



Creating Inclusive Communities: Facilitator Resource

CUPA-HR is committed to diversity, inclusion and equitable practices as a means to achieving excellence in higher education. As part of our commitment, CUPA-HR recently launched a Creating Inclusive Communities (CIC) project. Stories of diversity and inclusion can enrich a campus community and move the institution along the path to greater cultural understanding and competence.

Project description and details

Overview: Each of us has an important story to tell. Our stories are compiled from the reservoir of the institution's history, experiences, hopes and dreams. They intersect and are woven together to create a strong, diverse tapestry that represents our community. This project offers the CUPA- HR community and campuses that participate in the project the opportunity to provide a glimpse into the wonderful eclectic group of human beings that make up the higher education community.

Objective: To create a project that, through images, stories, and video, will offer the higher education community an opportunity to use their shared voices to inspire others about the difference each of our lives can make in the world. In addition, we are creating facilitator guides and resources for many of the 24 portraits and videos so that campus leaders can use the portraits and videos to facilitate discussions on campus.

As a way to facilitate a campus session, we'd like to share a few tips and tools for generating discussion.

Introduction

Effective facilitation involves the recognition and acceptance of everyone's different perspectives and skills, which can contribute to inclusive environments. Discussion is a powerful mechanism for active learning; a well-facilitated discussion can allow the learner to explore new ideas while recognizing and valuing the contributions of others. The overall objective of a CIC session is to provide an opportunity for learners to view personal stories and perspectives on inclusive communities and discuss ways to ensure inclusion in thought and in practice flourishes at their institution.

In order to effectively oversee discussion on your campus, let's consider some important features of effective discussions and conditions that promote small group interaction and engagement.

Facilitator's Role

Honest dialogue with your group starts with you. Ask yourself the following:

- What value will I bring to the group as a facilitator?
- How will I keep my opinions in check and not influence the discussion?
- How am I acknowledging what each participant can bring to the group? In what ways am I embracing the characteristics that illustrate each person's unique perspective?
- What behaviors am I most familiar or comfortable with? Conversely, what behaviors am I least familiar or comfortable with?
- What behaviors challenge me?
- Be sure to be prepared to respond to a learner asking for clarification or is unclear about their participation/role. And it's okay to admit you don't know. Offer to follow up later with an answer, if it's possible.

Getting the Discussion Started: Session Objectives

- Share the details of the Creating an Inclusive Communities project – see introduction above
- Consider adding another objective (or two) related to your campus expectations.
- Be clear up front about the session expectations and intentions, including honest dialogue, there is no silly question and that everyone can express their thoughts and suggestions without judgment.
- Share that everyone should treat each other with respect and consideration.

Materials to Assist You

- CIC portraits
- CIC video clips
- Computer/laptop with a projector
- Flip chart, flip chart stand
- Markers
- Pens and paper available at each table
- Name tags, if needed

Time to Cover Session

Depends on the number of CIC examples used. Recommended time is to allow around 20 minutes to cover each still shot or video. Recommended number of still shots and videos to use? For example, use at least 3 photos/videos to generate an hour's worth of discussion

The Session Outline

1. Introduction

- As a session opener, allow time for learners to introduce themselves. In addition to introducing themselves, you may also ask them to share something like:
 - A unique characteristic about themselves that we wouldn't know by looking at or talking to them.
 - Share what is the most important aspect about their position and why?
 - Who do they most admire?
 - If they could be a superhero, who would they be and why?
 - Other?

After covering the welcome, introductions, objectives and expectations, here are few question prompts to assist you during the session:

2. Explain to the learners that they will be reading and/or viewing individual stories of higher ed HR practitioners from around the country. But before they read or hear the stories, ask them:

- To describe the person they see
- Without knowing their story, have the learners share who they think the person is and what story/experience they will share

3. After discussion, ask them to continually share:

- Why do you think the person will share that particular story?

4. Now share with the group either a portrait or video clip. Ask the learners to answer the following:

- What story did the person actually share?
- What one message did you take from their story?
- Are there people like them on our campus?
- In what ways do we individually inspire, perpetuate or negate behaviors like those that the person shared in the photo/video?
 - As individuals, what do we need to do differently? The same?

[NOTE TO FACILITATOR: PLEASE REFER TO FINAL PAGES OF THIS GUIDE FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND DATA RELATED TO THE TOPIC REFERENCED IN THIS PORTRAIT OR VIDEO. INCORPORATE SOME OF THAT INFORMATION HERE TO ENHANCE LEARNING AND UNDERSTANDING.]

- On our campus, how do we as a community inspire, perpetuate or negate behaviors like those that the person shared in the photo/video?
 - As a community, what do we need to do differently? The same?
- After today, in what ways should we take action and do our part to transform our campus – to begin, improve or share the transformation with others?
 - Write suggestions on a flip chart.

- Identify who should/will take accountability in the transformation (participants can identify others on campus who are not in the session, too).
5. After the Session:
- Don't forget to follow up with learners (via email, for example) and thank them for the honest dialogue and contributions to the discussion. Also share with them the overall action items/steps to take to transform their campus.
 - Don't forget to share with the appropriate person(s) what recommendations were made and what steps are needed to implement them?

