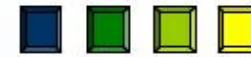


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**EDI PARTNERS GROUP**

*Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Consulting*

2011 PPCII Conference

# DESIGNING AND INSTITUTING DIVERSITY TRAINING TOWARD BUILDING AND SUSTAINING AN INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE CULTURE

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***"Together We Prosper" Conference***

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***“Be the change you wish to see in the world”***

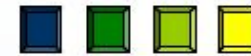
Mahatma Gandhi

## DEFINITION OF DIVERSITY

- Many definitions are applied to diversity – often depends on type of “diversity” to which one is referring and in what context
- It is often personal -- *What does it mean to us?*

*“Diversity is a commitment to recognizing and appreciating the variety of characteristics that make individuals unique in an atmosphere that promotes and celebrates individual and collective achievement.”*

University of Tennessee, Knoxville



## **WORKPLACE DIVERSITY STATEMENT**

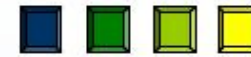
“Diversity is a source of opportunity, whether in employment or customer markets.

Appreciation of the rich mosaic of difference within the workforce fuels group dynamics and helps create an environment where teams can perform to their full potential.

A generalized market approach will not reach the many pockets of value to be found in diverse groups of customers.

Competitive edge can be gained from the variety present in our workforce and customer base, and specific attention to market variation....”

- HSBC Statement on Diversity



## WHY THE NEED FOR WORKPLACE DIVERSITY?

- According to the International Personnel Management Association's Benchmarking Committee, *"diversity efforts in the workplace facilitate the exchange of new perspectives, improve problem solving by inviting different ideas, and create respectful and accepting work environments"*
- Shown a positive impact on high performance where leadership teams include diversity of ages, ethnicity and gender and communication styles
- A diverse workforce also can improve organizational productivity and creativity
- Legal compliance
- Profitability

## WHY THE NEED FOR WORKPLACE DIVERSITY? (Cont'd)

- Demographic labour market changes; the Canadian labour market is currently undergoing fundamental shifts due, in part, to an aging population, a growing demand for highly skilled workers and an increasingly diverse population as a result of immigration
- By the year 2020, approximately two thirds of the Canadian population aged 15-64 will be made up of women, visible minorities, Aboriginal persons, persons with disabilities
- Canadian businesses that are diverse will be better positioned in the international marketplace

