BSBLDR404
Lead a diverse workforce

Release 1

Learner guide

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Aspire Version 1.1

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BSBLDR404 Lead a diverse workforce Release 1

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Contents

Before you begin

This learner guide is based on the unit of competency *BSBLDR404 Lead a diverse workforce*, Release 1. Your trainer or training organisation must give you information about this unit of competency as part of your training program. You can access the unit of competency and assessment requirements at: www.training.gov.au.

How to work through this learner guide

This learner guide contains a number of features that will assist you in your learning. Your trainer will advise which parts of the learner guide you need to read, and which practice tasks and learning checkpoints you need to complete. The features of this learner guide are detailed in the following table.

Feature of the learner guide	How you can use each feature
Learning content	Read each topic in this learner guide. If you come across content that is confusing, make a note and discuss it with your trainer. Your trainer is in the best position to offer assistance. It is very important that you take on some of the responsibility for the learning you will undertake.
Examples and case studies	Examples of completed documents that may be used in a workplace are included in this learner guide. You can use these examples as models to help you complete practice tasks and learning checkpoints. Case studies highlight learning points and provide realistic examples of workplace situations.
Practice tasks	Practice tasks give you the opportunity to put your skills and knowledge into action. Your trainer will tell you which practice tasks to complete.
Video clips	Where QR codes appear, learners can use smartphones and other devices to access video clips relating to the content. For information about how to download a QR reader app or accessing video on your device, please visit our website: www.aspirelr.com.au/help
Summary	Key learning points are provided at the end of each topic.
Learning checkpoints	There is a learning checkpoint at the end of each topic. Your trainer will tell you which learning checkpoints to complete. These checkpoints give you an opportunity to check your progress and apply the skills and knowledge you have learnt.

Foundation skills

As you complete learning using this guide, you will be developing the foundation skills relevant for this unit. Foundation skills are the language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) skills and the employability skills required for participation in modern workplaces and contemporary life.

The following table outlines specific foundation skills noted for your learning in this learner guide.

Foundation skill area	Foundation skill description
Writing	• Develops texts dealing with complex ideas and concepts using specialised and detailed language to convey explicit information, requirements and recommendations in accordance with legal and organisational requirement
Oral communication	• Establishes understanding through questioning and active listening
Navigate the world of work	• Appreciates the implications of legislation, policy and other organisational responsibilities in carrying out own role
Interact with others	• Implements communication strategies and behaviours for a diverse range of colleagues to build rapport and foster strong relationships • Identifies strengths and limitations of own interpersonal skills and attitudes and addresses areas that would benefit from further development
Get the work done	• Takes responsibility for developing and implementing systems and processes to achieve organisational objectives, seeking feedback and advice as required • Uses analytical processes to identify workforce diversity issues and evaluate options to address them

What do you already know?

Use the following table to identify what you may already know. This may assist you to work out what to focus on in your learning.

Topic	Key outcome	Rate your confidence in each section
Topic 1 Identify the dimensions of workforce diversity	1A Establish the nature of diversity in the business context	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	1B Identify the benefits of workforce diversity	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	1C Recognise legislation, regulations, policies and procedures that impact workplace diversity	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	1D Identify opportunities and barriers to inclusive engagement	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
Topic 2 Factor diversity into team plans and operations	2A Develop, review and adjust work plans and operations in line with legislation, policies and procedures	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	2B Design processes to incorporate and maximise the benefits of diversity	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
Topic 3 Engage with a diverse workforce	3A Apply inclusive communication, language and behaviours	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	3B Ensure cultural competence	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	3C Incorporate and apply diversity tools and techniques to operations	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
Topic 4 Support and encourage diverse workforce members	4A Provide workplace support and access to enabling services	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	4B Encourage, review and provide feedback to the workforce on a regular basis	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident

Topic 1
Identify the dimensions of workforce diversity

All individuals have certain traits and characteristics that set them apart from others in the workplace and that are not always obvious or visible. It is recognised that some people find it more difficult to become employed or, once employed, to be included in workplace activities. Inclusion is about actively working to meet the different needs of different people and taking deliberate steps to create environments where everyone feels respected, valued and able to achieve their full potential. A diverse workforce benefits both the organisation and the people who work for it.

In this topic you will learn how to:

1A   Establish the nature of diversity in the business context

1B   Identify the benefits of workforce diversity

1C   Recognise legislation, regulations, policies and procedures that impact workplace diversity

1D   Identify opportunities and barriers to inclusive engagement

1A Establish the nature of diversity in the business context

Diversity refers to the differences between people in regard to race, culture, age, language, gender, sexuality and abilities. In broad terms, diversity is human difference; it is what gives each of us our identity. Respecting diversity means respecting human individuality.

A workforce may employ a range of people who exhibit a number of these differences.

Managing diversity successfully means creating an environment that values and utilises these different traits and characteristics of people with different backgrounds, experiences and perspectives.

Diversity in Australia

The people who work in organisations, across industries and locations, are as varied as the Australian population.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics has published a range of information about diversity in Australia based on data collected from the 2011 census (the most current at the time of publication of this resource).

Diversity statistics
• 16 per cent of working Australians are aged over 55 years.
• Almost 400 different languages are spoken collectively by Australia's population.
• The median age of the Australian population (the age at which half the population is older and half is younger) is 37.3 years.
• Almost one third of the Australian population was born overseas.
• 50.5 per cent of the Australian population is female.
• 3 per cent of the Australian population is Indigenous Australians.
• 56 per cent of people aged 15–64 years have a post-secondary school qualification.

The nature of diversity

Workplace diversity recognises that individuals or groups of individuals have certain attributes that set them apart from others in the workplace. This applies to all employees (full-time, part-time and casual), contractors and volunteers.

As a supervisor or team leader, you need to understand the characteristics of diversity and the range of diversity present in your workplace so that you can learn how to use the different abilities and traits to the organisation's advantage.

Here are some examples of characteristics that make up diversity in a workforce.

Ability and aptitude

- Staff may have basic education or be highly qualified.
- People may have a physical or cognitive disability.
- Some people may be suited to a particular job role more than others based on their skills, ambitions and aptitudes.

Age

- An organisation may employ people of all ages, from young people straight out of high school to mature-age people in their 60s or 70s.

Culture

- People may come from other countries and may wish to continue their customs and beliefs. They may have a different work ethic to others.

Ethnicity

- Staff may come from a variety of countries with different languages, cultures, beliefs and ways of dressing, behaving and eating.

Gender

- Some workforces may have a balanced ratio of male–female staff, while other organisations may have more male or more female staff.

Language

- While English is the major language in most Australian workplaces, English may not be the first language for many employees.

Family arrangement

- Staff may be married, single, in a de facto relationship or separated. They may be a single parent, have children or have no children. They may also have other carer's responsibilities, such as caring for elderly parents.

Diversity in a business context

Organisations must by law integrate workplace diversity principles into their workplaces and ensure that these principles underpin all aspects of workforce management. This means that diversity characteristics should be considered in all business operations, such as planning, selection and recruitment, leadership, performance appraisal, training and development, career progression opportunities, workplace health and safety (WHS) and industrial relations. For example, translating safety signs and organisational information into different languages ensures that WHS information is available to all.

To help organisations to manage the diversity in their workplaces, there is a range of relevant laws and regulations that all businesses must comply with, including anti-discrimination, harassment and equal employment opportunity legislation. These ensure that no person is disadvantaged because of their background, experience or differences in age, gender or sexuality.

You have a responsibility to understand what diversity means and the extent to which your organisation is embracing the concept of respecting and valuing all forms of difference in individuals.

Qualify and quantify the source of workplace diversity

As a team leader, it is useful for you to be able to identify and to measure the types of diversity across your workplace or within your own team.

Workplace diversity can be measured in a number of ways. These methods typically fall into two categories: quantitative and qualitative. When measuring diversity, it must be remembered that you are measuring at only one point in time and that building an organisation that values and utilises diversity effectively is a continuing process.

Quantitative measures

Measuring diversity in a quantitative way means using specific, measurable data to obtain information that can be used to compare and contrast results. Quantitative measures are useful when you need to collect data that can be converted into numbers.

Quantitative questions are usually closed-ended questions that restrict the respondent to answering in a set format, such as selecting a response from a list of options given in the question, providing a yes or no response, or specifying a number as the answer to the question.

Quantitative measures in action

From the data collected, you can prepare a profile of the current workforce diversity by presenting the results as numbers or percentages in bar graphs or pie charts. This allows an organisation to identify the extent of diversity within its workforce, or to compare its structure and performance against those of other organisations in the same industry or compared to the Australian population. This practice is known as 'benchmarking'.

Here are some examples of quantitative data that can be collated and used to create a workforce diversity profile.

Ability

- What percentage of the workforce has physical or other disabilities?
- What percentage of the workforce holds post-secondary school qualifications?

Age

- What is the statistical breakdown of employees' ages?
- What percentage of the workforce is under 21 and on junior pay rates?
- What is the average length of service with your organisation for employees under 30 years of age?

Gender

- What is the ratio of males to females in the workforce?
- What is the ratio of males to females in your team?
- What is the percentage of female managers in the workforce?

Ethnicity

- What percentage of staff was born overseas (approximately)?
- If there are several staff who were born overseas, do they come from one country or a number of countries?
- Does the spread of ethnicities across the workforce reflect that of the city or town where the workplace is located?
- What cultural events do employees celebrate apart from the Christian-based festivals of Christmas and Easter?

Language

- What percentage of the workforce speaks English proficiently?
- How many staff speak a language other than English?

Qualitative measures

Qualitative methods of measurement focus on the experiences, perceptions and views of the participants. Qualitative questions are open-ended questions that allow the respondent to answer in any way that they choose. Information can be gathered through interviews, focus groups, surveys or observation. This allows an organisation to gain insights into how people in its workforce feel about certain practices.

Qualitative measures can be a useful way of finding out what people really think about a particular issue, as they are free to answer the question however they wish to, rather than choosing a response from a set of pre-determined options. However, it is important to remember that respondents are being asked what they think or how they feel about a particular topic, so their responses will be subjective.

Qualitative measures in action

It is important to be aware that qualitative methods may produce comments that are biased and prejudiced. However, you must respect the right of people to hold their views. Your job as a team leader is to promote the benefits of diversity and to resolve any problems that team members may have with one another. While the responses may not be what you have hoped for, the results may indicate the need for further training on the benefits of diversity, which in itself is a positive outcome from the survey as it gives you specific action items to work on with your team.

Questions to ask
• How diverse is the team in which you work? Give examples.
• How does your team utilise the differences among people?
• In what ways do you enjoy or not enjoy working with people from different backgrounds?
• How fairly do you feel that you and others are treated at work? Provide an example illustrating fair or unfair treatment in your workplace.
• What can be done to improve your team's approach to including different types of people in the workplace?
• What do you think about your organisation's approach to handling discrimination complaints?
• How would you suggest that your organisation improves its handling of discrimination complaints?
• What are three things that you think your workplace does well to encourage diversity?

Conduct a diversity audit

A diversity audit is both a qualitative and a quantitative tool that can be applied to help to gather information on how well an organisation is managing workplace diversity. There is no set format for a diversity audit; however, the goal is to determine how the organisation approaches diversity and to identify any gaps or shortcomings. The results of a diversity audit can provide information on how diverse a workforce is and can diagnose any problems and their underlying causes. This information can then be used to help to shape a set of actions to improve workplace diversity.

When collecting information, preserve all survey forms and sources of your information in case you need to double-check or confirm a statement.

Conduct a diversity audit

Example: how to qualify and quantify workforce diversity

Diversity audit	
Goal: To measure how the organisation manages diversity	
Diversity profile: A snapshot of the diversity of the organisation's workforce	
	Yes/No/ Comments
Policy development and review	
1. Does your organisation have a diversity policy?	
2. If there is a diversity policy, has this policy been recently reviewed?	
3. If there is a diversity policy, do all other workplace policies reflect the approach outlined in the diversity policy?	
4. If there is no diversity policy in place, what is your organisation's approval process to implement such a policy?	
5. Does the culture of your organisation prevent a diversity policy from being implemented? Provide reasons.	
Planning	
6. Does your organisation measure workforce diversity? If so, how?	
7. Has your organisation discussed the benefits of increasing the diversity of your workforce?	
8. Has your organisation allocated responsibility, resources and accountability for a diversity plan?	
9. Has your organisation provided relevant information and training to your stakeholders, such as employees, volunteers, contractors, suppliers and customers, about the organisation's approach to diversity?	
10. Do you think your organisation recognises the importance of diversity?	
People management	
11. How does your team/organisation utilise the differences among people?	
12. Does your organisation provide training on workplace diversity to all team members?	
13. Do your organisation's recruitment and selection practices include measures to enhance workplace diversity?	
14. Do your organisation's position descriptions allocate responsibilities for diversity management to appropriate staff?	
15. Do you believe that your organisation embraces diversity as well as it could? Identify areas for improvement.	

What more do you think your organisation could do to enhance its image through well-managed diversity planning?

Practice task 1

1. Which diversity categories are represented in your workplace?

2. Use this template of a diversity audit to qualify and quantify diversity in your workplace and indicate what responses you would select for your organisation.

Diversity audit	
Goal: To measure how the organisation manages diversity	
Diversity profile: A snapshot of the diversity of the organisation's workforce	
	Yes/No/Comments
Policy development and review	
1. Does your organisation have a diversity policy?	
2. If there is a diversity policy, has this policy been recently reviewed?	
3. If there is a diversity policy, do all other workplace policies reflect the approach outlined in the diversity policy?	
4. If there is no diversity policy in place, what is your organisation's approval process to implement such a policy?	
5. Does the culture of your organisation prevent a diversity policy from being implemented? Provide reasons.	
Planning	
6. Does your organisation measure workforce diversity? If so, how?	
7. Has your organisation discussed the benefits of increasing the diversity of your workforce?	
8. Has your organisation allocated responsibility, resources and accountability for a diversity plan?	
9. Has your organisation provided relevant information and training to your stakeholders, such as employees, volunteers, contractors, suppliers and customers, about the organisation's approach to diversity?	
10. Do you think your organisation recognises the importance of diversity?	

