



Leading Inclusive Teams



Participant Handbook

MODULE 2

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How to develop 'Creator' teams

DiStefano and Maznevski propose a 3-step process to releasing value from the diversity of your team:

1. **Mapping**
2. **Bridging**
3. **Integrating**

Please see the Handbook for Module 1 on the Mapping stage.

The Team Charter can provide a map for developing and maintaining an inclusive working environment for your team but, as a document, it remains of little value if it does not guide action. DiStefano and Maznevski propose 2 essential actions:

Bridging to communicate across differences

This means putting into action what the map has taught your team about how to communicate effectively. There are 2 elements to this:

- The forms of communication – individual preferences around using different channels, tools, timescales, etc.
- The content of communication – “sending and receiving meaning as it was intended”, as the researchers put it. This means appreciating the personality, thinking and communication styles of others in the team and adapting how you do it, to avoid misunderstandings and conflict.

Integrating to leverage differences

This is how you, as a manager, can begin to unlock the value of your team’s diversity. DiStefano and Maznevski propose 3 essential skills:

1. **Managing participation** - to allow inclusion in team discussions and decision making. This isn't just about getting everyone there; it's about creating a culture where everybody feels safe to say what they think.
2. **Resolving disagreements** – this makes disagreements more likely, so the team needs to have good strategies for listening to each other and calmly evaluating options.
3. **Building ideas** – this is where the value begins to grow as your team use their new inclusive habits to produce better solutions and create innovations

You can use this approach in the way you structure and initiate every team activity, for example:

- Ensuring that every meeting is set up and run inclusively, so that everyone feels safe to participate fully in team discussions
- Ensuring that a group tasked with solving a complex problem has cognitive diversity, a range of experience, specialisms, etc. and the willingness / ability to resolve disagreements.
- Utilising differences that can complement each other to produce good decisions, such as bringing together those who prefer to reflect on an issue and those who like to move to action and, again, quickly resolving any conflicts that arise.

Using Inclusion Nudges

The best way to embed these approaches in your team is to try out some of these behavioural nudges, see which ones work best for your team and then build them into new habits – it’s just the way you do things.

Personal Nudges

- Use a **keyword or action** - a word like ‘pause’ or an action like taking a deep breath
- Find a **trusted person**, someone who will be objective and ask their opinion – use their human to check your chimp.
- Use **counter stereotype images** - if you know that a certain characteristic triggers bias in you – maybe age, skin colour, gender, find an image of a person that completely contradicts the stereotype and have it around you – on the office wall, as your laptop or phone wallpaper. There is plenty of research showing that exposure to such positive images can influence our subconscious attitudes. (‘Blindspot’, Chapter 8 – see reading list below)



Marissa Mayer

Michelle Obama

Albert Einstein

Source: Martin Klimek / ZUMA Press / Monica Schipper/Filmmagic/Getty Images

- Use **intention implementation planning** - if you are aware of an unconscious bias you have, develop a self-talk script for yourself :

- a **goal intention** – e.g. “I will not be prejudiced”.

AND

- an **implementation intention plan** – e.g. “If I see a dark face, then I’ll ignore the skin colour.”

Repeating these statements before an interaction will tend to reduce biased responses.

(‘The Value of Difference’, Chapter 6 – See Reading List Below)

- **Mindfulness** is an excellent way to learn how to be more aware of your own thought processes and slow down your automatic responses to the world.

Team Nudges - Meetings / Decision Making – Avoiding Groupthink

- **Allow Different Ways To Register Ideas**

Build in a variety of ways to gather ideas, proposals, evaluations, etc. E.g. people can submit in writing in advance, everybody writes on a post-it at the beginning of a meeting (before discussion) and all ideas are read out, breaking up a meeting into pairs for discussion.



- **Golden Silence**

At the beginning of meetings, all participants are asked to read a carefully drafted document summarising the important issues to be discussed. This is done in silence, giving everyone time to digest and consider their own responses. When the discussion begins, the most senior person speaks last. This approach has been described as one of the most important strategic advantages of one of the world’s most successful companies – Amazon.