## HOW MUST EMPLOYERS RESPOND TO THEIR INCREASINGLY DIVERSE WORKFORCE?

**Answer:**

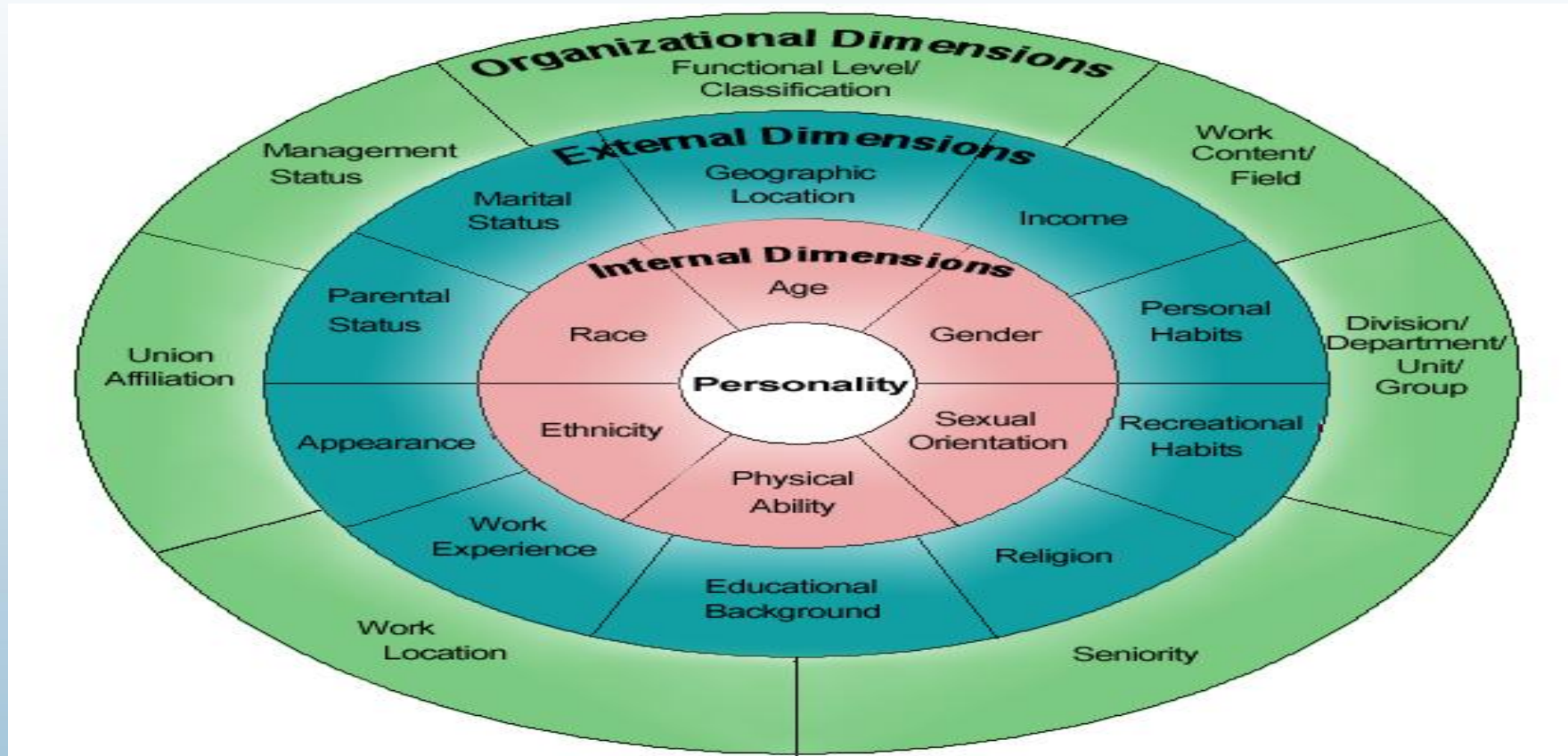
**\* Designing and Instituting Diversity Training \***

**How?** Key question to ask: Where is my organization now? Is it inclusive?  
Where must it be in the future in order to survive?

**Need to consider:**

- How organizational environment can influence workplace behaviour patterns
- Why certain assumptions can impact workplace culture
- What can be done to create an inclusive organization

# FIRST STEP - FOUR LAYERS OF DIVERSITY



**Source:** From Lee Gardenswartz and Anita Rowe, *Diverse Teams at Work*, (Irwin Professional Publishing, 1994)

\*Internal Dimensions and External Dimensions are adapted from Marilyn Loden and Judy B Rosener, *Workforce America!* (Business One Irwin, 1991)

## ELEMENTS OF THE FOUR LAYERS MODEL

### 1. Personality

- includes an individual's likes, dislikes, values, and beliefs
- shaped early in life and is both influenced by, and influences, the other three layers throughout one's lifetime and career choices

### 2. Internal Dimensions

- include aspects of diversity over which we have no control (though "physical ability" can change over time due to choices we make to be active or not, or in cases of illness or accident)
- the layer in which many divisions between and among people exist and which forms the core of many diversity efforts
- include the first things we see in other people, such as race or gender and on which we make many assumptions and base judgements

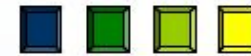
## ELEMENTS OF THE FOUR LAYERS MODEL

### 3. External Dimensions

- these include aspects of our lives over which we have some control over, might change over time, and which usually form the basis for decisions on careers and work styles
- often determines, in part, with whom we develop friendships and what we do for work; also tells us much about whom we like to be with, and decisions we make in hiring, promotions, etc., at work