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People management	
11. How does your team/organisation utilise the differences among people?	
12. Does your organisation provide training on workplace diversity to all team members?	
13. Do your organisation's recruitment and selection practices include measures to enhance workplace diversity?	
14. Do your organisation's position descriptions allocate responsibilities for diversity management to appropriate staff?	
15. Do you believe that your organisation embraces diversity as well as it could? Identify areas for improvement.	

What more do you think your organisation could do to enhance its image through well-managed diversity planning?

1B Identify the benefits of workforce diversity

Management needs to ensure that the diversity of their workforce benefits the workplace and that everyone works harmoniously. Having a diverse workforce means: there is a range of abilities and skills to draw on; people can learn from each other's different experiences and skills; new ideas and innovation are generated; and people learn tolerance, compassion and how to view situations from perspectives other than their own. Staff enjoy a culture that is dynamic and varied.

A reputation for diversity can also enhance an employer's business, as it may raise the organisation's profile within the community. People are also more likely to want to join an organisation that demonstrates that it values diversity and different contributions.

By encouraging workplace diversity, an organisation shows that it respects and values all forms of difference in individuals.

Here are some of the benefits that a diverse workforce brings to both an organisation and its employees.

Organisation benefits

- A range of abilities and skills to draw on
- Productive staff who generate new ideas
- Ability to open up new markets and opportunities
- Increased customer base
- Attraction and retention of talented staff as an employer of choice
- Increased creativity and innovation
- Community support and enhanced image

Employee benefits

- Increased job satisfaction and engagement
- Increased morale and motivation
- Improved equity of access to career development opportunities
- Increased understanding of different cultures, points of view and opinions
- Learning from each other's different experiences and skills
- A workplace free from harassment, discrimination and bullying

Promote the benefits of diversity

A workplace that welcomes diversity is one that encourages people to be themselves and to share their collective experiences and knowledge.

It is crucial that you understand the benefits that diversity can bring to the workplace and, in particular, to your team.

You can promote these benefits at staff induction sessions, then repeat this at regular intervals through staff meetings, refresher training, team meetings and performance appraisals, to show that diversity is important to the organisation.

It is always a good idea to refer to diversity in informal situations, as well as formal ones, so that diversity is seen as part of day-to-day operations and the culture of the organisation, rather than being a separate issue. Modelling appropriate behaviours is also crucial and this is a key skill for team leaders and supervisors to develop.

Support workforce diversity

Your role as a manager, supervisor or team leader is to create an inclusive environment where everyone feels respected and is able to achieve their full potential. Being aware of diversity and its many characteristics and benefits can help you to plan your work and help your work team to function collaboratively and cooperatively. Be a role model to others.

Ways to support diversity
• Use appropriate, inclusive language.
• Implement strategies to remove barriers to inclusion.
• Identify and counteract your own biases and assumptions about different diversity characteristics.
• Make use of staff who speak a community language to help customer relations.
• Use the expertise and knowledge of older employees to mentor younger ones.
• Ask staff who have come from different countries to explain various customs and traditions to other staff.
• Be aware of the range of legislation that governs anti-discrimination in the workforce.
• Know the policies and procedures that your organisation has in place to ensure compliance with diversity legislation.

Example: identify the benefits of diversity in the workforce

SunCity Importers and Exporters has identified the benefits of a diverse workforce to its business. The company has developed a workplace diversity statement that includes the following philosophy:

Diversity philosophy

At SunCity we wholeheartedly welcome diversity.

What do we see as diversity?

This is the freedom for people to be themselves and to share their differences in an inclusive environment. Diversity includes race, gender, cultural background, age, sexual preference, family commitments. Basically it is anything that sets us apart from the next person.

Why are we keen to embrace diversity?

- It helps us to manage legal risks.
- It helps to keep our staff engaged.

We benefit from the many skills, attributes and experiences that our diverse team brings to work with them every day, such as language skills, experience and culturally sensitive customer relations.

- We are an employer of choice within the community.
- In short, it just makes business sense for us to embrace diversity.
- We are a better business because of the diversity of our team.

Practice task 2

Prepare the text for a poster that will be displayed in your workplace. The purpose of the poster is to outline the benefits (for employees) of embracing a diverse workforce.

1C Recognise legislation, regulations, policies and procedures that impact workplace diversity

As a team leader you need to be aware of, and comply with, current Commonwealth and state/territory legislation relating to anti-discrimination, equal opportunity, bullying and sexual harassment. Organisations are obliged to take proactive, reasonable and proportionate measures to eliminate discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation. Ignorance of the law is no protection against breaking the law. There are serious consequences for a workplace that fails to take steps to prevent discrimination; these include costly litigation and compensation claims, as well as unwanted staff turnover and damage to an organisation's reputation.

An organisation's policies and procedures should reflect the range of legislation to ensure that it complies with its legal obligations.

Here is a list of the key Commonwealth legislation and how the Acts impact a workforce.

Age

Age Discrimination Act 2004 **(Cth)**

This Act states that people must not be treated less favourably on the grounds of their age.

Disability

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 **(Cth)**

People with a disability must not be treated less fairly than people without a disability. All states and territories have established bodies to deal with disability discrimination issues under the legislation they administer.

Employment

Fair Work Act 2009 **(Cth)**

There must be no discrimination during recruitment, employment, the termination of employment and when negotiating Enterprise Agreements (subject to some exemptions).

Race, nationality and ethnicity

Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)

This Act underpins Australia's obligations under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. It is unlawful to discriminate against people on the basis of their race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin.

Sex and family status

Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)

This Act recognises the need to prohibit, as far as possible, discrimination against people on the grounds of sex, marital status, pregnancy or potential pregnancy, breastfeeding or family responsibilities.

Human rights

Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)

People of all backgrounds must be treated equally and have the same opportunities. Discrimination against people on the basis of their race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin is unlawful.

Gender

Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth)

This Act legislates to improve and promote equality for both women and men in the workplace in terms of age, gender, ethnicity and family care arrangements.

Privacy

Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)

This Act deems personal information (such as health, memberships, religion, political or sexual orientation) to be sensitive and only to be handled by authorised personnel.

Work health and safety

***Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (Cth)**

Workplaces must be free from discrimination, harassment and bullying. All states and territories have implemented harmonised WHS laws based on this Act, except Victoria and Western Australia, which continue to operate under their existing legislation.

Additional legislative information

The following table lists the Commonwealth, state and territory WHS Acts. To find out further information about discrimination, check the websites for the agencies listed.

State/ territory	WHS Act	Agency	More information is available at
Commonwealth	*Work Health and Safety Act 2011*	Fair Work Ombudsman	www.fairwork.gov.au
		Australian Human Rights Commission	www.humanrights.gov.au
ACT	*Work Health and Safety Act 2011*	ACT Human Rights Commission	www.hrc.act.gov.au
NSW	*Work Health and Safety Act 2011*	Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW	www.antidiscrimination.lawlink.nsw.gov.au
NT	*Work Health and Safety Act 2011*	Northern Territory Anti-Discrimination Commission	www.adc.nt.gov.au
Queensland	*Work Health and Safety Act 2011*	Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland	www.adcq.qld.gov.au
SA	*Work Health and Safety Act 2012*	Equal Opportunity Commission, Government of South Australia	www.eoc.sa.gov.au
Tasmania	*Work Health and Safety Act 2012*	Office of the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner, Government of Tasmania	www.antidiscrimination.tas.gov.au

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Victoria	*Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*	Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission	www.humanrights commission.vic.gov.au
WA	*Occupational Health and Safety Act 1984*	Equal Opportunity Commission, Government of Western Australia	www.eoc.wa.gov.au

Regulations

Legislation relating to anti-discrimination, equal opportunity, bullying or sexual harassment creates a broad legal framework, while the details for how the legislation applies are contained in accompanying regulations. These regulations have the same effect as the Act and must be read together with the Act for a complete picture of the law on that topic. Each piece of legislation specifies its complementary regulations.

Here are some examples of where legislation has created regulations.

Human rights

- The *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986* (Cth) defines discrimination.
- The Australian Human Rights Commission Regulations 1989 (Cth) list additional grounds that constitute discrimination under the Act.

Fair work

- The *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth) states that there must be no discrimination during recruitment and employment.
- The Fair Work Regulations 2009 (Cth) include terms and conditions of employment; rights and responsibilities of various parties in workplace relations; compliance and enforcement; and provisions to stop workers from being bullied at work.

Privacy

- The *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) deems personal information to be protected and only to be used by authorised personnel.
- The Privacy Regulation 2013 regulates the laws that protect privacy, such as the collecting, handling and storing of personal information.

Policies and procedures

Organisations are obligated to develop policies and procedures based on legislation relating to human rights, equal opportunity, harassment and discrimination, to guide management and employees in regard to diversity in the workplace. The policy must relate to all staff, whether they are permanent, full-time, part-time, casual, contractors or volunteers. While it is not a requirement for all organisations to have a specific diversity policy, it is implied under the law that all organisations must adhere to the principles of diversity and equity.

Under Commonwealth anti-discrimination law, an employer, regardless of the size of the organisation, may be held legally responsible for any discrimination or harassment that occurs in the workplace or in connection with a person's employment, unless it can be shown that all reasonable steps have been taken to reduce this liability. Therefore, to reduce this risk, an organisation should develop a management system that encourages diversity based on a comprehensive diversity policy that is reviewed on a regular basis.

Diversity policy

A diversity policy sets out the organisation's philosophy and objectives for managing diversity. It should be relevant to the specific workplace. It supports an organisation when managers, supervisors and team leaders hire and promote staff, allocate tasks, allocate overtime, provide information about workplace behaviour, and manage complaints about harassment and bullying.

The diversity policy should be well publicised and staff training should be provided to ensure that everyone understands and complies with the policy.

A diversity policy should include:

- the organisation's philosophy statement on diversity
- a statement on the need to treat everyone with respect and dignity
- a statement on the need to provide a safe and healthy workplace
- how to raise a complaint if the diversity policy is breached
- how breaches of the diversity policy are managed
- who is responsible for workplace diversity
- endorsement by the CEO, Board or manager responsible.

Example: diversity policy

Diversity policy

Westfield Business Solutions

Philosophy

We appreciate the value of a diverse workforce that demonstrates a range of factors: age, gender, race, cultural heritage, lifestyle, education, physical ability, appearance, language and other factors. We value the differences between people and the contributions that these differences make to our business.

Above all, we are committed to ensuring that all employees are treated with respect and dignity, and we endeavour to provide a workplace free from harassment, discrimination and bullying.

We believe that embracing workplace diversity is everyone's responsibility.

Managers' responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all managers to create an environment where:

- there is tolerance of difference
- appropriate behaviours are modelled
- the ability to contribute and to access opportunities is based on merit
- inappropriate attitudes and behaviours are confronted
- diversity complaints are responded to promptly
- any breaches of the diversity policy are dealt with promptly
- the safety and health of everyone is valued and protected.

Staff responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all staff to:

- treat other team members with respect and dignity
- attend training on topics, including diversity training
- raise any diversity concerns with their manager (or, if this is not appropriate, to their manager's manager)
- follow the organisation's grievance procedures when making a formal complaint.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the workplace discrimination and harassment policy.

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years.

For further information on this policy, contact your manager or human resources.

Diversity procedures

Procedures specify how an organisation intends to achieve the diversity policy's aims; they define the specific strategies, actions and step-by-step instructions necessary in order to carry out the tasks to implement the policy. It is the responsibility of team leaders and supervisors to ensure that diversity procedures are understood and are followed by their team and other members of the workforce.

Typical areas covered by diversity procedures
• Methods for addressing diversity in work plans; for example, ensuring that people's skills and abilities are utilised
• Strategies for promoting diversity, such as modelling appropriate behaviours and running regular publicity sessions
• Types of training in areas relevant to managing diversity, such as providing induction sessions and refresher courses
• Dealing with non-compliance, including mediation and appeal processes
• Steps for making or responding to a complaint, including a grievance procedure
• Appropriate people to contact for support or more information
• Recruitment and promotion are based on merit
• The need for continuous improvement

Practice task 3

Review your organisation's diversity policy or the example diversity policy from this section. Does this policy contain the elements that should be in a diversity policy? What information may be missing? Are the implications of legislation and organisational responsibilities clear?

1D | Identify opportunities and barriers to inclusive engagement

It is important for a team leader to understand the opportunities that can come from having a diverse workforce and to identify strategies that demonstrate the organisation's commitment to diversity and can be utilised within your team. At the same time, you should be aware of the barriers in your workplace that may prevent people from engaging in the workforce.

Your job is to actively meet the needs of different people by taking deliberate steps to create working environments where everyone feels respected and is able to achieve their full potential.

Opportunities for inclusive engagement

There are many opportunities that an organisation can take to foster diversity and to create an inclusive workplace. For example, you should respond promptly to situations where a team member does not comply with the organisation's diversity policy and procedures, explaining why the team member's behaviour is wrong and how the organisation promotes diversity. In some cases, an aggrieved team may take legal action or resign if the team leader does not take the opportunity to act positively.

A range of strategies to promote inclusive engagement can be implemented at an organisation-wide level.

Opportunities for inclusive engagement
Review the team's work practices and processes to ensure that they are consistent with the organisation's diversity philosophy.
Provide opportunities for staff to contribute to the diversity policy and provide regular feedback to employees about how diversity is working in the organisation.
Integrate the diverse workforce into workplace planning activities.
Discuss diversity and the need for people to get along harmoniously following a complaint.
Recruit and promote people on merit in line with the organisation's diversity philosophy.
In promotional material, use positive case studies where employees share their experiences.

Opportunities to engage the workforce

Be aware of every opportunity that arises to allow you to help all of your team members to engage in all activities.

Here are some specific initiatives that can be introduced to ensure inclusive engagement at both the organisational and the team levels. As you read the list, consider the options you or your organisation have already implemented and those that you believe may improve your team's ability to function collaboratively.

Opportunities for inclusion

Ability, aptitude or disability

- Make physical changes to the workspace; for example, improve disability access.
- Enlist the help of a hearing- or sight-impaired employee to make changes to layout or signage.
- Pair people with differing personalities to work together to provide different insights.

