latinx. See also Latinx. (Source 24)

Imposter Syndrome: A psychological phenomenon where people doubt their accomplishments and sometime fear being exposed as a "fraud."

A DEI Glossary of Terms

Inclusion: Broad concept that refers to the extent to which individuals from underrepresented groups feel valued and represented within all levels of an organization.

Inclusive Workplace: A working atmosphere where all people—regardless of identity—feel a sense of belonging, are able to contribute fully, and thrive.

Indigenous: Describes ethnic groups who are the earliest known inhabitants of an area (also known as First People), in contrast to groups that have settled, occupied, or colonized the area more recently. In the United States, this can refer to groups traditionally termed Native Americans (American Indians), Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians. In Canada, it can refer to the groups typically termed First Nations. (Source 24)

Intersectionality: Describes the unique ways race, gender, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, ability, status, and other social and demographic identities come together to inform peoples' lived experiences.

Latino/Latina: A person of Latin American origin or descent, with gender indicated by the ending -o or -a. Latino as an adjective reflects the acceptance of the -o ending in Spanish to describe a group of people that includes men, or as a default when gender is not specified. (Source 26)

Latinx: A gender-neutral or nonbinary term to describe a person of Latin American origin or descent (gender-neutral version of Latino or Latina). (Source 24)

Lesbian: A woman who is emotionally, romantically, or sexually attracted to other women. Women and non-binary people may use this term to describe themselves.

LGBTQ+: An acronym for "lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer" with a "+" sign to recognize the limitless sexual orientations & gender identities.

Marginalized Identities: Groups and communities that experience discrimination and exclusion (social, political, and economic) because of unequal power relationships across economic, political, social, and cultural dimensions.

Mental Health: Our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act as we cope with life. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices.

Microaggression: Subtle and normally unintentional slight—resulting from unconscious bias—that undervalues or demeans a person. (Other commonly used terms are micro-inequity, micro-exclusion.)

Misogyny: Hatred or entrenched prejudice against women.

Mommy Penalty: A concept based on biased, stereotypical views of mothers, like the notion that they're less productive. The motherhood penalty affects wages, mothers' ability to get hired, evaluations, promotions, and more.

Native American: Can be used to refer broadly to the indigenous peoples of North and South America, but is more commonly used as a general term for the indigenous peoples of the contiguous United States. Many Native American individuals prefer to identify themselves by their specific tribal affiliation(s). (Source 25)

Non-binary: An adjective describing a person who does not identify exclusively as a man or a woman. Non-binary people may identify as being both a man and a woman, somewhere in between, or as falling completely outside these categories. While many also identify as transgender, not all non-binary people do. Non-binary can also be used as an umbrella term encompassing identities such as agender, bigender, genderqueer or gender-fluid.

Pan-sexual: Describes someone who has the potential for emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to people of any gender though not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way, or to the same degree. Sometimes used interchangeably with bisexual.

Performative allyship: A self-serving form of allyship where the focus is on the ally obtaining recognition for being an advocate while doing minimal or inauthentic work.

Privilege: Power and advantage that benefits one individual or group, often based on the historical oppression of other identity groups.

Pronouns: Pronouns can be used as a way to promote inclusion and recognize that someone is non-binary or wants to support those who are non-binary. Examples of pronouns include She/ Her/Hers, He/Him/His or They/Them/Theirs. Some individuals use other less common gender-neutral pronouns, such as Xe/Hir/Hirs, or use no pronouns at all.

Queer: A term people often use to express a spectrum of identities and orientations that are counter to the mainstream. Queer is often used as a catch-all to include many people, including those who do not identify as exclusively straight and/or people who have non-binary or gender-expansive identities. This term was previously used in a derogatory fashion, but it has been reclaimed by many parts of the LGBTQ+ movement.

Questioning: A term used to describe people who are in the process of exploring their sexual orientation or gender identity.

A DEI Glossary of Terms

Racism: The marginalization and/or oppression of people of color based on a socially constructed racial hierarchy that privileges white people.

Reasonable Accommodation: Any modification of or adjustment to a job, an employment practice, or the work environment that makes it possible for a qualified individual with a disability to apply for, perform the essential functions of, and enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment.

Sexism: A bias or discrimination against an individual based on that person's gender identity or gender expression.

Sexual orientation: An inherent or immutable enduring emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to other people. Note: an individual's sexual orientation is independent of their gender identity.

Stereotype: Blanket beliefs and expectations about members of certain groups that present an oversimplified opinion, prejudiced attitude, or judgment. They go beyond necessary and useful generalizations in that they are typically negative, based on little information, and highly generalized.

Transgender: An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. Being transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation. Therefore, transgender people may identify as straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, etc. This is also referred to as "trans," but referring to someone as "transgendered" is incorrect.

Transitioning: A series of processes that some transgender people may undergo in order to live more fully as their true gender. This typically includes social transition, such as changing name and pronouns, medical transition, which may include hormone therapy or gender affirming surgeries, and legal transition, which may include changing legal name and sex on government identity documents. Transgender people may choose to undergo some, all, or none of these processes.

Unconscious bias: Social stereotypes outside of a person's conscious awareness; these influence decision-making and behavior in ways the person does not notice.

Underrepresented Groups: A group of people whose members are often disadvantaged and subjected to unequal treatment by a dominant group.

White fragility: The defensiveness, awkwardness, and anger that white people display when confronted with matters of race. It's a state of mind that captures how little it takes to upset white people.

Appendix

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