### 4. Organizational Dimensions

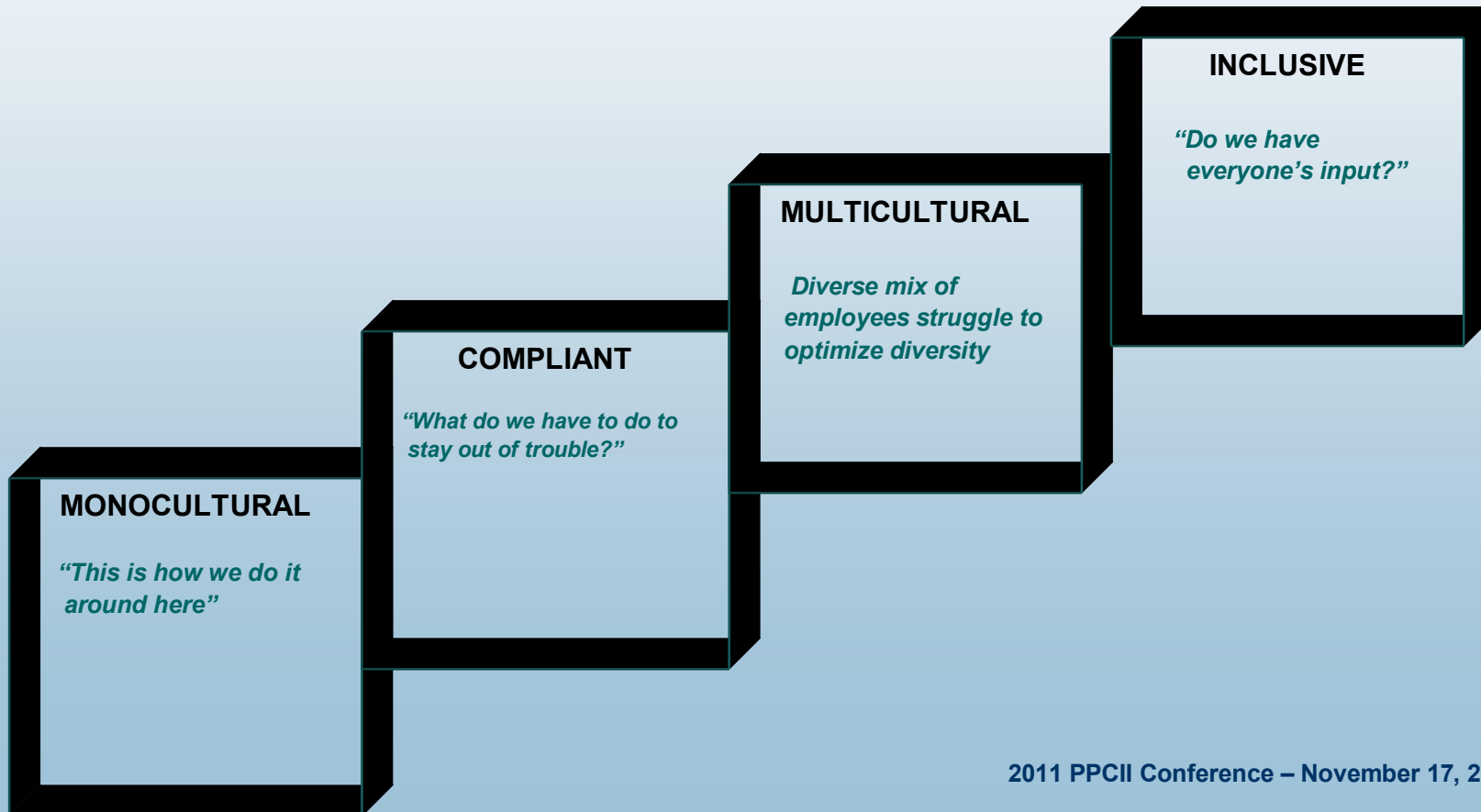
- this layer concerns the aspects of culture found in a work setting
- while much attention of diversity efforts is focused on the internal dimensions, issues of preferential treatment and opportunities for development or promotion are impacted by the aspects of this layer



## **WHY THIS MODEL IS RELEVANT TO DIVERSITY TRAINING**

- it includes the dimensions that shape and impact both the individual and the organization itself
- while the "Internal Dimensions" receive primary attention in certain types of diversity training, it is the elements of the "External" and "Organizational" dimensions that often determine the way people are treated, who "fits" or not in a department, who gets the opportunity for development or promotions, and who gets recognized
- A manager who wants to understand diversity, and be an effective manager of a diverse team, needs to pay attention to all these layers of diversity with the goals of using both differences and similarities to enrich the work environment and bring the organization closer to its mission