Age

- Provide flexible working practices, including part-time work and flexible hours.
- Provide pathways to retirement, such as reducing working hours.
- Encourage more-experienced workers to become part of mentoring programs to share their knowledge.
- Ensure that promotion and other career development opportunities remain available to mature-age workers.

Culture, ethnicity, nationality, race and religion

- Promote cultural awareness in the workplace by initiatives such as Harmony Day.
- Develop and work towards workforce targets or quotas; for example, for five per cent of the workforce to be Indigenous Australians.
- Implement an organisational dress code that respects people's choices to wear culturally appropriate clothing (subject to health and safety requirements).
- Allow staff to swap selected public holidays for alternate days off that are more relevant to them (industrial law permitting).

Gender

- Implement appropriate workplace policies that prevent harassment and discrimination.
- Develop and work towards workforce targets or quotas based on merit; for example, fifty per cent of senior leadership roles to be held by women.
- Implement targeted skill or career development programs to help to upskill selected staff.

Language

- Remove or reduce use of overly technical terms or jargon (or provide an explanation of these terms).
- Communicate via a number of methods, such as using verbal instruction and written instruction to convey the same message.
- Pair an English-speaking person with a team member who needs support with the English language.
- Communicate important information in languages appropriate to the workforce.

Family arrangements and carers' responsibilities

- Provide flexible working arrangements, including part-time work, flexible work times, working from home opportunities, and options to work longer hours on some days to 'time bank' or gain time-in-lieu.
- Note: strategies that promote access for some people may reduce access for others. It is good practice to develop a range of options that enable access for a range of people.

Sexual orientation

- Implement clear policies that promote respect and diversity.
- Implement clear promotion and career development policies that ensure equity of access.

Barriers that prevent engagement

While you need to grasp every opportunity to enhance the management of diversity within your organisation and your team, there may remain a number of barriers that impact workforce engagement. Characteristics or traits that can make it difficult to enter or become fully engaged in the workforce include gender, age, language skills, disability, race, sexual orientation and religion, and lack of flexible working arrangements for those with carer's responsibilities.

Specific barriers that prevent engagement
• Problems are not taken seriously and little support is provided in regard to incidents of harassment or anti-discrimination.
• There is no wheelchair access or accommodation for guide dogs.
• Reasonable adjustments are not made to timelines for people with a disability to complete their work.
• English is the only language used in the workplace.
• Mature-age people are not considered for promotion.
• Some people are suspicious of, or prejudiced against, people who wear traditional clothes or follow different religions or customs to their own.
• People do not wish to report an incident of bullying as they believe that they may be blamed for the situation.
• People's other commitments are not considered relevant when planning work schedules.

Strategies to remove barriers to workforce engagement

You need to find ways to reduce or eliminate the impact of any barriers to engagement and to contribute to a more inclusive workplace. This may be more difficult if the culture of the organisation does little to promote diversity and if there is no positive support from senior management to champion diversity initiatives.

It is also important that you are aware of your own attitudes and beliefs toward people different to you. Whether conscious or unconscious, the attitudes and assumptions that underpin and influence our own behaviour can have a strong effect on people.

As a team leader, you are also a role model for your team and for other colleagues. Use your verbal and written communication, language and behaviour to encourage diversity and to support inclusion as a way of reducing barriers to diversity.

Steps to reduce or remove barriers
• Ensure that your staff are educated and trained about the organisation's diversity policy.
• Reinforce acceptable workplace conduct at meetings and performance reviews.
• Always use plain English. Avoid the use of Australian colloquialisms that some people may not understand and the use of technical language or industry jargon.
• Translate information into language that everyone understands. Include international symbols and graphics to aid understanding.
• Provide training in cultural competence.
• Give positive feedback to team members when they collaborate successfully or overcome a diversity issue.
• Ensure that your work practices are consistent with the organisation's diversity policy and procedures.

Example: identify opportunities and barriers to inclusive engagement

Edmund, a team leader, has recently had a new team member, Lindsay, join the team. Lindsay has impaired hearing. Edmund wants to include Lindsay in all team activities, so he has devised the following strategies to help reduce the communication barriers:

• Asking Lindsay what would assist him in his work

• Discussing the situation with all team members and enlisting everyone's support

• Holding team meetings in quiet places to reduce background noise

• Following up important information discussed in team meetings in writing (which also serves as a good reminder of what was discussed for all participants)

• Investigating what technology can be used to assist Lindsay in his role

Lindsay's feedback lets Edmund know that he appreciates being asked what would help him and he already has some ideas, including a new voice-to-text software program that he has been investigating.

Practice task 4

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

Nova, an Indigenous female apprentice chef, walks up to a group of three Caucasian male colleagues. One of them, Tony, is overtly hostile to her, saying that because she has received an apprenticeship, one of his mates was prevented from getting one. He says, 'It's unfair that you get treated better than everybody else, just because you're a minority.' Nova protests that she just wants to be treated like everyone else, but Tony continues to harass her, saying, 'Women don't make good chefs. You're going to have to prove yourself to me.' None of the other men in the group say anything.

1. Why might Tony have the perception that Nova is being treated better than everybody else?

2. Why do you think no-one else said anything after Tony spoke to Nova?

3. If this was happening in your team, would you intervene? If so, how?

Summary

1. Workplace diversity recognises that individuals have different backgrounds, experiences, perspectives and characteristics that set them apart from others in the workplace. Managing diversity successfully means creating an environment that values and utilises these differences.

2. Workforce diversity benefits an organisation and its employees through having a range of skills and abilities to draw on, the ability to generate new ideas, community support and increased understanding of others.

3. There is a range of laws and regulations in Australia that makes some conduct in the workplace illegal.

4. A diversity policy sets out an organisation's philosophy and objectives for managing diversity. Procedures specify how the organisation intends to achieve the policy's aims.

5. Opportunities to foster diversity and to create an inclusive workplace at an organisation-wide level include education and training; policies and procedures on diversity, anti-discrimination and harassment; encouragement of staff to contribute to the diversity policy and procedures; and recruitment and selection processes that support the organisation's diversity philosophy.

6. Understand what barriers may hinder diversity. Part of your role as a successful team leader is identifying these barriers and finding ways to reduce or eliminate their effects, making for a more inclusive workplace.

7. To further increase opportunities for inclusion, specific initiatives can be used to reduce barriers for specific diversity categories; for example, improvement of disability access for employees with disabilities.

Learning checkpoint 1
Identify the dimensions of workforce diversity

This learning checkpoint allows you to review your skills and knowledge in identifying the dimensions of workforce diversity.

Part A

1. Explain in one paragraph (or at least three dot-points) why it is important for a team leader to understand the nature of diversity and the range of diversity present in their workforce.

2. Identify three categories of diversity and explain how each one can benefit an organisation.

3. List five actions that you as a team leader can take to reduce or remove barriers to diversity in your workplace.

4. The following is a list of laws and regulations in Australia that make some conduct in the workplace illegal:

   • *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth)

   • *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Cth)

   • *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth)

   • *Age Discrimination Act 2004* (Cth)

   • *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth)

   Read the following description of these anti-discrimination Acts and write the correct name of the Act next to the description.

Description	Act
This Act recognises the need to prohibit, as far as possible, discrimination against people on the grounds of sex, marital status, pregnancy or potential pregnancy, breastfeeding or family responsibilities.	
This Act states that people must not be treated less favourably on the grounds of their age.	
This Act prohibits discrimination during employment, the termination of employment and when negotiating enterprise agreements (subject to some exemptions).	
This Act underpins Australia's obligations under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. Its major objectives are to promote equality before the law for all people and to make discrimination against people on the basis of their race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin unlawful.	
Discrimination occurs when people with a disability are treated less fairly than people without a disability. All states and territories have established bodies to deal with disability discrimination issues under the legislation they administer.	

Part B

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

Sophie is a mature-age woman who has recently started a new career in the real estate industry. One day she walks into the client meeting area to see a group of three male colleagues. One of them, David, is overtly hostile to her, saying that because she received a traineeship, one of his mate's sons missed out. He says, 'It's unfair that you get treated better than everybody else, just because you're a woman. And to make it worse, I can't believe they put on an old trainee, what a waste of time...' Sophie responds by saying that she is excited by this new career direction and that she just wants to be treated like anyone else. David continues to harass her, saying, 'You're too old to make it in this industry and women don't make good real estate agents. You're going to have to prove yourself to me.'

The Sales team leader, Scott, intervenes and says to David, 'I know you're new here, David, and you may not know about our diversity policy, but those comments are not acceptable. Sophie doesn't answer to you.' Scott adds, 'You need to understand that our clients are from a range of backgrounds and ages. I'm sure Sophie will treat our clients well and as long she can do her job, it doesn't matter about her age or gender, or anything else for that matter.'

Turning to Sophie, Scott says, 'Sophie, I'm sorry those things were said to you. We are confident in your ability to do this job and think you'll bring a lot of experience and contacts to this role. This company values and respects diversity because it's the right thing to do and because we know it makes business sense.'

1. Was Scott's behaviour towards both David and Sophie appropriate? Give at least two reasons to justify your response.

2. If you were the team leader in this example, explain in a paragraph what you would have done.

3. To ensure that this type of incident does not happen again, list at least three things that Scott can do.

4. Describe some possible consequences of David's remarks if Scott had done nothing, by listing at least one action that Sophie, David, their colleagues and their clients might have taken and the potential consequences of these actions for the organisation.

Part C

1. Conduct an audit or survey of your team (or your organisation as a whole if preferred) to identify the level of diversity in the workforce. Include the audit questions in your submission.
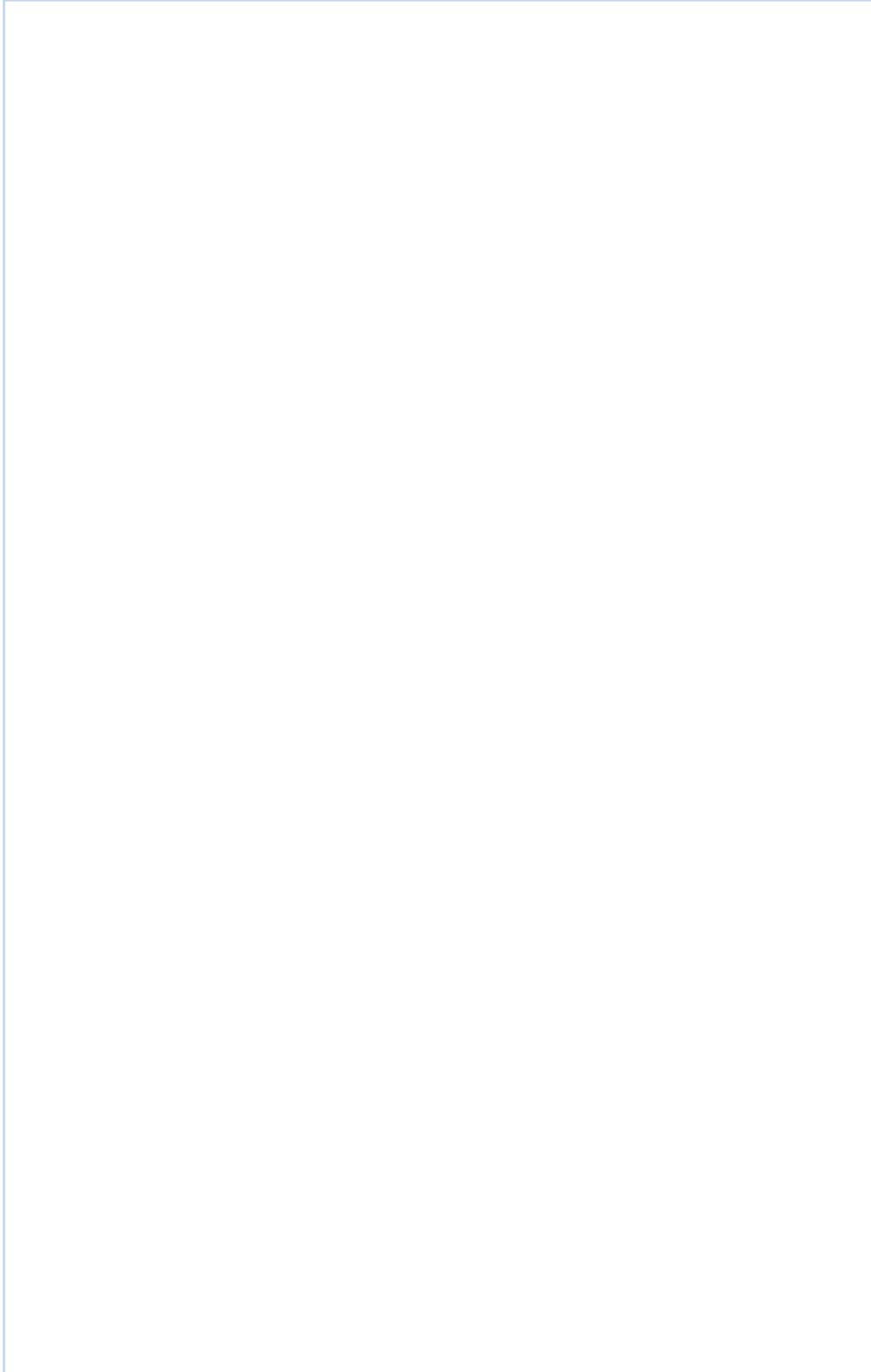
Part C

2. Analyse the results of the audit you conducted by qualifying and quantifying the sources of diversity. Use your workplace format or a table similar to the following.