- **Taking a 5-minute brain break**

Choose key moments in your meetings, e.g. after a long discussion and before you move to make a decision, and allow a 5 minute break. This is not a tea break or a time to check emails, this is 5 minutes for everyone to do whatever relaxes and ‘grounds’ them – a short walk round the office or outside, a mindfulness exercise, reading a few pages or listening to some music, for example.

- **Re-fuelling**

As your brain uses up its reserves of glucose, your ability to over-ride biases and make rational, evidence-based decisions is impaired. Provide some means of people topping up their energy at key points. Be aware of the diversity of your team (health issues, personal preferences, etc.) and offer a range of refreshments.

- **Bias Busting**

When you reconvene following a 5-minute Brain Break or Re-fuelling break, take a few minutes for everyone to consider if they think any biases or unevidenced assumptions have crept into the meeting discussion.

- **Allocating Someone To Be The Sceptic**

A team member is given the role of Sceptic. They question all decisions and ideas to ensure that proper consideration has been given. Rotate the role so that you don't end up with a permanent sceptic!



- **Engaging An Outside Eye**

Invite someone from outside the team to observe the meeting and give objective feedback on content and process.

- **Argue For The Other**

If clear groups are forming around ideas, ask the groups to swap ideas temporarily and develop arguments to support the opposing idea.



- **Silent Sense Check**

Once a decision has been reached, ask everyone to write down a summary of their understanding. Check the notes to see that everyone has the same understanding.

- **Use Checklists**

To make sure people aren't inadvertently excluded from events or processes, develop checklists of the considerations necessary for inclusion.

Organisation Nudges - Selection / Recruitment Processes

- **Group Interview**

Interview groups of candidates together. This counteracts our tendency to evaluate against the 'norm' (the unconscious image in our head of what we like or feel comfortable with) and nudges us to evaluate against other candidates. It is important to get a good balance of candidates in the group to avoid minorities feeling inhibited.

- **Two-Part Interview**

After the standard interview, the panel retire to make a quick evaluation of strengths and weaknesses and further questions they would like to ask the candidate. They also flag any implicit associations they have noticed and challenge these by asking questions like "if she was a 'he', would we have

thought the same?”, etc. The panel re-join the candidate to ask further questions and conduct an evaluation of the interview.

- **Use ‘Norming Statements’**

This is similar to Intention Implementation Planning above. Each member of a panel is given a statement to read before interviewing. It reminds them of the value of diversity, etc. and has a statement reminding them of **their** role in achieving that e.g.

‘Every member of the interview panel plays an important role in recruiting the best candidate for the job / promotion by making an objective evaluation.’

- **Interrupter Bell**

Panel members have a hotel reception type bell, which they ring whenever they feel that the discussion is based on assumptions or biases about the candidate, rather than evidence. This can also be used in any talent development / review context.



- **Inclusion / Exclusion Selection Methodology**

Starting with a blank list and selecting people who meet the selection criteria is much less likely to trigger unconscious biases and stereotyping than starting with a full list and excluding those who don't meet them.

- **Advertising Posts**

This is a big issue and you should seek full guidance on the impact of unconscious processes in job postings, but here are two examples:

- Focus on a short list of essential job requirements, rather than a long list of ‘desirables’ – women are likely to apply only if they feel they meet at least 85% of the requirements, for men the figure is 40 – 60%.
- Try putting your proposed text into the gender decoder:

[click here](#)

Manager's Inclusion Self-Assessment and Action Plan

If you work through the questions below, it will focus your attention on the most important changes you can make in building an inclusive culture for your team. To help you incorporate these into your busy working lives, at the end you are asked to identify a few key actions to begin working on.

Remember:

The Catalyst report 'Getting Real About Inclusive Leadership' proposes 6 key qualities/behaviours that help a manager build an inclusive culture. You can see the full report at:

[Click Here](#)



Leading Inward

Curiosity

- What **conscious prejudices** do you have?

Remember - These are particular characteristics in a person that can trigger a reaction in you e.g. an accent, the way they dress, a hobby, etc. You can be aware that this tends to provoke a negative or positive response, without knowing anything else about the person. If you are not aware of this, you can pre-judge the whole person, based on this one part and the stereotypes that go with it.

- Where did the prejudices come from?

Remember - These stereotypes can come from our parents, family, friends, culture and media and from direct personal experience.

- How might they affect your work?

