



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)

Race and Ethnicity – Resources for Use With This Video

Background

I'm a 58-year-old white male and want to make an impact at my institution and community with regard to diversity and inclusion and candid discussions on race. I ask myself, what do I have to add? I'm part of the majority and struggle with how to speak with a credible voice. I spent 20 years in the military and worked with people of all races and cultures and now want to know how my story can help others engage in this important conversation. I'm not interested in another training program and want to be seen as a credible leader for those I serve as a chief HR officer.

Topical Discussions

Like most, I went to the Internet to try to find something that spoke to my desire to learn how to be part of a conversation about race as a white person. The following 11 points (I included my own commentary in italics) came from a 2015 article written by Emma Gray and Jessica Samakow. Their advice: If I want to be an ally, I need to educate myself.

1. **Everyone has a race – even you.** *Hey, I'm not the only one with a race. Seems obvious, right? Not so. White is not the "default" race and instead a contributor to the broader issues of race and diversity. I have a story to tell, so share that as a beginning.*
2. **For white people, talking about race is uncomfortable. For people of color, it's a necessity.** *Guilty as charged, and that is why I need to ask the very questions I have avoided. If I speak as an advocate for all people, I speak as a person and not just a white person. Yes, I am more than a skin color and I have a story to tell.*
3. **You're not "color blind."** *Quit telling yourself you "don't see color." We all do; it is visible; it is part of who we are and the story we share. If I recognize that, I can then appreciate the perspective of others.*
4. **You need to recognize that you benefit from white privilege in order to move the conversation forward.** *While uncomfortable to admit, it is true. I never suffered from discrimination, hatred or being judged by my skin color. Maybe it's not so much about "privilege" as it is about "life experience." When I share my stories with others, I become a person who shares the same hopes and dreams that all people aspire to. It's about learning about my journey.*
5. **#BlackLivesMatter doesn't suggest that other lives don't -- it's about making sure that black lives do.** *Ok, I admit I struggled with this; however, here is another way to look at it: it doesn't say other lives don't matter. It's a call to action for those most impacted statistically by violence. The statistics are disturbing. From 2010 through 2012, the annual rate of homicide deaths among non-Hispanic white Americans was 2.5 per 100,000 persons, meaning that about one in every 40,000 white Americans is a homicide victim each year. By*

comparison, the rate of homicide deaths among non-Hispanic black Americans is 19.4 per 100,000 persons, or about 1 in 5,000 people per year.

6. **People of color are allowed to be angry about racism. Don't dismiss that anger, take it in.** *I can get angry about all sorts of things, so why shouldn't people feel angry if they feel minimized? Don't dismiss the anger; use it as a moment to learn about another person's journey in life.*
7. **Everyday racism is subtle and insidious.** *Whether by accident or design, racism can sneak into our lives and those of others in subtle ways. Another reason to maybe speak less and listen (and watch) more.*
8. **Words matter.** *Think before you speak. Are you speaking the language of inclusion or exclusion?*
9. **The conversation about race implicates you, but your voice should not be at the center of it.** *It's not about me personally; it is about structural and societal issues that have long impacted some groups in our society more than others. I want to add my voice and not try to explain away another person's experience.*
10. **"Reverse racism" isn't a thing.** *While trying to argue the validity of "reverse racism," I get caught in a typical argument. Although the position may provide me with a emotional blanket, it does not take into account how, in reality, I have not suffered from widespread institutional and societal challenges associated with my race.*
11. **Don't think you know it all – or even most of it. Listen, listen, listen.** *That sums it up as I begin this journey. I need to listen and reflect. I can't speak to what I have not experienced or learned. Understand my life's journey and those who may have struggled simply for the color of their skin. I don't need to feel guilt; I need to feel empowered to speak as an advocate and ally.*

Summary

1. Educate yourself about the issues of race in America and on our campuses.
2. Be vocal, but take more time to listen and watch.
3. Share your hopes, fears and dreams as a way to build connection to others.
4. Don't be scared, like I was. Be bold, be brave and be an advocate. Speak up!