Diversity survey Westfields Business Solutions		
Characteristic	**Diversity in action in the workplace**	**Analysis**

3. Prepare a diversity report on the diversity survey you conducted and present it to the appropriate personnel; for example, as a written report or an electronic presentation. Include tables, bar graphs, pie charts or other relevant formats to enhance the presentation and to improve understanding of the level of diversity. Include the survey and questions you asked.
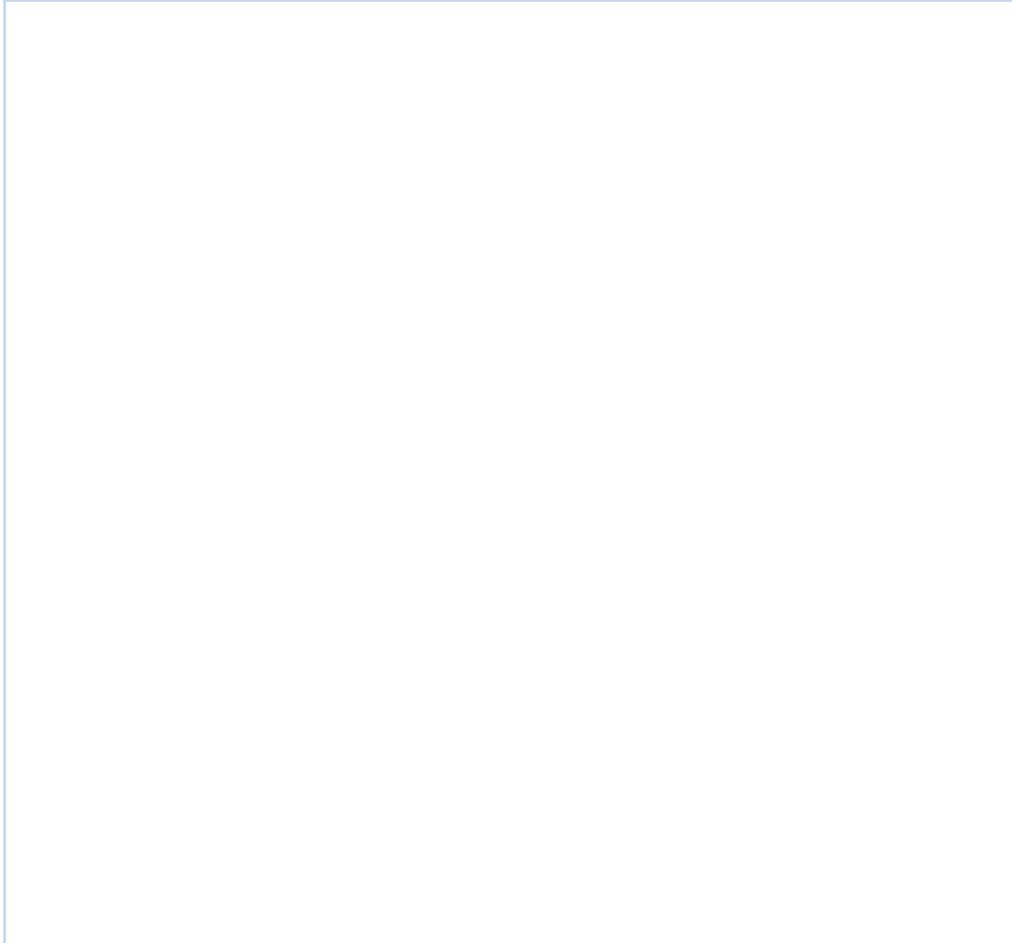
4. Locate the diversity policy of your organisation or any other Australian business. Select two aspects of the policy and write a paragraph for each one about how the organisation puts the policy into action.
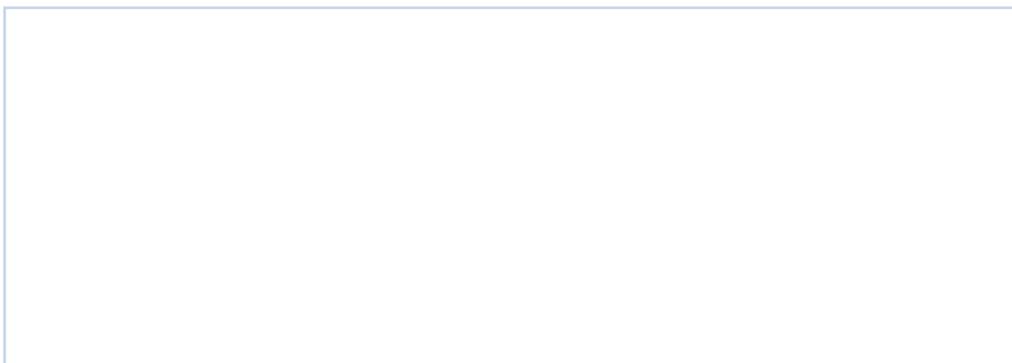
Topic 2
Factor diversity into team plans and operations

Developing work plans is a key part of a team leader's duties. As well as ensuring that work plans are compliant with relevant legislation, policies and procedures, you need to consider how you will incorporate workplace diversity to ensure that you utilise the various skills, knowledge and abilities within your team. Consider how you can encourage team members to offer ideas for improving work plans. After a review of work plans, policies, processes and procedures, these documents may need to be adjusted to incorporate your team's feedback. Alternatively, you may need to design new processes to maximise the benefits of diversity.

In this topic you will learn how to:

2A   Develop, review and adjust work plans and operations in line with legislation, policies and procedures

2B   Design processes to incorporate and maximise the benefits of diversity

2A Develop, review and adjust work plans and operations in line with legislation, policies and procedures

As a team leader, it is important that you develop effective work plans that take into account the diversity of your team. Both your team and your organisation can take advantage of the different qualities, skills, experience, abilities and aptitudes that team members bring to the workplace.

Strive to create a working environment that values the contributions of all workers and ensure that a person, regardless of their age, gender or ability, is suited for their tasks and can carry them out safely. A work plan that addresses and uses the skills, experience and characteristics of team members in the best possible ways benefits the team as a whole, as team members are likely to feel valued, they have job satisfaction and they are allowed to grow within their roles. Team members work competently because they are using their own specific skills, experience and background knowledge.

Develop work plans that address the diversity of the workforce

A work plan identifies the aims, goals, targets or objectives of the team's work and the tasks that the team must complete to achieve these goals. This provides a sense of direction and purpose as to how and why the work aligns with the other goals and activities of the organisation's operations and what is expected of the team.

A team is more effective and efficient and people work more competently and collaboratively if its work plan identifies and allocates tasks to people with the specific skills, knowledge and experience to carry them out.

Workforce planning is about having the right people with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time.

The right people

Having the right people means that:
- recruiting, promoting and allocating tasks has been done in an equitable way
- people have not been overlooked because of a personal trait or characteristic such as race, gender or age.

The right skills

- Having the right skills refers to ensuring that decisions are based on a person's abilities or skills appropriate to the role and based on suitability for the role, not on someone's personal traits or characteristics.
- Remember that having a diverse workforce often means that you have a broader range of skills within your team.

The right place

- Being in the right place means that you allocate the appropriately skilled person to the appropriate role within your team and ensure that task allocation is open and equitable.
- You may be able to modify some elements of the role so it becomes accessible for a broader range of team members, such as the innovative application of technology for those with physical disabilities.

The right time

- Being at the right time means that you have suitable numbers of staff available to meet deadlines or resourcing requirements.
- If you are required to roster staff for shifts, allocate them in a way that does not disadvantage someone because of a specific diversity characteristic, such as family or carer's responsibilities, that make these allocations difficult to accommodate.

Consider people's skills and knowledge

Consider a person's skills and knowledge when allocating tasks so that you incorporate the positive contributions of a diverse workforce into your work plans.

Examples of using the diversity of your workforce
• A person's ability to write may be used for developing reports, making submissions, preparing correspondence or editing other people's work • People with technology skills may be used to format reports, develop promotional material or troubleshoot computer problems. • Mathematical ability can be harnessed for budgets and analysis. • Language skills can be used to help customers who speak a language other than English or in translating organisational information. • Communication skills can be valuable for interviewing, making presentations and motivating other team members. • Team members with experience and understanding in cultures and traditions of countries other than Australia can contribute to ideas for improving products, marketing and communication.

Consider people's characteristics

When identifying opportunities to use diversity, acknowledge the features of the person's character that make them valuable to the organisation and the team.

Think of the characteristics that are the basis for differences between people. What challenges have people had to overcome to accept their own differences or to have their differences accepted by others? What skills or qualities have been gained through overcoming these challenges and experiences that can contribute to a more effective workplace? Often the very fact of the person's difference from others shows you how to assess their strengths.

Ask yourself which people:

- make good planners, communicators, decision-makers and problem-solvers

- are creative in their problem-solving

- can counsel and mediate between employees

- are persistent and determined in getting the job done

- strive to succeed against all odds.

Allocate tasks

Once you know what your team's objectives are, you need to analyse them to identify and document what tasks are required to achieve the objectives, to determine the skills needed to achieve them, and to recognise opportunities where the team can use its members' individual differences. Tasks are then divided up and allocated to individual team members depending on their talents, skills, experience and expertise. Doing this maximises the effectiveness of the team by ensuring that team members are allocated the tasks best suited to their skills and experience and so using the team's diversity to advantage.

For example:

• Ensure that older workers have meaningful components within their role and are not just allocated tasks that no-one else wants to do.

• Encourage younger team members by providing them with challenging work and offering coaching and mentoring to increase their skills.

Incorporate contributions from the team

When creating or revising work plans, it is important to seek feedback from team members. They are the ones who are carrying out the tasks in the plan and so they have thorough knowledge of how a task is currently being done, and they may also have suggestions for improvement.

Show interest in their input and ask questions as appropriate. If you have developed an environment in which team members feel comfortable and know that their ideas will be acknowledged and acted on where appropriate, you will regularly receive constructive suggestions for refining and improving the work plan.

People may prefer different communication methods, so make sure that you communicate with your team and invite their feedback in a variety of ways.

Communication methods
• Regular team meetings
• Staff surveys
• One-on-one meetings or interviews
• Suggestion boxes or suggestion email inboxes
• An open-door policy where you are always accessible to staff for them to discuss any concerns or share ideas
• Informal meetings to discuss the expertise that people have and to encourage them to share their knowledge, culture and traditions

Examples of contributions from team members

Team members may make a number of suggestions. List these and discuss their feasibility and how you can incorporate them into future work plans.

Some suggestions include the following:

- Use a staff member's language (other than English) to help to translate information into languages used by customers.

- Express tasks more clearly by using plain English and unambiguous statements.

- Allocate tasks more suited to a person's abilities and appoint a mentor to assist.

- Extend time lines for people who may need this of their abilities.

- Improve access to the workplace for those with mobility limitations.

- Take account of particular religious or cultural days of significance when creating work plans.

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Review work plans

Work plans should be reviewed on a regular basis as part of a continuous improvement cycle to ensure that they continue to match the organisation's objectives. As work is successfully completed, new tasks are added and new responsibilities, budgets and time lines are included. Staff must be informed or trained for these changes.

A team member's circumstances may change and the work plan may need to be adjusted. For example, a team member now asks for flexible hours, so you need to review the tasks to see whether deadlines can be amended to accommodate this request and either agree to the change or swap tasks in consultation with another team member.

Work plans should also be reviewed to make sure that they continue to comply with legislative obligations and the organisation's workplace policies and procedures.

Adjust plans and operations to ensure that they comply with legislation

All aspects of work plans need to comply with relevant legislation. It may be that after a review, you find that some work plans do not reflect a compliant approach. If this occurs, these plans should be modified accordingly as soon as practicable. Prompt action is important, because noncompliance with workplace laws can cause problems and can leave an organisation open to fines and prosecutions.

Be familiar with legislation that relates to diversity.

Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)

The *Fair Work Act 2009* gives employees the right to request flexible arrangements and to decline a request to work overtime when carer's responsibilities are involved. When preparing the work plan, consider each team member's situation and make sure that tasks are allocated fairly. In some situations it is permitted for a recruitment advertisement to ask for a person with a specific physical requirement in order to perform required tasks.

Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth)

The *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (Cth) and various state-based legislation require workers to wear personal protective clothing and to use manual-handling aids as they carry out their tasks. When allocating tasks, make sure these aspects are included in task information.

Anti-discrimination Acts

Anti-discrimination Acts identify the need to be inclusive in recruitment, promotion and task allocation to ensure that workers are not discriminated against because of their age, gender, sexual preference, marital status or abilities. Legislation provides for specific circumstances where discrimination is allowed due to the nature of the role, such as advertising for a female-only social worker for a domestic violence shelter.

Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth)

The aim of the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012* (Cth) is to improve gender equality. It does not mean that a certain number of women must be employed or that women must be given jobs over more skilled or better qualified men, but rather encourages equality of opportunity for women in the workplace and equal remuneration between women and men for the same role. A recruitment and promotion process that selects the best candidate based on merit is important to comply with these requirements.

Adjust plans and operations to ensure that they comply with policies, procedures and processes

All aspects of work plans need to comply with your workplace's policies, processes and procedures. Be familiar with your organisation's discrimination policies that describe workplace rules and the processes and procedures for implementation, such as accommodating people because of their religious beliefs or ensuring that everyone's skills are fully utilised. In the event that a protocol is not followed, adjust plans to ensure that this does not happen again.

Here are some areas that you may need to check to ensure that you are complying with the organisation's policies and procedures when preparing a work plan.

Terms

Terms in policies and procedures

Terms used in the work plan must be inclusive and not discriminatory. People should be referred to as 'they' or 'their' rather than 'he' or 'she'.

Language

Language in policies and procedures

Instructions for an operation or procedure must be clear and understandable by everyone. Using plain English is recommended for all staff communications.

Disability

Disability in policies and procedures

Disability must not be a factor in task allocation if a team member's disability does not affect the requirements of the task or their ability to competently perform the task.

Example: factor diversity into work plans

Vincent and Edmund, two team leaders, are talking in the lunchroom about their respective teams. The topic of factoring diversity into a work plan comes up.

Vincent says, 'I understand that diversity is important, but it seems like some groups get special treatment over others or I have to make special allowances for some people'.

Edmund responds, saying, 'Sometimes people need to be treated differently to provide them with the same opportunities and that way everyone gets an equal opportunity to contribute to the organisation'.

Edmund goes on to explain one example of how he recently worked with an employee, Sam, to allow him to change his start and finish times so that he could drop his children off at school in the mornings. He explains, 'I'm happy because the work still gets done on time and Sam's happy because he can look after his responsibilities at home as well as here'.

Practice task 5

In one or two paragraphs, describe the role of a work plan and what responsibilities a team leader has when preparing one.