- How can you educate yourself?

Remember - the best way to reduce prejudice is to ensure that your brain's data base has facts about a person, rather than stereotypes and assumptions.

Curiosity

- What **unconscious biases** do you have?

Remember – most of us like to think of ourselves as fair and non-judgemental, but behind this conscious self-image lies a range of unconscious biases that we are less aware of. You can get an insight into these by trying out some Implicit Association Tests (see link below) and looking out for Golden Nuggets (moments when you realise you have made a wrong assumption about someone).

Implicit Association Test Results

Golden Nuggets

- How might they affect your work?

- **Inclusion Self-Assessment**

On the following page is a template for the Inclusion Self-Assessment. In the left-hand column, write down the initials of your team members. You have room for up to 16 on this sheet. Consider the inclusive behaviours across the top row and score yourself from 1 to 5 (1 is low and 5 is high) for each member of staff. Don't spend too long thinking about it and go with your first instinct. When you have completed the grid, add up the scores down the right-hand column for each team member and across the bottom row for each behaviour. Do any scores stand out as significantly lower? Is there a reasonable justification for this difference? If not, then you know the staff members and behaviours that deserve particular attention in your work to develop a more inclusive team.

Do you feel brave enough to give one of these to your team members and ask them to score you for each of these behaviours? It could give you valuable guidance on where to focus your efforts.

Implicit Association Test

This is an online test, developed by Harvard University, to identify unconscious biases towards or away from a range of characteristics. Its validity is still the subject of debate, but it can give a useful insight into areas where you need to be particularly careful to reduce potential bias. The book 'Blindspot' in the course reading list, charts the development of the IAT.

You can take the tests by clicking the link below. Please note:

- from the dropdown menu, choose the country most relevant to you
- you will need to allow good time as you will be asked to do a series of 'calibration' tests first
- be prepared to be stressed – it is designed to trigger your chimp! [Click Here](#)

TEAM MEMBER (initials)	How well do I know them as a person?	How much 'face time' do I give them? (incl. online)	How much do I know about their working preferences?	How likely am I to trust them with an important task?	How likely am I to ask them for feedback on my leadership?	SCORE
SCORE						

Curiosity

- Which **Inclusion Nudges** can you use?

Remember – the video ‘What We Can Do About Unconscious Bias’ and your Leading Inclusive Teams, Module 2 Handbook have a range of different inclusion nudges you can try out to suit your working needs. Experiment with them, find the ones that work for your team, and turn them into new habits.

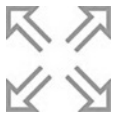
Humility

- Have you made any mistakes or wrongly assessed any situations that you could take more responsibility for? What are they and what can you do about them?

Remember – if you are open and straightforward about your own limitations, as well as your strengths, it helps build trust and psychological safety for your team.

Courage

- Are there any non-inclusive behaviours or processes that you are aware of but have avoided challenging? This could be colleagues who say or do things that hurt others or organisational structures / habits that can exclude people because of a particular characteristic. What are they and why are you avoiding them?



Leading Outward

Accountability

- Thinking about your responses in the 'Courage' section, what actions can you take to put this right and how can you follow it up?

- Who can you get advice from if you need it?

Ownership

- Are there people in your team that you can encourage to take more ownership of their work? What can you do?

Remember – if you are less trusting of some members of your team, it is easy for you to hold onto responsibility for their work. This could deprive them of the opportunity to develop and to show you what they can really do – and it can end up overloading you!

Allyship

- Can you be a better Ally for any of your colleagues? Who are they and what can you do?

Remember - being a good ally means actively supporting people who are excluded for whatever reason. This could involve:

- Speaking up – if you witness someone being treated or spoken of unfairly
- Extending opportunities – to help overcome the barriers they may face
- Challenging the status quo – to ensure that all systems and decision-making processes are equitable

Your Team Charter

- What more can you do in using it to develop your team culture?

Remember - use inclusion nudges to make conversations and meetings as inclusive as possible.

Action Plan

Review your responses above and choose the most important actions for you to begin putting in place immediately. You can use the Change Commitment poster on the following page to record these then put it up somewhere to remind you of your commitments and to keep in touch with your check-in partner.

My change commitments

Don't forget to talk to your
check-in partner!