

LEXICON OF TERMS

The first phase of discussions among the subcommittee centered on the review of existing definitions for all key elements or constructs in the realm of inclusion. The following represents a list of key terms:

Authentic Self: One's true or genuine self, including thoughts, emotions and self-image. Who someone believes they are as a person.

Bias: A partiality or an inclination or predisposition for or against something.

Climate for Inclusion: A climate designed by eliminating relational sources of bias by ensuring that identity group status is unrelated to access to resources, creating expectations and opportunities for heterogeneous individuals to establish personalized cross-cutting ties, and integrating ideas across boundaries in joint problem-solving. Three key elements are involved:

- Foundation of Equitable Employment Practices
- Integration of Differences
- Inclusion in Decision-Making

Disparate Impact: When policies, practices, rules or other systems that appear to be neutral result in disproportionate impact on a protected group; often referred to as "unintentional discrimination."

Disparate Treatment: Intentional employment discrimination. For example, testing only certain minority applicants for a skill.

Diverse Hiring: The practice of hiring individuals with special attention given to seeking qualified candidates from diverse and/or minority backgrounds.

Diversity: The differences between individuals, based on any attribute, that may lead to the perception that another person is different from the self.

Equality: Equal treatment of individuals and groups.

Equity: A relative form of equality that takes into consideration the needs and characteristics of the individuals, the context of the situation, and circumstances that result in disparate outcomes.

Inclusion: The extent to which individuals can access information and resources, are involved in work groups, have the ability to influence decision-making processes, and can contribute fully and effectively to an organization. "Inclusion" is also defined as the fulfillment of needs for belongingness and uniqueness. According to Optimal Distinctiveness Theory, employees' needs of belongingness and uniqueness have to be met in order for employees to feel included. To feel included, the unique characteristic of an employee must be valued within a group; more importantly, though, this uniqueness the person brings to the group must be allowed and encouraged to remain.

Inclusive Culture: An organizational environment that allows people with multiple backgrounds, mindsets and ways of thinking to work effectively together and to perform to their highest potential in order to achieve organizational objectives based on sound principles.

Individual Racism: A personal belief in the superiority of one's race over another.

Institutionalized Racism: The imposition by an organization as a whole of philosophies, guidelines and practices that have the intent or effect of promoting systematic, discriminatory treatment of persons on the basis of their race.

Internalized Racism: Acceptance by members of the stigmatized races of negative messages about their own abilities and intrinsic worth.

Microaggressions: Brief and commonplace subtle insults (verbal, nonverbal and/or visual), often unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership.

Personally Mediated Racism: Prejudice and discrimination, where prejudice means differential assumptions about the abilities, motives and intentions of others according to their race, and discrimination means differential actions toward others according to their race. This is what most people think of when they hear the word "racism." Personally mediated racism can be intentional as well as unintentional, and it includes acts of commission as well as acts of omission.

Racial Microaggression: Brief and commonplace subtle insults (verbal, nonverbal and/or visual), often unintentional, directed toward people of color automatically or unconsciously that communicate hostile, derogatory or negative racial slights and insults.

Prejudice: A negative attitude toward another person or group formed in advance of any experience with that person or group. Prejudices include an affective component (emotions that range from mild nervousness to hatred), a cognitive component (assumptions and beliefs about groups, including stereotypes), and a behavioral component (negative behaviors, including discrimination and violence).

Psychological Safety: A shared belief that a workplace or a workplace team is safe for interpersonal risk taking. This term is not meant to suggest a careless sense of permissiveness nor an unrelenting positive affect, but rather a sense of confidence stemming from mutual respect and trust that a workplace or workplace team will not reject, embarrass or punish someone for speaking up.

Racism: A system of advantage based on race that is created and maintained by an interplay between psychological factors (i.e., biased thoughts, feelings and actions) and sociopolitical factors (i.e., biased laws, policies and institutions).

Sense of Belonging (at work): The extent to which individuals feel they are a part of, included in and connected with people at their organization. Creating a sense of belonging—an employee's perception of acceptance within a given group—provides HR leaders a good opportunity to reinvigorate their inclusion approach and goals. Belonging is a key component of inclusion. When employees are truly included, they perceive that the organization cares for them as individuals, their authentic selves. HR can help make that happen. Three elements foster belongingness: diminished outsider practices, enhanced caring mechanisms and transparency.

Sex-Based Discrimination: Any act that involves treating someone unfavorably because of that person's sex. This includes discrimination against an individual based on gender identity (including transgender status) or sexual orientation.

Stereotype: A set of cognitive generalizations about the qualities and characteristics of the members of a group or a social category. Like schemas, stereotypes simplify and expedite perceptions and judgments, but they are often exaggerated, negative rather than positive, and resistant to revision even when perceivers encounter individuals with qualities that are not congruent with the stereotype.

Stereotype Threat: A phenomenon that occurs when targets of stereotypes alleging their inferiority in a relevant domain are reminded of the possibility of conforming to these stereotypes, resulting in performance deficits.

Workplace Harassment: Interpersonal behavior aimed at intentionally harming another employee in the workplace, based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, age, disability, gender identity or genetic information.

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