2B | Design processes to incorporate and maximise the benefits of diversity

A team leader or supervisor can make a positive contribution to their organisation by making sure that the processes they use to implement the work plans incorporate all the benefits of their diverse team. In this way they utilise colleagues' various skills, knowledge and backgrounds to create an effective and efficient team.

Processes address who is accountable for a specific task (usually a team or department, rather than an individual team member), what major functions are performed within that task and when action is required. When writing a process, it is important to ensure that it complies with legislation and workplace policies, it is written clearly and concisely so it is easily understood, and it uses inclusive language. Technical language may be retained if necessary, but industry jargon and Australian colloquialisms should be removed.

Examples of processes that promote diversity

There are a number of processes that can incorporate and maximise a team's diversity.

Initially, make sure that staff induction sessions discuss the issue of diversity and promote the organisation's policy and its benefits.

Here are some more examples of how a team leader can use specific processes to promote the positive aspects of diversity and ensure that no-one is disadvantaged.

Meetings

- Have regular brainstorming sessions for the team to use their diversity to generate innovative ideas to improve competitiveness within their market.
- Schedule meeting procedures so no-one is disadvantaged by not being able to attend because of flexible working arrangements.
- Ensure that decision-making committees include people of diverse age, gender, experience and abilities.

Using skills

- Incorporate mentoring into professional development processes so that team members can teach a skill in which they are proficient to other team members.
- Encourage team members to use their experience and expertise to contribute to articles on diversity in the organisation's newsletter.

Encouraging cultural competence

- Design information dissemination processes to ensure that important notices are translated into community languages for display on noticeboards.
- Encourage processes to arrange for guest speakers from local community groups to visit to discuss their cultures and traditions.
- Allow team members to dress according to their traditions as long as this does not breach safety laws or the organisation's dress/uniform code.

Celebrating

- Allow time to celebrate the contributions made by everyone to the team.
- Celebrate various religious and traditional customs.

Follow recruitment processes

Recruitment processes are a key strategy for incorporating and maximising the benefits of diversity.

An organisation may make a commitment to encourage a diversity of applicants by advertising in various formats, including local community languages. Accepting applications by mail or in person, as well as online, helps to mitigate the limitations imposed by accepting applications via the website only and assists people who struggle with computer use because of disability, language or skills gaps.

Recruitment processes may also encourage applications from older people, women with specific experience and expertise, or people with backgrounds that align with the local community.

Make sure that recruitment processes incorporate inclusive language in job advertisements and in interview questions. Always ask yourself whether someone's age or gender is something that needs to be known.

Legislation and recruitment processes

Sometimes, in specific circumstances, recruitment processes are allowed by legislation to discriminate on selected grounds where there is an inherent requirement of the role that the successful applicant does or does not have certain characteristics.

The use of discrimination on selected grounds should always be used with caution and must be because there are specific requirements of the role that require it. Before making any decisions that exclude certain categories of people, it is best to conduct your own research or to speak to an adviser such as an employer association or government agency.

Here are some examples of selected grounds for discrimination.

Specific tasks

A role may require a specific type of person to perform that role, such as a person capable of lifting extremely heavy loads or being required to work away from home for lengthy periods.

Young employees

An employer is able to hire younger, less experienced staff on junior wage rates if the employee is 21 years of age or younger. This is permitted as it is seen as a good way for young people to get workplace experience, but acknowledges that employers need to spend more time and resources training a young person because of their lack of experience.

Working with children

People who work with children must not have criminal convictions; people who hold certain licences, such as in financial services, must not have fraud convictions.

Work rights

To work in Australia, prospective employees need to have either work rights, by way of citizenship, permanent residency or working visas, or an employer to sponsor them to work here. If an employer is not willing or not able to sponsor people for a role, then requiring a candidate to have work rights is a valid selection criterion.

Example: incorporate and maximise the benefits of diversity

Hot Stuff is a small retail business specialising in herbs and spices from around the world. The owner, Andrew, recently returned from South Africa where he enjoyed trying many new spice combinations and a local food, biltong. He wants to add some South African products to his shop and reads a self-help book on improving your small business; two suggestions are to capitalise on the strengths and abilities of existing team members when planning new projects and to have a website for online ordering. Andrew has a team of 15 employees and gives some thought to their skills, then creates a list of tasks and a work plan. He is excited by this new project and how his team's mix of skills and knowledge can be applied to it.

Market research

Will this new line of products be popular? Poppy is in her final year studying marketing. Andrew assigns her the role of undertaking some market research with existing clients and new ones.

Target market

South Africans who have immigrated to Australia are a possible market. Ash's parents are South African and he can speak and write Afrikaans. Andrew asks Ash to write promotional material about the new product line in Afrikaans and also to speak to South Africans he knows about these products.

Branding

Ginger, who does the bookkeeping and has a hearing impairment, has a great eye for graphics and visuals. Her skills are ideal for designing the new packaging labels and branding for the website.

Online ordering/ social media

Although Todd is quite introverted, Andrew knows he is talented at technology-related tasks and social media. He asks Todd to design the website's online checkout and update Hot Stuff's Facebook page.

Practice task 6

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

Adam has a new project vacancy coming up that involves speaking with a range of people to identify their needs and providing feedback to the organisation. He considers the skills and experiences of each of his team members and recognises that Mona has the most relevant skills. The project requires a lot of late conference calls, but Mona has a young family. As she does not usually stay back for work functions, Adam has always assumed that Mona is not interested in progressing her career or working late. However, Mona feels that she is always being overlooked for career development and is considering looking for work elsewhere.

Adam recalls some diversity training that was run recently for team leaders. He remembers that making these kinds of assumptions without speaking with the person to get a better understanding of their situation means that he, the team and the organisation might be missing out on the skills a person can bring to their role. Adam realises that he should ask Mona if she is interested in the position, especially as her special expertise is in consulting – after all, she might be happy to take these conference calls from home, which he is happy for her to do.

Adam schedules a meeting to discuss this project with Mona. Mona is happy that she has been asked about this opportunity and readily agrees to take the calls from home. She feels that her time management skills mean that this won't be a problem for her. She is also excited that she may get to use her language skills on this project.

1. What were the assumptions that Adam made about Mona's situation?

2. How was the work plan reorganised to accommodate Mona's personal circumstances?

3. What are the benefits that Mona can contribute in this role?

Summary

1. When allocating who is to be responsible for each task in a work plan, consider the talents, skills, experience and expertise of your team, and maximise the benefits of this diversity.

2. All aspects of work plans need to comply with relevant legislation and should also comply with your workplace's policies, processes and procedures.

3. As a team leader, it is your responsibility to factor diversity into a work plan, either when you are creating it or when you are making adjustments to an existing work plan.

4. When your team's work plans incorporate the benefits of diversity, you are creating a more effective and efficient team, which benefits you, the team and the organisation.

5. When creating or revising work plans, it is important to seek feedback from the team. Team members have thorough knowledge of how the task is currently being done and may have ideas for improving processes.

6. It is important to remember that different people prefer different communication methods, so it is vital that you communicate with your team and invite their feedback to be submitted in a variety of ways.

7. Ensure that there are processes in place to encourage workforce diversity (such as recruitment processes) and processes that maximise your work team's diversity (such as using a person's skills to mentor other team members).

Learning checkpoint 2
Factor diversity into team plans and operations

This learning checkpoint allows you to review your skills and knowledge in factoring diversity into team plans and operations.

Part A

1. Use at least four dot-points to list the processes that a team leader could follow (once the objectives for their team have been identified) to develop an effective work plan that incorporates the team's diversity.

2. In one paragraph, explain the importance of developing a work plan that uses the team's specific skills, experience and characteristics, and maximises the benefits that this diversity brings. To illustrate your response, provide an example of a work plan that shows how the skills, backgrounds and capabilities of team members have been used.

3. Provide two examples of how a work plan can be adjusted to accommodate a diverse workforce.

4. When developing or revising work plans it is important to seek feedback from the team. List five ways to encourage feedback from your team members, remembering that different people prefer different communication styles.

Part B

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

Sarah, the owner of Something's Brewing cafe, sees the following job advertisement:

> **Position vacant – kitchen hand @ Mean Beanz**
>
> We are looking for a hard-working kitchen hand. To get this job, you must:
>
> • be young and energetic
> • be able to lift heavy boxes (males preferred)
> • be prepared to work all hours
> • speak English – no foreigners.
>
> To apply, drop your resume into Mean Beanz cafe, 100 Main Street.

Sarah believes the advertisement is discriminatory and breaches legislation, so she decides to discuss this with her team and ask them how to do it better. She wants to utilise the skills of her team members; two are excellent writers and others have had poor recruitment experiences. Sarah hopes that they will bring their experience and expertise to improving recruitment processes at Something's Brewing and building a diverse team.

The team members raise the following suggestions:

• Review the cafe's policies, processes and procedures to make sure they are diversity-friendly.
• Remove any discriminatory aspects of job advertisements and use
• inclusive language to encourage a diversity of applicants.
• Ensure that the reason for a specific ability relates to the requirements of the role, not the person.

Sarah and her team create a template job ad that can be used in the future and incorporates this feedback. Here is the revised job advertisement.

continued …

... continued

Position vacant – kitchen hand @ Something's Brewing

Passionate about food, hard-working and reliable? We want to hear from you!

Successful applicants will be:

- energetic and enthusiastic
- able to lift heavy boxes (loads up to 20 kg)
- available to work on weekends and weeknights
- fluent in spoken English and, at a minimum, have a working visa.

All suitably qualified applicants are welcome to apply.

To apply, drop your resume into Something's Brewing cafe, 200 Main Street.

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1. List the areas of the Mean Beanz job ad that you think are inappropriate or unlawful and explain why.

2. Why did Sarah ask her team members for their feedback when reviewing this work process?

3. If the Something's Brewing team's suggestions are incorporated into Sarah's work plan for her team, how do these help to maximise the benefits of diversity?

Topic 3
Engage with a diverse workforce

Team leaders have a responsibility to communicate with their teams and with others in the organisation in ways that are appropriate and effective in a diverse working environment. They need to understand different communication style preferences and barriers to effective communication, as well as the behaviours and language to use to encourage diversity. Recognising your own biases and prejudices and being able to interact comfortably with people of different cultures are all aspects of communication that need to be addressed.

In this topic you will learn how to:

3A   Apply inclusive communication, language and behaviours

3B   Ensure cultural competence

3C   Incorporate and apply diversity tools and techniques to operations

3A | Apply inclusive communication, language and behaviours

Team leaders have a responsibility to understand the importance of communicating with their teams and with others in the organisation in ways that are appropriate and effective in a diverse working environment. Analysing any barriers to effective communication and using strategies to remove or reduce these barriers is an important element of inclusive communication. Your team looks to you as a guide to appropriate conduct in the workplace, so it is important that you consistently demonstrate appropriate behaviours and language use.

Communicate appropriately

To be successful in your role, you need to be able to communicate well. Communication involves getting your message across to your audience and having them understand it.

Everyone has a preferred way of giving and receiving information. If a message is not understood, this may be due to different communication styles being used by the 'sender' and 'receiver', rather than a right or wrong way of communicating. Try a different communication method to increase understanding, rather than just repeating what you have already tried.

One way of categorising communication styles is by the senses that we use to process the information. Some people send or receive information better by seeing it (visual), hearing it (auditory) or demonstrating it (kinaesthetic). As a team leader, using different communication styles both encourages inclusion and increases your chances of being understood. Be aware of your team members' communication preferences.

Visual

Visual communicator

This is a person who prefers a visual approach and focuses on what is seen, such as documents and diagrams, facial expressions and body language. Good communication techniques include electronic presentations, watching a demonstration, printed handouts, speaking face to face or using video-call/Skype technology.

Auditory

Auditory communicator

This is a person who prefers an auditory approach and focuses on what is heard, such as spoken words, sounds and noises. Instructions are best delivered by verbal means such as asking someone to do something, training, telephone calls, podcasts etc.

Kinaesthetic

Kinaesthetic communicator

This is a person who prefers a kinaesthetic approach and focuses on what is felt or experienced, so they prefer active participation and being involved.

Use inclusive communication

Always consider the diversity of the workplace when communicating. Use your interpersonal skills to develop professional rapport. Present information in different ways to suit people's language abilities and communication styles, and adapt your interactions to accommodate the ways that other people like to work. Speak and write clearly using plain English and then confirm that everyone has understood your message. Always allow time for people to ask questions.

Some ways to use inclusive communication:

- If someone's English language skills are low or they have a physical or mental impairment, include demonstrations in your explanations, use symbols or signs, translate documents into other languages and/or engage an interpreter.

- Assist team members who use augmentative and adaptive communication aids (such as electronic devices with speech output, signing or a text telephone) to ensure that they are always included in discussions and decision-making.

- Ensure that your body language matches your message. If your body language does not reflect what is being said, this can create confusion; for example, smiling when giving negative news.

- Respect people's traditions, such as bowing when greeting, having personal space between people when speaking and addressing people correctly, such as by their title, first or last name.

- Translate workplace policies and procedures into other languages and check that workplace signs use universally understood symbols.

Use appropriate language

Always use language in line with the diversity context. Be a positive role model in using appropriate language and correct any team member who uses unsuitable terms or disparaging expressions.

It is important to note that language and society both change continually, so terms deemed acceptable at one time may no longer be acceptable, either because the language itself has changed or because the communities referred to have objected to some terms used to describe them. Working with diversity means that you have a responsibility to refer to people with respect and consideration, and this means using terms that are acceptable to them. For example, the best general reference for Indigenous Australians is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Characteristics of appropriate language
Clear and straightforward with minimal use of technical terms, jargon or acronyms, or, if these are necessary, then they are clearly explained
Non-discriminatory; instead of using 'him' or 'her', use 'they'
Free of sexist language and stereotyping such as 'He's behaving like an old woman'; avoid terms that are demeaning, such as referring to women as 'love' or 'dear'
Free of sexist terms; for example, avoid 'tradesmen' and 'chairman', using 'tradesperson' and 'chairperson' instead
Inclusive and respectful of the audience; do not use derogatory words such as 'loony bin'; use terms such as 'people with a disability' rather than 'disabled people'

Behave appropriately

Modelling by team leaders is a powerful way to promote diversity in the workplace. If a team leader routinely tells jokes that are offensive to certain groups (such as women, people born overseas, members of religious groups or people with disabilities), the message that staff receive is that the organisation does not actively support a diverse workplace. On the other hand, team leaders can actively promote diversity by modelling appropriate behaviours such as basing decisions on ability rather than characteristics like age and gender, never telling offensive jokes and acting promptly whenever the diversity policy is breached.