Other Tips and Techniques

To encourage discussion, you may have to:

- Ask follow-up questions, and paraphrasing the comments for everyone to ponder. A combination of initiating and probing questions can be an effective approach to bring out learners' ideas further.
 - How do you feel about this topic?
 - What I hear you saying is...
- Ask the learner for further clarification and/or elaboration.
- Re-visit past contributions and incorporate them into subsequent discussions.
- Encourage others to add their reactions or ideas to build on someone's comment.
- Invite others to provide resources, and use the opportunity to discuss with the group how one might go about researching the issue.

Don't forget to also:

- Provide sufficient time and space for learners to gather their thoughts enabling them to contribute to discussions.
- Provide opportunities for learners to consider a question on their own and/or provide an opportunity for learners to gather in small groups or pairs to discuss the question. You can then bring the entire group back together to further discuss the question.
- Establish ground rules:
 - Make sure to share from personal experiences rather than make general statements about groups of people (stereotyping).
 - Make sure in creating a safe space for conversation is important. Know what is said in the room, stays in the room; and know what learning can be shared outside the learning experience.
 - Allow facilitator and learners alike a chance to speak. Highlight the value of diversity of perspectives is an essential part of the discussion.
 - If necessary, cover constructive and destructive group behaviors at the start of the course / workshop.
 - Request that if learners challenge others' ideas, they back it up with evidence, appropriate experiences, and/or logic.

- On a piece of flip chart paper, write “Parking Lot.” Use the parking lot to write down questions that cannot be immediately addressed and can be followed up after the session or if discussion veers off topic. For example, if the group begins to address a different topic or vents without regard to the subject matter, write a note on the parking lot to revisit at the end of the session, if time permits.
- Step back when a group is working together – help learners become independent learners and take control of their learning.

Helpful Resources

Don't forget to check out CUPA-HR resources:

- [E-Learning resource, CUPA-HR Essentials: Facilitation Skills](#)
- [Knowledge Center: Training & Development Toolkits](#)
- [Building a Successful, More Inclusive Search: Facilitator Version](#)
- [DEI Toolkit](#)
- [DEI Resources](#)
- [CUPA-HR Inclusion Cultivates Excellence position statement.](#)
- And more!

Other Helpful Resources:

- Project Implicit study by Harvard - <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html> or <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/selectatest.html>
- Handelsman J, Miller S., Pfund C. *Scientific Teaching*. New York: W.H. Freeman; 2006
- *Creating a Collaborative Learning Environment Guidebook*, Center for Integration of Research, Teaching, and Learning (University of Wisconsin-Madison).
- Gelula, M.H. (1997) *Clinical discussion sessions and small groups*. *Surgical Neurology*, 47:400-403.
- Handelsman, J., Miller, S., & Pfund, C. (2006) *Scientific Teaching: Diversity, Assessment, Active Learning* (New York: W.H. Freeman & Co.)
- Sellers, S.L., Roberts, J., Giovanetto, L., Friedrich, K. & Hammargren, C. (2007) *Reaching All Students-A Resource for Teaching in Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics* (Second Edition) (Madison, WI: Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching, and Learning)

Challenges of the Deaf – Resources for Use With This Video

In this summary, I am speaking of my experience and perspective on different workplaces. I do not speak for other Deaf individuals. I currently work at Gallaudet University, which is the only deaf and hard-of-hearing liberal arts university in the world. I am very fortunate not to experience barriers anymore. My workplace is a signing environment.

The challenges for Deaf individuals in the workplace vary between different Deaf individuals and different workplaces. Some Deaf individuals work in Deaf-setting workplaces, and some of us work in a hearing setting — but most of us have experienced barriers of some sort in the workplace (before being hired, during the interview process and even after being hired). For example:

- An employer calls to set up an interview with a deaf individual, at which point the caller has to go through an interpreter via the Video Relay Services (VRS). The employer realizes the prospective employee is Deaf, and hangs up the phone.
- The employer places the call to set up an interview, and the Deaf candidate asks for a sign language interpreter to be present during the in-person interview. The employer then asks the candidate to bring an interpreter or asks him or her to provide a listing of interpreting agencies. Sometimes, the employer makes an excuse to get off the phone and then never calls back – perhaps because they don't want to go to the trouble or expense of bringing in an interpreter. But the Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits discrimination because of a person's disability, and requires that the communication needs of Deaf and hard-of-hearing people be met. It is the employer's responsibility to provide an interpreter.
- Communication barriers are also common in the workplace for Deaf and hard-of-hearing people. Deaf individuals in a hearing setting often feel they are excluded from "hallway" meetings, dialogue between coworkers and other "pop-up"-type conversations. We need clear communication to be aware of what is going on in the workplace and to be able to do our work. Employers should always remember to request an interpreter during departmental meetings, corporate events, and so on, as it is important for Deaf individuals to have equal access to all of the information our coworkers get.

It is time for our workplaces to be more inclusive for Deaf individuals and to be aware of what our needs are and to provide accessibility. I would urge employers to educate themselves about Deaf individuals and their needs and culture (yes, we have our own culture). We value using sign language, so be sure to provide an interpreter if we request one and if it is needed.

Additional Resources:

Americans with Disabilities Act: www.ada.gov

National Association of the Deaf: www.nad.org

Gallaudet University: www.gallaudet.edu