



Glossary of DEI Terms

Understanding DEI vocabulary sets the foundation for creating a culture of inclusion.



Anti-Racism

Anti-racism is the active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies, and practices, so that power is redistributed and shared equitably. A person who practices anti-racism is someone who works to become aware of how racism affects the lived experience of people of color and Indigenous peoples; how racism is systemic and has been part of many foundational aspects of society throughout history; and how white people participate, often unknowingly, in racism.

Belonging

Belonging refers to the level of security and comfortability an employee feels at work when they are accepted, included, and supported. Feelings of belonging at work support engagement, high performance, and employee well-being and help teams build cohesion and achieve organizational goals.

Bias

Bias is learned perceptions, images, and stereotypes that operate often automatically and involuntarily, affecting both our perceptions and behavior. Bias is an inflexible, positive or negative, conscious or unconscious belief about a particular group of people. Such bias may show up in subtle behaviors but may have significant impact.

Covering

Covering is concealing something about one's self-identity to avoid making other people feel uncomfortable or lessen attention to a given characteristic. For example, a woman might avoid

talking about being a mother because she does not want her colleagues to think she is less committed to her work, or a veteran might refrain from challenging a joke about the military, so she is not seen as overly strident.

(Cultural) Assimilation

(Cultural) assimilation is the process in which a subordinate group or culture comes to resemble a society's dominant group or assume the values, behaviors, and beliefs of another group. