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Diversity & Inclusion

Glossary

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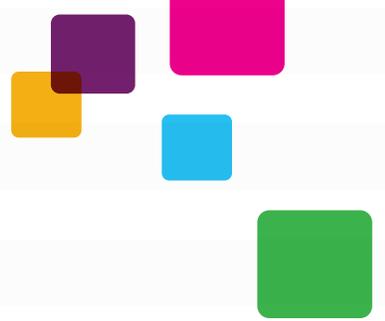




Since diversity, equity and inclusion terminology has evolved over the years, we have created this glossary to share with your colleagues, teams, and leaders, allowing all stakeholders in your organization to speak the same language. This list isn't exhaustive. As DEI develops, many of these terms may continue to evolve. We will strive to keep learning and growing our vocabulary together.



Diversity and Inclusion Glossary



Click on **Glossary by alphabet** for main menu.

a

Ableism

Discrimination against people with mental and/or physical disabilities; social structures that favor able-bodied individuals

Affirmative action

Proactive policies and procedures for remedying the effect of past discrimination and ensuring the implementation of equal employment and educational opportunities

Ageism

Discrimination against individuals because of their age, often based on stereotypes

Ally

Someone who is not a member of an underrepresented group but who supports that group

Anti-oppression

Recognizing and deconstructing the systemic, institutional and personal forms of disempowerment certain groups use over others; actively challenging the different forms of oppression

Antiracism

The work of actively opposing discrimination based on race by advocating for changes in political, economic and social life

Glossary by alphabet

b

B.A.M.E.

This acronym is used mostly in the United Kingdom to identify Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people.

Belonging

The feeling of security and support when there is a sense of acceptance, inclusion and identity for a member of a certain group or place

Bias

A positive or negative inclination toward a person, group or community; can lead to stereotyping

Biphobia

The fear and hatred of, or discomfort with people who love and are sexually attracted to more than one gender

Bigotry

Intolerant prejudice that glorifies one's group and denigrates members of other groups

B.I.P.O.C.

An acronym for Black Indigenous People of Color

C

Cisgender

A term some use to describe people who are not transgender

Glossary by alphabet

Classism

Biased attitudes and beliefs that result in, and help to justify the unfair treatment of, individuals or groups because of their socioeconomic grouping

Colorblind

Term describes personal, group and institutional policies or practices that do not consider race or ethnicity as a determining factor; the term “colorblind” de-emphasizes or ignores race and ethnicity as a large part of one’s identity.

Conscious bias

In its extreme, is characterized by overt negative behavior that can be expressed through physical and verbal harassment or more subtle means such as exclusion.

Corporate social responsibility

A business model that helps a company be socially accountable to itself, its stakeholders and the public; CSR initiatives seek to make a positive impact on local communities and the environment.

Cultural assimilation

When an individual, family or group gives up certain aspects of its culture to adapt to the dominant culture

Cultural competence

Refers to an individual’s or an organization’s knowledge and understanding of different cultures and perspectives

Cultural intelligence (CQ)

The capability to adapt, relate and work effectively across cultures

Glossary by alphabet

Cultural sensitivity

Being aware that cultural differences and similarities between people exist without assigning them a value

d

Disability

Physical or mental impairment, the perception of a physical or mental impairment or a history of having had a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

Discrimination

Unfavorable or unfair treatment toward an individual or group based on their race, ethnicity, color, national origin or ancestry, religion, socioeconomic status, education, sex, marital status, parental status, veteran's status, political affiliation, language, age, gender, physical or mental abilities, sexual orientation or gender identity

Diversity

The similarities and differences of people found in our workforce, our customers and in the community in which we serve. Diversity includes many characteristics that may be visible, such as race, gender and age, and it also includes less obvious characteristics such as personality style, ethnicity, ability, education, religion, job function, life experience, lifestyle, sexual orientation, geography, regional differences, work experience and family situations that make us similar to and different from one another.

e

Emotional tax

The combination of being on guard to protect against bias and feeling different from peers at work because of gender, race and/or ethnicity and the associated effects on health, well-being and ability to thrive at work

Equality

Evenly distributed access to resources and opportunities necessary for a safe and healthy life

Equity

Fair treatment for all while striving to identify and eliminate inequities and barriers. Equity promotes justice, impartiality and fairness within the procedures, processes, and distribution of resources by institutions or systems.

To create a truly inclusive work culture, the everyday language we use needs to ensure that everyone within a business feels welcome.

Glossary by alphabet

f

Feminism

Theory and practice that advocates for educational and occupational equity between men and women; undermines traditional cultural practices that support the subjugation of women by men and the devaluation of women's contributions to society

g

Gaslighting

A form of psychological manipulation in which a person or a group covertly sows seeds of doubt in a targeted individual or group, making them question their memory, perception or judgment, often evoking in them cognitive dissonance and other changes, including low self-esteem

Gay

People of the same sex who are attracted sexually and emotionally to each other; more commonly used to describe male attraction to other males

Gender

The socially constructed ideas about behavior, actions and roles a particular sex performs

Gender binary

A classification system consisting of two genders, men and women

Gender expansive (gender non-confirming)

Used to describe those who view their gender identity as one of many possible genders beyond strictly man or woman

Gender identity

A personal conception of one's gender; often in relation to a gender opposition between masculinity and femininity

Glossary by alphabet

Gender-neutral

Used to denote a unisex or all-gender inclusive space, language

h

Heterosexism

Social structures and practices that serve to elevate and enforce heterosexuality while subordinating or suppressing other forms of sexuality

Homophobia

A fear of individuals who are not heterosexual

Human rights

The basic rights and freedoms to which all humans are entitled, often held to include the right to life and liberty, freedom of thought and expression and equality before the law.

i

Identity group

A particular group, culture or community with which an individual identifies or shares a sense of belonging. Individual agency is crucial for identity development; no person should be pressured to identify with any existing group, but instead the freedom to self-identify on their terms.

Implicit bias

Implicit biases are negative associations that people unknowingly hold; they are expressed automatically and without conscious awareness. Many studies have indicated that implicit biases affect individuals' attitudes and actions, thus creating real-world implications, even though individuals may not even be aware that those biases exist within themselves.

Inclusion

The act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported and valued to fully participate. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people.

Glossary by alphabet

Inclusive language

Words or phrases that include all potential audiences from any identity group; inclusive language does not assume or connote the absence of any group. An example of gender-inclusive language is using “police officers” instead of “policemen.”

Indigenous

Originating from a culture with ancient ties to the land in which a group resides

Individual racism

The beliefs, attitudes and actions of individuals that support or perpetuate racism; can occur at both a conscious and unconscious level and can be active or passive

Institutional racism

Refers specifically to how institutional policies and practices create different outcomes for different racial groups; the institutional policies may never mention any racial group, but their effect is to create advantages for whites and oppression and disadvantage for people from groups classified as people of color.

Internalized racism

Occurs in a racist system when a racial group racism oppresses supports the supremacy and dominance of the dominating group by maintaining or participating in the set of attitudes, behaviors, social structures and ideologies that undergird the dominating group’s power

Intersectionality

How oppressive institutions (racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, xenophobia, classism, etc.) are interconnected and cannot be examined separately from one another.

Latinx

A gender-neutral or nonbinary alternative to Latino or Latina.

Glossary by alphabet

Lesbian

A woman whose primary sexual attraction is to other women.

LGBTQ (QIA)

Acronym for “Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Queer (Questioning Intersex Allies)”; the description of the movement expanded from gay and lesbian to LGBTQ and some include questioning, intersex, allies, same-gender-loving, asexual, pansexual and polyamorous

Marginalization

The placement of minority groups and cultures outside mainstream society; all that varies from the norm of the dominant culture is devalued and at times perceived as deviant and regressive

Microaggressions

The everyday verbal, nonverbal and environmental slights, snubs or insults – whether intentional or unintentional – that communicate hostile, derogatory or negative messages to target people based solely upon their marginalized group membership.

Micro-inequity

Subtle, often unconscious, messages and behavior that devalue, discourage and impair workplace performance; it can appear as individuals who are overlooked, singled out or ignored and is based on characteristics such as race, gender, ability, etc. Micro-inequities can be conveyed through facial expressions, gestures, tone of voice and/or choice of words.

Microinsults

Communications that subtly exclude, negate or nullify the thoughts, feelings or experiential reality of marginalized individuals

Microinvalidations

Verbal and nonverbal communications that subtly convey rudeness and insensitivity and demean a person’s racial heritage or identity

Glossary by alphabet

Multiculturalism

The practice of acknowledging and respecting the various cultures, religions, races, ethnicities, attitudes and opinions within an environment; the theory and practice promote the peaceful coexistence of all identities and people

n

Non-binary

An umbrella term for gender identities that are neither male nor female identities that are outside or between the gender binary

o

Oppression

The systemic and pervasive nature of social inequality woven throughout social institutions as well as embedded within individual consciousness; oppression signifies a hierarchical relationship in which dominant or privileged groups benefit, often in unconscious ways, from the disempowerment of subordinated or targeted groups.

p

People/person of color

Many individuals who identify as members of racially oppressed groups also claim the political identity of being people of color. This in no way diminishes their specific cultural or racial identity; instead it is an affirmation of the multiple layers of the identity of every individual.

Personal gender pronoun

The pronoun or set of pronouns that an individual personally uses and would like others to use when referring to them

Privilege

Refers to the unquestioned and unearned set of advantages, entitlements, benefits and choices bestowed on people solely because of who they are

r

Racial and ethnic identity

The racial and ethnic categories that an individual chooses to describe themselves based on such factors as biological heritage, physical appearance, cultural affiliation, early socialization and personal experience

Glossary by alphabet

Reverse discrimination

Unfair treatment of members of a dominant or majority group

S

Sex

System of classification based on biological and physical differences, such as primary and secondary sexual characteristics; differentiated from gender, which is based on the social construction and expectations of the categories “men” and “women”

Sexual orientation

The direction of one’s sexual attraction toward the same gender, opposite gender or other genders; it is on a continuum and not necessarily a set of absolute categories.

Social justice

A vision of society in which the distribution of resources is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure

t

Transgender

An individual whose gender identity differs from the societal expectations of their physical sex; transgender or “trans” does not imply any form of sexual orientation

U

Unconscious bias

The subliminal tendency to favor certain people or groups of people based upon learned stereotypes; it can be interchangeable with the term “implicit bias.” It refers to social stereotypes about certain groups of people that individuals form outside their conscious awareness. Everyone holds unconscious beliefs about various social and identity groups, and these biases stem from one’s tendency to organize social worlds by categorizing.

Underrepresented groups (URG)

Group that is less represented in one subset (e.g., employees in a particular sector, such as IT) than in the general population; this can refer to gender, race/ethnicity, physical or mental ability, LGBTQ+ status and many more.



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