Tips for modelling inclusive behaviour:

- Always try to be inclusive of everyone in your workplace and allow people to contribute in the best way they know how.

- If you know that a newcomer is having trouble fitting in, let them know they are valued and that the team is interested in finding out about them.

- Find opportunities to remind all team members of the benefits of diversity and the organisation's approach to diversity.

Respond to concerns

An important responsibility of a team leader is to encourage team members to raise concerns if they feel they (or anyone else) have been treated in a way that goes against the organisation's approach to diversity or anti-discrimination laws, rather than ignoring any problems. Provide an environment in which team members are comfortable approaching you to discuss issues relating to diversity. Ignoring problems may result in issues not being reported to you, team members being dissatisfied and not feeling valued, or even a team member resigning or taking legal action.

Recognise your own biases and assumptions

We all have our own way of viewing the world and this is often built on our own life experiences, culture, values and beliefs. It is likely that at various times, the way you perceive something is very different to the way someone else does. Preconceived ideas can come from our own biases and prejudices, from stereotypes or from thinking that one culture is better than another. Your job is to recognise and understand the characteristics that make people different from each other, and to be able to respond effectively and sensitively to issues that arise. You need to acknowledge that, while differences exist, no-one deserves less courtesy, respect or consideration because of these differences.

Understand assumptions

Your role as a team leader is to make decisions based on merit and to avoid making judgments based on preconceived ideas and assumptions about others. To do this, approach people in a way that respects their experience, work style, culture and abilities, and avoid the following.

Stereotyping

- Definition:

  Stereotyping is when you group people together based on certain characteristics and make a judgment (whether positive or negative) about them without knowing them.

- Example:

  Racial or cultural remarks, sexual remarks and gender remarks; for instance, all Indigenous Australians are good at sport or all Asians love cooking. While it may be our experience that these statements are true for one person, labelling everyone from that particular group in the same way is not appropriate.

- Action:

  Avoid broad generalisations and focus on the qualities and value of each individual. Every group of people and every individual is different.

Ethnocentrism

- Definition:

  Ethnocentrism is the belief that one culture is superior to another.

- Example:

  We often think that our own culture is better than someone else's. This type of belief has no place within the workplace.

- Action:

  Be culturally aware and knowledgeable about other cultures and engage positively with colleagues and customers from all backgrounds, regardless of personal beliefs.

Prejudice

- Definition:

  Prejudice is a negative preconception or belief that we hold about a person, action or situation.

- Example:

  People may dislike or feel uncomfortable with certain people because of the way they dress, look or talk, or their age, gender or ethnicity. Prejudices are always unhelpful.

- Action:

  Value each person for who they are and the achievements they have made.

Bias

- Definition:

  Bias is a tendency or an inclination to do something, usually based on a preconceived idea or prejudice.

- Example:

  A negative bias towards people can affect many of the decisions that team leaders are required to make, such as recruiting or disciplining staff members, and may result in poor decisions being made, an organisation's poor image in the community or low staff morale.

- Action:

  Always consider a person's ability rather than their background, looks or sexual orientation.

Reflect on your own beliefs and values

Diversity makes people think differently about the world around them and can challenge their assumptions. It is crucial that team leaders are fair, honest and unbiased in all their dealings with staff. You need to be accountable for your behaviour and your decisions. As a role model for your team, you must always demonstrate actions that are based on impartial, objective evidence and are free from prejudice.

How can you be confident that you are free of prejudice in your personal reactions? The best test is to consider your interactions with others. Ask yourself questions such as:

- Am I impatient with older people or children?

- How comfortable am I when talking to a person in a wheelchair?

- Do I make assumptions about people of a particular ethnicity because of one or two negative examples?

- If my child announced that they were in a relationship with someone of the same gender, how would I react?

- Are any of my friends of a different race, religion, ethnicity or sexuality to me?

Develop an unbiased attitude

Being aware of what we think about issues and why we think those things is an important part of becoming more aware of how we make decisions. By self-reflecting and considering our interactions with people different to ourselves, we can learn more about our own values and then work to change our attitudes, our prejudices and how we communicate with people.

Strategies for developing an unbiased attitude
• Acknowledge that you may be biased in a particular area.
• Recognise that biases and prejudices can be changed.
• Read material that challenges your present attitudes.
• Watch others you admire for their lack of bias and observe them interacting and making decisions.
• Learn about other cultures, religions, physical disabilities and personality types to help you to see things from other people's perspectives.
• Take extra time to make decisions and reflect on whether your decision includes any bias.
• Ask yourself how you would feel if you were treated this way or if you saw your partner, child, sibling or parent being treated this way.

Example: apply inclusive communication, language and behaviours

Alvaro believes he is a good supervisor and role model for his team because he tries to make sure he acts appropriately at work, by refraining from making offensive jokes and making sure he uses inclusive language when he speaks to his team, such as not using sexist language or stereotypes.

However, he is concerned that some of his team members are bringing their prejudices about other cultures to work. They often make jokes about a team member who is of Italian descent and another who wears a scarf for religious reasons. Alvaro has reflected on this behaviour and knows that he would not appreciate being treated this way.

In an exercise to help make his team more aware of their own biases and preconceived ideas, Alvaro sets a task for everyone to do an online activity called the Brief Implicit Association Assessment Test developed at Harvard University. This is freely available at: www.implicit.harvard.edu/implicit.

The purpose of this activity is to provide some personal feedback on prejudices and it is a useful tool to get people to start thinking about how they view the world around them and how they interact with others.

Alvaro's team's experiences with the activity are then discussed at the next team meeting.

Practice task 7

1. Which communication style do you prefer?

2. List an example of each communication preference.

3. In what ways does knowing more about different communication styles influence a team leader's job?

3B Ensure cultural competence

Cultural competence refers to the ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures.

Team leaders need to know and understand the different cultures of those within their team and their organisation. You can use this knowledge to create an inclusive team environment based on a conscious decision to promote cultural inclusiveness in a positive way. You can also help to educate your team members on cultural differences, apply this knowledge to your work plans and processes, and review the ways that you communicate to ensure that they are culturally appropriate.

Cultural competence is more than simply being aware of the differences between people and cultures. You also need to:

- be aware of your own way of viewing the world
- develop positive attitudes to cultural differences
- gain knowledge of the values and practices of different cultures
- have skills that allow you to communicate and interact appropriately across cultures.

Training in cultural competence

Cultural competence training helps you to understand the history and culture of a specific culture, its traditions, beliefs, values and language, and the issues relevant to this culture, in both the past and the present. This knowledge can then serve as the basis for skill development to enable effective and appropriate communication and engagement with people of that specific cultural group, to ensure that the team works collaboratively and cooperatively.

By taking active steps to increase your knowledge of other cultures, you create a more inclusive workplace and avoid mistakes, inappropriate actions or saying something that may offend or be misinterpreted.

All training should include specific actions that can contribute to a harmonious environment. For example, it is traditional in Australia to acknowledge Australian Indigenous peoples by holding a 'welcome to country' before a presentation and by acknowledging them in written and oral communications.

Strategies for cultural competence

An organisation can implement a range of initiatives for helping people to learn about different cultures and culturally appropriate behaviours. There is no 'one size fits all' approach, as the ways that an organisation can improve its cultural competence depend on the nature of the organisation.

Learn about different strategies you can use to encourage cultural competence.

Appoint a diversity officer

Appoint diversity champions from various levels within the organisation. A diversity officer advocates and implements cultural competence policies and procedures throughout an organisation.

Provide training

Organise formal training sessions on diversity, including induction programs for all new staff.

Include the benefits of diversity; presentations from people of different cultures; handouts with tips for interacting with people from different cultures; and opportunities for questions.

Model inclusive behaviours, such as applying this knowledge to work plans and processes.

**Learn about other people's cultures**

Discuss the cultures of team members at meetings or discussion sessions.

Ask team members to compare their culture to those of others, comparing the similarities and differences.

Ask team members who know about other cultures for advice.

Focus on the values and beliefs and traditions that may affect the workplace.

Invite guest speakers

Hold special information sessions where people from different cultures in the community talk about their backgrounds.

Arrange for people from specific cultural backgrounds to organise interactive displays of food, music and photographs to celebrate other cultures.

Undertake research
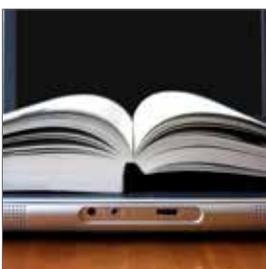
Encourage team members to find out about specific cultural behaviours they do not understand, so that interactions with others are sensitive to cultural differences.

Provide resources on cultural competence in the workplace so that people can read books about culturally appropriate workplace behaviour or watch DVDs about different cultures.

Research via the internet.

Understand cultural traditions and beliefs

Here are some other traditions and cultural beliefs that may impact interactions within the workplace.

In some cultures:

- it is not appropriate to look people in the eye
- it is a sign of respect to bow on greeting
- you should not touch a person's head
- you should not stand too close to another person
- the importance of 'saving face' or respecting older people means that they may not question an instruction that is unclear and may appear to agree with everything that is said
- people introduce themselves in different ways to other cultures; for example, the use of surnames (family names) first, followed by their first name, or using a title such as Mr or Ms
- references to the deceased are seen as inappropriate
- verbal communication is carried out differently, with the use of characteristics such as intonation, pitch of voice and speed of delivery.

Example: ensure cultural competence

Frank provides a briefing to his team on how to operate a piece of new machinery, including how to use it safely. He notices that his new team member, Hitoshi, is nodding along with the instructions Frank is providing, so he assumes that Hitoshi understands these instructions.

Later that day, Frank notices Hitoshi asking co-workers to show him what to do. Frank is puzzled by this, so he asks Hitoshi why he is asking for help and if he needs the instructions to be repeated. Hitoshi explains that in his culture it is not appropriate to ask questions of authority figures. He is embarrassed to have to say that he does not understand.

Frank also notices team members making jokes about Japanese people.

Frank realises that he and most of his team have little knowledge about Japanese traditions or culture, so he arranges for Hitoshi to talk to them at a team meeting. Hitoshi says that he is happy to speak at the next meeting to share information about his culture with others.

Frank also arranges to have universally understood images about how to safely operate the new machine placed onto or near the machine.

Practice task 8

Discuss your own cultural background with someone from a different cultural background. Find out the similarities and differences between these two cultures. Make a note of at least three similarities and three differences between these cultures.

3C Incorporate and apply diversity tools and techniques to operations

There are a range of tools and techniques that a team leader can use to incorporate diversity into workplace practices in order to engage a diverse workforce. Be aware of the processes used in your organisation to effectively apply these tools.

Diversity processes include the following:

- Follow inclusive practices.
- Provide training.
- Implement continuous improvement processes.
- Promote diversity through recruitment, selection and career paths.
- Incorporate diversity into work plans and team management.
- Manage the complaints procedure.

Follow inclusive practices

The organisation may have a number of policies and procedures that prescribe the tools or methods that you need to apply to implement the policy or procedure.

Promotional material

Promote an inclusive image of your organisation; for example, use images of people from diverse backgrounds in your promotional materials and website.

Dress code

Be flexible when following a dress code policy to accommodate cultural practices while maintaining required standards; for example, allow an Indian woman to wear a sari as long as safety standards are met.

Language

Translate information into the languages used in the workplace. This is especially important for health and safety signs and notices.

Meetings

Hold informal meetings to discuss the diversity policy and diversity issues that arise in order to encourage input, debate and an exchange of ideas and views.

Suggestion box

Establish a suggestion box for anonymous comments and suggestions related to diversity.

Greeting

Create an inclusive environment by learning and pronouncing people's names. Ask people how they want to be addressed. This can help them to feel welcome and valued and make the organisation an employer of choice.

Provide training

Providing training can help existing team members to feel more comfortable when engaging with people from different groups. For example:

- Use presentations, DVDs and information booklets to train team members in cultural competence.

- Conduct role-plays that challenge staff members to manage situations involving potential incidents of non-compliance with the diversity policy.

- Prepare information sheets about the language that is acceptable/not acceptable in the workplace.

Implement continuous improvement processes

Improve operations by conducting regular reviews of organisational and team operations to make them more accessible to a diverse range of people.

Continuous improvement processes
• Write policy and procedures documents in plain English.
• Use symbols and pictures to improve the accessibility and communication of key information to those with difficulties understanding English.
• Incorporate suggestions from team members to improve work practices and make better use of people's skills, knowledge and backgrounds.
• Regularly review work plans and adjust these to meet diversity requirements.
• Conduct exit interviews as an opportunity to find out whether a lack of inclusive practices is why staff are leaving the organisation.

Promote diversity through recruitment, selection and career paths

Take the opportunity to promote diversity through the way that you recruit new team members and assist them to progress in the organisation.

- Recruit a diverse applicant pool and focus on the job requirements when selecting candidates.
- Use inclusive language in recruitment advertisements.
- Respect diversity when promoting staff.
- Set targets for selected minority groups based on ability, such as youth, people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds and Indigenous Australians.
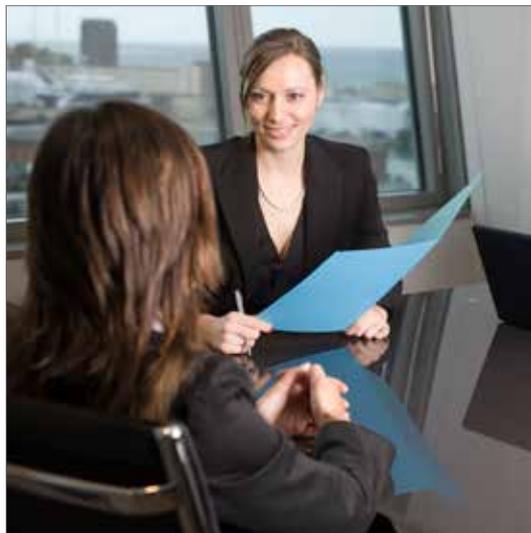
Incorporate diversity into work plans and team management

Apply tools and techniques to ensure that you acknowledge and integrate diversity within your work team.