## NEXT STEP: CLIMATE ASSESSMENT TO DETERMINE EXTENT OF WORKPLACE DIVERSITY



# STAGE OF ORGANIZATIONAL ENVIRONMENT WILL DETERMINE WHERE TRAINING IS NEEDED

## Monocultural Organization

- is unconscious at best and intentionally discriminatory at worst; its motto might be: *“This is how we do things around here.”*
- might have a diverse work force but only values a majority culture

## Compliant Organization

- still views diversity as a problem; its motto is: *“What do we have to do to stay out of trouble?”* It is a numbers-based organization

## Multicultural Organization

- has a diverse mix of employees with differences in race, age, sexual orientation, disabilities etc.
- often, this organization has met the challenges of compliance but it struggles to make the best use of diversity

## Inclusive Organization

- appreciates what everyone in the organization brings with them; its motto is: *“Do we have everyone’s input?”*
- let’s not miss a chance to be smarter than we are

## KEY QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER PRIOR TO INITIATING DIVERSITY TRAINING

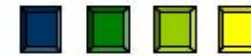
- Before going forward with a plan for diversity training, the following questions need to be addressed:
  1. **What is currently driving the interest in diversity training?**
  2. **What outcomes are desired?** – What is the training expected to accomplish? (E.g. improved inter-group relations, fairer hiring and promotional practices, better grasp of the organizational culture?)
  3. **Is the training only one part of a larger diversity effort?** – If so, how will training complement or impact other interventions
  4. **What types of organizational data can inform the design and content of training?** – Is there adequate data about specific organizational needs in relation to diversity? Will a needs assessment or other data collection be required? E.g. employee survey, business statistics etc.

## WHAT SHOULD DIVERSITY TRAINING LOOK LIKE IN BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE?

- While each organization's workforce will determine the answer to this question, there are three areas that need to be considered:
  1. **Awareness Programs**
  2. **Trans-Cultural Skills Training**
  3. **Organizational Development and Transformation**

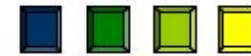
## AWARENESS PROGRAMS

- programs which help the organization to become aware of, respect and positively value the diversity that exists within and around it
- Includes awareness of cultural groups, their values, behavioural tendencies and lifestyles
- May involve raising consciousness about inequities and clearing up prejudices, which inevitably occur when differing groups work side by side or newcomers enter an organization that is unfamiliar to them
- Awareness programs can range from top management meetings and retreats to employee directed initiatives



## TRANS-CULTURAL SKILLS TRAINING

- Awareness of differences needs to be complemented by appropriate changes of behaviour which enable teams to work with each other more successfully
- A need for communication skills in which people learn how to speak and listen to each other more effectively across cultural boundaries
- Acculturation programs that prepare individuals for expatriate assignments or which orient international personnel in their new environments and assist their local personnel to work with them
- “Culture general skills” – skills which enable managers to be aware of and search out specific areas in which employees may differ and to respond effectively to concerns stemming from those differences



## **ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSFORMATION**

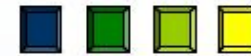
- every organization has a culture all its own, shaped by people who founded it and make it up; each adds its own unique layer of national, regional and industry cultures in which it functions
- when markets become more global and the nature of the workforce shifts, organizational structures, policies and cultures must shift to accommodate the change
- the process of cultural transformation is generally slow and, as such, “transition management” interventions may have to be taken to move an organization into full effectiveness toward an inclusive workplace culture

## **QUESTIONS THAT MUST BE ANSWERED ONCE A DIVERSITY TRAINING PLAN HAS BEEN ACCEPTED**

1. Who participates?
2. What is the broad content?
3. What is the content focus?
4. How many participants per session?
5. What is the participant mix?
6. Is it required (mandatory/voluntary)?
7. How is it designed?
8. What training length and sequence?
9. Who conducts it?
10. What training methodology is to be utilized?

## CONCLUSION

- In response to a growing multicultural workforce, more organizations are recognizing that diversity training creates good staff relations, effective business practices and compliance with human rights laws
- Diversity training can no longer be treated as a stand-alone intervention but must instead be part of a larger and more integrated approach
- Given that each organization has unique circumstances, in order to be effective and transformative, training considerations must be closely aligned with the specific diversity-related needs
- The best diversity model is one in which an organization pursues an integrated approach from a mono-cultural culture towards the goal of an inclusive culture



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**END**