Flexible work practices

Follow flexible work practices when allocating overtime or making changes to the timetable for those with family responsibilities, disabilities or different faith commitments so your team benefits by attracting and retaining a range of staff that may not be possible in an environment without flexibility.

Allocation of tasks

Discuss the allocation of tasks with staff to ensure they use their skills, abilities and cultural knowledge to advantage.

Cultural practices

Consider different cultural practices when planning workplace events to create an inclusive and respectful environment; for example, consider whether events will serve alcohol, what types of food are served, and be mindful of those who are participating in Ramadan.

Language assistance

Create a voluntary buddy system where proficient English speakers are partnered with those who need assistance with English, or partner mature age workers with younger ones, to allow those with difficulties to have a friendly mentor to work with.

Manage the complaints procedure

Apply procedures to manage complaints that focus on diversity issues. For example:

- Role-play or watch DVDs or apps that show techniques for managing complaints about harassment and bullying.

- Train team members in negotiation practices and conflict resolution, to help members to understand each other and to work more collaboratively without bias and prejudice.

- Ensure that all team members understand the relevant forms they may have to complete when making a complaint and can complete the form correctly.

Example: apply a diversity technique

Melissa is a team leader who has been given the task of finding out why so many new recruits are leaving the organisation. The organisation has received anecdotal feedback that some people are leaving because they feel as if their differences are causing them to miss out on career opportunities.

Melissa works with other team leaders to create an exit interview questionnaire. When developing this tool, she prepares questions about how people feel they are treated at work, how the person feels about the organisation's approach to diversity and how inclusive the organisation is. They decided that responses can be kept anonymous, as the company wants to find out honest feedback and overall trends, rather than any individual details.

The exit interview tool is applied by asking people departing the company to discuss the questionnaire at an interview or to complete the questionnaire online or on paper. By allowing the tool to be applied in a variety of ways, the company hopes to get as many responses as possible, which can then be analysed to identify how well the company's approach to diversity is working.

Practice task 9

Pick a tool that helps you as a team leader to incorporate diversity within your team. How does this benefit your organisation?

Summary

1. Communicate with your team and others in ways that are appropriate and effective in a diverse working environment.

2. Be aware of different communication styles and the ones that your team members prefer: by seeing (visual), by hearing (auditory) or by demonstrating or doing (kinaesthetic).

3. Communicate in different ways to suit people's language abilities and communication styles; speak and write clearly using plain English; respect people's traditions when speaking.

4. Use language appropriately, such as a minimal use of technical terms, jargon or acronyms, non-discriminatory language and no sexist terms.

5. Model appropriate behaviour such as basing decisions on ability, never telling offensive jokes and acting promptly whenever the diversity policy is breached.

6. Always be fair, honest and unbiased in dealings with staff and recognise your own way of viewing the world and any prejudices and biases you may have.

7. Cultural competence refers to an ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures.

8. Use a range of tools and strategies effectively to incorporate diversity and know how to effectively apply these tools, such as recruiting people through appropriate advertisements.

Learning checkpoint 3
Engage with a diverse workforce

This learning checkpoint allows you to review your skills and knowledge in engaging with a diverse workforce.

Part A

1. Some people send or receive information better by seeing it (visual), by hearing it (auditory) or by demonstrating or doing it (kinaesthetic). Read the communication method in the first column, then write in the second column what style it can be categorised under.

Communication method	Communication style/preference
Telephone call	
A demonstration where participants can practise new skills	
Face-to face discussion	
Skype or video conference	
Asking for volunteers to role-play a situation in a training environment	
Electronic presentation	
Podcast	
Diagram	
A DVD shown in a training session	

2. In one paragraph each, define what it means to have a bias or prejudice. Use at least two dot-points to explain why a team leader should avoid making decisions based on bias or prejudice.

3. In one paragraph, explain why it is important for a team leader to understand and to apply the various tools and techniques that an organisation has developed to incorporate diversity into workplace practices in order to engage a diverse workforce. Use at least three dot-point examples of inclusive practices to illustrate your response.

Part B

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

During his induction session, Chris has to provide the name of an emergency contact person. He does not feel comfortable disclosing this information, because he is in a same-sex relationship and this will mean disclosing his sexuality. Chris decides to give the form directly to Samantha, his manager, after he has had an opportunity to discuss this with her. He feels that she will understand, as he has a good working relationship with her. He also knows that he was chosen as the best candidate for the position.

Samantha asks Chris to share with her any ideas he has for making processes more sensitive to homosexual people. Chris suggests the following:

- Do not assume everyone is heterosexual.
- Never reveal a person's sexual orientation or gender identity without permission.
- Use the term 'partners' when inviting spouses to social activities. This is a more inclusive and non-gender-specific term, and includes same-sex couples.
- Remind or train people about appropriate language use to make for a more inclusive environment.

Samantha thanks Chris for sharing these suggestions with her. Hearing Chris's thoughts makes Samantha think about her own biases, including that she assumes that most people she meets are heterosexual. Based on Chris's feedback, Samantha decides to pass on the feedback about the induction processes to the relevant team (without referring specifically to Chris).

1. In a sentence or two, explain why Chris felt comfortable engaging with Samantha.

2. Why were Samantha's actions appropriate?

3. Provide at least two examples of the possible consequences if Sam had not acted the way she did.

Part C

1. Prepare a poster or an information leaflet with dot-point tips or 'dos and don'ts' for using inclusive behaviours and appropriate communication and language. The poster or leaflet is to help other team leaders/supervisors to engage with their workforce.

2. Prepare a dot-point list of at least five points to explain to people in the workforce why it is important for them to be culturally competent.

3. Research a country with a culture different to your own that you need to know about. Complete the following table or use the headings from the table. Dot-points may be used where appropriate.

Country:	
Language/s spoken	
Communication protocols	
Religious/cultural beliefs	
Traditions	
Holidays/festivals celebrated	
How I can use this information with my team:	
How I can train team members to learn more about the cultures of others in the workforce:	

Topic 4
Support and encourage diverse workforce members

Providing support and encouraging staff to work collaboratively are essential responsibilities for team leaders, supervisors and managers. Support can be given at the broader organisational level, as well as at the team level. Be aware of the various strategies and techniques that you can provide to help people to adjust to the work environment, to overcome the challenges of a disability or language difficulty, and to learn new skills, so that you develop a productive and harmonious team.

In this topic you will learn how to:

4A   Provide workplace support and access to enabling services

4B   Encourage, review and provide feedback to the workforce on a regular basis

4A Provide workplace support and access to enabling services

Providing support is an essential part of establishing an environment that is conducive to workplace diversity. Your role as a team leader is to ensure that information about the support provided at an organisational level is passed on to your team. This is especially important if your team is made up of part-time or casual staff or volunteers. You have a responsibility to remove any barriers, to help them integrate successfully where needed and to open up opportunities for each person to reach their potential.

Inform your team of the organisation's approach to diversity, its strategies for managing diversity and the types of support provided. This may include support for:

- cultural and religious circumstances
- physical and mental disability
- language training
- flexible working conditions
- individual team members.

Explain the organisation's approach to diversity

All staff need to understand how the organisation incorporates diversity into its work practices. A starting point is to ensure that staff have access to, and are familiar with, the organisation's diversity policy and their role and responsibilities in relation to the policy.

While each organisation is different, here are some strategies that support a diverse workforce. Your job is to ensure that your team is familiar with these support systems and the organisation's approach to diversity.

The organisation's approach to diversity
• Conduct induction sessions that include diversity issues and processes to manage them, including the organisation's grievance procedure.
• Promote workplace diversity issues and initiatives to staff through team meetings, noticeboards, staff handbooks and intranet sites.
• Explain the role of the diversity officer or relevant staff member who advises people on their rights and responsibilities when raising a concern.
• Promote equity of access to all employees for promotion and career development opportunities through the staff intranet, noticeboards and team meetings.
• Establish mentoring programs where senior people can mentor junior staff to help them to develop in their career paths and overcome various obstacles that may exist.
• Ensure that performance management processes articulate the organisation's commitment to workplace diversity and are applied fairly to all employees.
• Ensure that access is made available to external, confidential counselling services, such as an employee assistance program.

Support for cultural and religious circumstances

An organisation may have specific policies and procedures relating to cultural and religious issues. Inform all team members about these so that they can see how the organisation recognises the importance of cultural and religious traditions.

Support for cultural and religious circumstances:

- Cultural competence training is provided for all staff.
- Flexible working hours allow time for prayer or attendance at special events.
- An organisational calendar of events includes dates of significance and important community events as they apply to various diversity groups.
- Acknowledgment of traditional (Indigenous Australian) owners is incorporated into all events.
- A dress code is as diversity-friendly as appropriate, keeping in mind work health and safety requirements.

Support for physical or mental disability

Support for people with a disability is covered in legislation, but there are a range of other supports that a workplace can provide. Make sure those who need this assistance are fully advised and know how to use the support.

Workspaces

Workspaces are accessible for those with physical disabilities; for example, ramps, wide doorways, use of automatic doors or doors that are easy to open, disabled toilet facilities and clear signage.

Technologies

Assistive technologies (screen readers) are provided to make computers and the internet accessible for sight-impaired workers. Text telephones are available for hearing-impaired people.

Environment

Lighting and noise levels are adjusted to suit everyone.

Emergencies

As part of the approach to workplace health and safety, the chief warden is notified about staff with mobility, hearing or sight impairments who may require support in emergency situations.

Support for language training

Be aware of the range of assistance available for those who have difficulties with the English language.

Support for language difficulties
• Use of plain English in all workplace communications
• Translation of relevant documents into other languages if required
• Appointment of translators
• Pairing of a buddy, mentor or coach with those for whom English is a second language
• Use of appropriate images, symbols and international signs to convey important messages

Support for flexible working conditions

An organisation may have a specific policy to support work/life balance for those with various family commitments. Discuss these with team members so they are aware of what the organisation offers.

- Flexible working opportunities and conditions may be provided, including part-time, job-share and home-based work.

- Provisions in industrial relations documents (such as enterprise agreements) support employees with access to flexible working arrangements in order to balance work, family and personal responsibilities.

- Staff may be supported in their caring responsibilities through the provision of nursing breaks and access to breastfeeding facilities for nursing mothers who have returned to work.

Provide team level support

As a team leader, you need to be aware of the diverse make-up of your team and the opportunities and challenges this brings. Implement a range of strategies that help team members and provide access to the kinds of support they may need, in line with the organisation's diversity policy and procedures.

Here are some examples of access and inclusion challenges, and the specific support that you can provide to your team.

The organisation's approach to diversity

- Ensure that your team members have received diversity training. Check your team member's understanding of what was covered in the training and ask them to share their learning with the rest of the team.
- Use performance evaluation processes to check that diversity is accepted and integrated into work practices.

Cultural or religious challenges

- Celebrate cultural/religious holidays.
- Arrange sessions in which team members talk about their cultures, traditions and life experiences.
- Ask members of specific cultural or religious groups to speak to the team to increase the team's awareness of that particular group.
- Inform staff of the consequences of using offensive language or inappropriate jokes.

Flexible hours

- Consider scheduling key meetings during core business hours and on days when all staff are present (if possible) so that no-one misses important meetings.
- Review your work plans to accommodate flexible hours and leave requests over school holidays where possible.

Age

- Consider how you can use the experience of both your mature and young workers.
- Do not discount mature-age workers for lack of a particular skill if appropriate training can bridge this skill gap.
- Encourage mature workers to share their skills and relevant life experiences with the team.
- Provide challenges to younger team members; do not regularly allocate basic tasks to them.

Physical or intellectual disability

- Provide targeted assistance as required to meet the individual requirements of staff with specific needs.
- Consider how reasonable adjustments can be made with assistive technologies, such as using large print, software to assist hearing and seeing, and a buddy system.
- Ensure that you take prompt, appropriate action if offensive language is used or inappropriate jokes are told about people with a disability.

Gender

- Let your team know about mentoring programs that you are aware of, either in-house or external to the organisation.
- Support equality of access to job roles regardless of gender.

Language

- If working with a team member who is struggling to understand English, consider additional support that could be provided to them, such as a colleague or support person to coach them; or access to the Federal Government's Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) or other commercial translating services.

Example: provide workplace support

Ron is a lawyer who is gifted in his field of expertise and many of his clients are not aware that his vision is significantly impaired. Ron's employer has been able to make a number of adjustments for him.

Gavin is one of the partners in the law firm that Ron works for. Gavin reflects on what has been done to accommodate Ron's low vision and considers that the adjustments are reasonable in terms of cost and implementation. He could not be happier that these relatively easy-to-implement methods have enabled Ron to become a highly effective team member of the practice.

Support provided to Ron

Software supplied that translates text to speech and screen-magnification programs that change font size and shape, enlarges icons, enhances mouse pointers and changes screen colours as required

Adjusted workstation lighting for an alternative source and illumination type that are more suitable for Ron (options include natural, incandescent, halogen and fluorescent types of light)

Large print used in team communications and documents

Electronic text and voicemail communications employed instead of written notes

An assistant assigned to help with printed and handwritten materials that cannot be converted electronically

Adjusted work schedule to allow additional walking time or use of public transport, rather than car use, as Ron is unable to drive

Practice task 10

Create the text for slides for a brief electronic presentation that you could use in training or as a discussion guide for a one-on-one induction session with a new team member that outlines:

- where to find your organisation's diversity policy
- types of workplace support that are provided to facilitate diversity at your organisation
- examples of what has been done in your team to accommodate diversity needs and to improve access to opportunities enabling a diverse range of people to participate fully in the workplace.
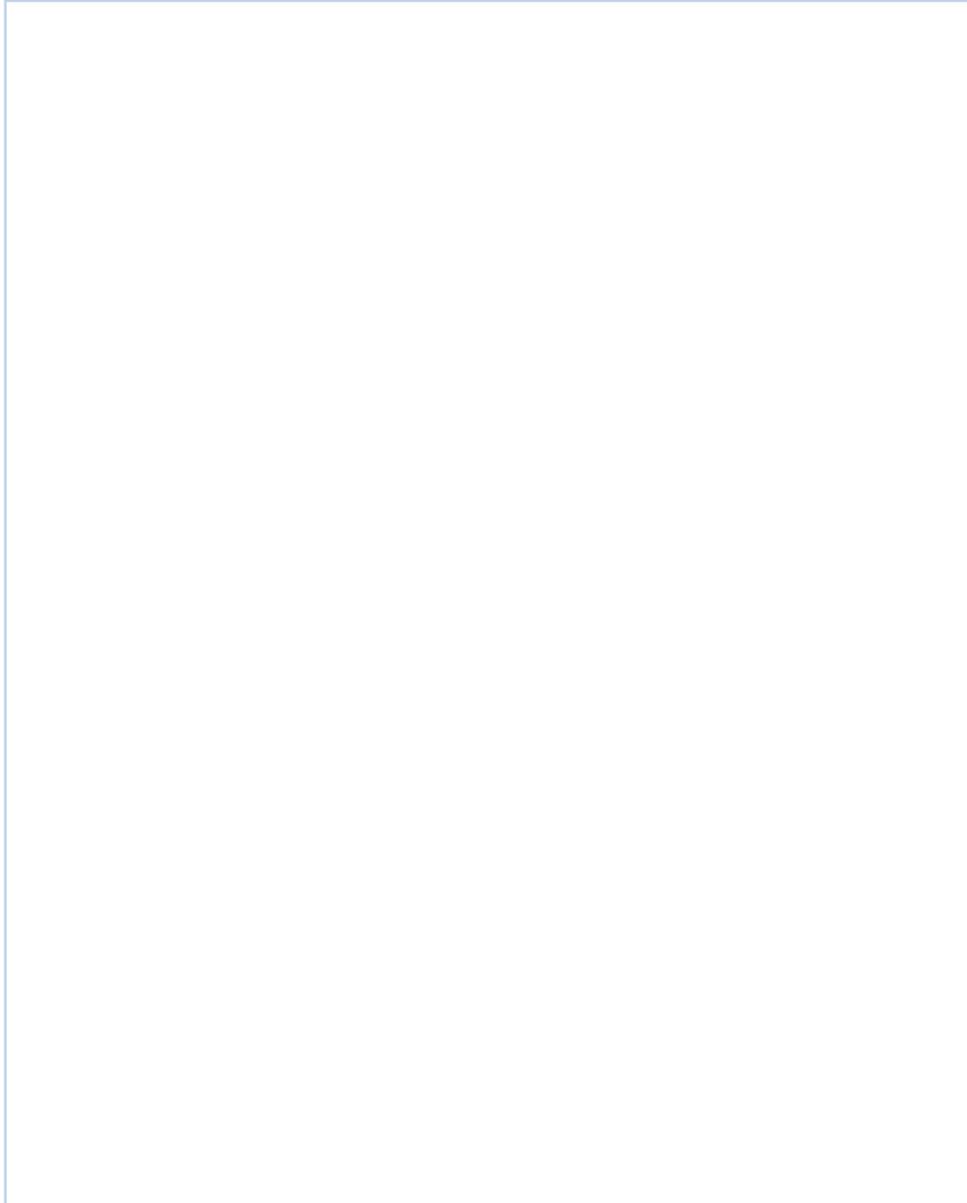
4B | Encourage, review and provide feedback to the workforce on a regular basis

A key responsibility for a team leader is to encourage their team to embrace diversity and to provide feedback as to how well the team is following the organisation's diversity policy and procedures, and where improvements may be made.

Support may be provided by:

- encouraging team members to be inclusive
- reviewing the team's approach to work
- acknowledging the importance of feedback
- providing regular feedback to the team
- encouraging team members to provide feedback to you and to each other.

Encourage team members to be inclusive

Your team can benefit from the different skills, knowledge and experiences of the workforce. However, people must feel comfortable to share their perspectives. As a team leader, it is part of your role to foster an environment where individuals feel able to share these views. If there is a hostile environment or an environment where people do not feel that they can express themselves, this may affect work output or working relationships between team members. In many cases it is best to deal with issues as a whole team, rather than directing a warning to a single person.

Always be aware of enabling activities that you may need to implement if there are particular barriers preventing people from participating or providing feedback.

Strategies for developing an inclusive environment

You can foster an inclusive environment where people are able to share their views freely by undertaking a range of strategies as shown below.

- Remind people of the organisation's diversity philosophy and processes.

- Provide training so your team knows how to deal with conflict in a positive way.

- Provide a variety of means for feedback to be given, such as written or verbal; in group or individual settings; to you directly or anonymously.

- Provide opportunities for people to talk about their backgrounds, hobbies and other jobs they have had.

- Provide mentors from similar backgrounds to new employees who may not know the organisation's culture.

- Provide support to those who feel that they are being treated differently.

- Model appropriate, inclusive behaviours.

Review the team's approach to work

Obtain feedback about your team in a number of ways and from a variety of sources to ensure that team members are working well together and meeting the outcomes from their work plans. Which of the following strategies do you currently use?

Observe team behaviour.

- Action items in work plans and projects with specific milestones to review performance.

- Seek feedback from other stakeholders on how your team has been performing.

- Schedule brainstorming sessions for your team to reflect on their own performance and suggest how things can be improved.

- Check the number of diversity complaints and issues raised.

Use a review checklist

It may be useful to use a checklist as a reminder of how well you, as a team leader, are encouraging and supporting your team and, in turn, how well team members are accommodating each other's differences. The checklist may require you to reflect on how you operate as a team leader and how you approach certain issues. The aim of such an activity is to make you aware of your leadership style and to highlight any areas for self-improvement.

	Inclusive behaviours checklist	Yes/No
Do I:	• model inclusive behaviours?	
	• support people who are being discriminated against?	
	• recognise each person as an individual with something important to offer the organisation?	
	• give my team members equal opportunity to participate in projects and team activities?	
	• celebrate everyone's contributions to the team?	
	• get to know people from other cultures and share stories about my heritage and theirs?	
	• take other people's concerns about diversity seriously and act promptly if someone raises a complaint?	
	• encourage new ideas, innovation and suggestions on how to improve processes based on people's experiences, expertise and backgrounds?	
	• ensure fairness within the team?	
	• incorporate workplace diversity principles into my management practices?	
Do team members:	• recognise each person as an individual with something important to offer the organisation?	
	• listen to other people's points of view?	
	• demonstrate respect for each individual and their differences?	
	• offer to help others in need of assistance because of difficulties associated with their age, gender, language ability or physical ability?	
	• focus on positive outcomes and strengths?	
	• adapt their behaviour when confronted with their personal biases and prejudices?	
	• raise issues with the team to resolve them cooperatively?	
	• understand and follow correct procedures for making a complaint?	

Acknowledge the importance of feedback

A team leader should encourage and support their diverse workforce on a regular basis to ensure they are maximising the skills and knowledge that members bring to the team. Providing constructive and considered feedback, either informally or in a structured way, is critical to maintaining a capable workforce. Feedback can acknowledge what has been done well and help people to improve in areas that need development.

When delivering feedback, take into account the various characteristics of individual team members. You may need to modify what you say and how you say it depending on a person's personality type or their cultural background, especially where 'saving face' is important.

Feedback is best delivered in specific terms and in a timely manner, relating back to a task or action recently performed. This way the feedback can be given on a frequent basis when the issues are fresh in everyone's minds, and so it helps to improve performance in real time rather than waiting for an annual appraisal session.

Another benefit of continuous feedback is that it reinforces your commitment as team leader to creating a positive work environment.

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Provide regular feedback to the team

After feedback is received and collated, it is important to provide this to the relevant individuals in a constructive way. Here are some examples of ways that feedback can be regularly provided to team members.

Strategies for providing regular feedback
• Have a standing agenda item in team meetings to discuss issues and provide team feedback.
• Organise informal discussions with the team when an issue arises based on a person's differences and provide positive feedback.
• Schedule an individual meeting; select an appropriate venue where there is some privacy if the feedback is sensitive.
• Discuss recent work together and provide suggestions or demonstrate areas for improvement.
• Conduct formal performance appraisal processes on a regular basis to provide feedback.
• Acknowledge and celebrate people's achievements as a practical and positive way of providing feedback.
• Explain any changes to anti-discrimination legislation.

Encourage the team to provide feedback

One of the benefits of having a diverse team is the range of points of view.

Encourage your team to provide suggestions on how the team's diversity may be affecting work output and workplace relations, and how the team can improve its practices. As team leader, let your team know that their feedback is integral to the success of the team.

Strategies for receiving feedback from your team include:

- team meetings
- brainstorming sessions and focus groups where team members provide their views on various policies, procedures and practices
- staff satisfaction surveys
- training evaluation forms
- exit interviews
- informal discussions.

Questions to ask

Here are some questions to ask in order to encourage feedback from team members. These can be used at interviews, in a written survey or in a general discussion.

Questions to ask
• Do you feel that your complaints are listened to?
• How promptly are complaints and issues dealt with?
• Is sufficient support provided to everyone when needed?
• Do you feel that your skills are acknowledged?
• How might issues be better handled?
• Does everyone interact and participate equally?
• How do you handle any biases or assumptions you may have?

Example: encourage, review and provide feedback to the workforce

Tracey has been a member of Alex's team for a number of years. She has motor neuron disease and the disease is progressing, which significantly affects her mobility. Tracey has just received a new wheelchair to help her to get around better.

Alex asks his team to brainstorm ways that they can support Tracey as she adjusts. They know that she is a valued member of the team and that her disability does not affect her mental capacity or her sense of humour. The team suggests a morning team to welcome Tracey back to work and celebrate her new wheels, and to ensure that her workstation is adjusted for the right height and that other physical aspects of the workplace, such as ramps and doorway widths, allow her access.

Alex thanks his team for their positive suggestions. However, he notices that Leonie looks frustrated and asks her if there is anything she would like to share with the group. Leonie blurts out, 'I'm sick of disabled people getting all the help around here. I'm a single parent and get no help – why is her situation any different?'

Alex is surprised, as he thinks Leonie fits in well and she has never mentioned her dissatisfaction before. He says, 'It's important that we help Tracey get back to work, as she is an important part of our team, with skills and experience we need. But I can see that we need to support you too, as you are also an important member of our team.'

Alex takes this opportunity to mention to the team that he is proud of their inclusive team environment and that different needs will be accommodated wherever possible. He tells them where they can access more information about support options within the organisation. He meets with Leonie later in the week to work out what her needs are and what options exist to accommodate these.

Practice task 11

List the strategies that you use to review how well your team is working together.

Summary

1. Providing support is an essential part of providing an environment that is conducive to workplace diversity.

2. Apply a range of strategies to help make your team environment a more inclusive one, so that the benefits of diversity can be integrated within your team.

3. Be sure that information about the support provided at an organisational level is passed onto your team.

4. A key responsibility for a team leader is to encourage their team to embrace diversity and to provide feedback where improvements may be made.

5. Provide constructive and considered feedback to team members (either informally or in a structured way) as to how well the team is following the organisation's diversity policy and procedures.

6. Encourage team members to give you feedback and provide suggestions on how the team's diversity may be negatively affecting work output and workplace relations, and how the team can improve its practices.

Learning checkpoint 4
Support and encourage diverse workforce members

This learning checkpoint allows you to review your skills and knowledge in supporting and encouraging diverse workforce members.

Part A

1. List at least three workplace supports and enabling services that a team leader can provide to a team member who has poor English proficiency.

2. List at least two reasons that it is important to provide feedback to your team about how they support and encourage other workforce members.

3. In your own words, provide at least three reasons that providing feedback on a continuous basis is better than giving feedback as a once-off event now and again.

Part B

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

Roger has been part of Serena's team for a month. She notices that he has become withdrawn and no longer contributes to team discussions the way he did when he first joined. Serena asks Roger if he has any concerns that he would like to raise with her.

Roger says that he does not feel comfortable in the team, as team members ignore his suggestions and exclude him from events; het knows they make fun of his appearance behind his back. He has also heard another team member, Raphael, make sexist jokes about some of the women in the team. While the jokes are not directed at him, Roger feels uncomfortable that this is allowed to go on. Serena thanks Roger for sharing this and assures him that she will follow up on these concerns.

To help address the concerns that Roger has raised, Serena decides to remind the whole team of her expectations of them at the monthly team meeting, and she creates the following agenda items and discussion notes:

- Diversity policy – remind the team about the company's policies and where to find them on the staff intranet. Focus on understanding and respecting colleagues, not making sexist jokes or using offensive language, and the importance of an inclusive team environment. Offer the chance to attend refresher training if they think it would benefit them. Ask them for ideas on how to work more cohesively as a team.

- Benefits to the company – remind the team about how the organisation benefits from having a range of people because of the skills they bring, regardless of their appearance or other differences.

- Acknowledging differences – the key message is that we may have different backgrounds and values, but we respect each person's right to their opinions. Treating others the way that we would like to be treated is a good guide.

- Question time – ask if anyone has any questions or suggestions that can be shared now in the group or later on a one-on-one basis after the meeting.

Serena realises that it is also possible that another work or non-work issue is affecting Roger, rather than the team's attitude. She offers him access to the employee assistance program, an external, confidential counselling service.

1. In one paragraph, explain how Serena has sought and provided feedback to the people in her team.

2. What does Serena's approach tell you about her role and responsibilities as a team leader? Provide at least three examples.

3. List three suggestions for how Roger's experience could be prevented in the future.

4. Provide an example, similar to this case study, of how you (or someone you know):

    • encouraged team members to provide feedback about diversity issues
    • assisted the team by providing feedback to them about diversity issues
    • delivered feedback on a continuous basis
    • believed the support benefited the team member/s.

Part C

Develop a checklist that you can use in your workplace when a new team member starts work, to ensure that you identify and provide the relevant workplace supports to this person and help to address any needs they may have.

Part C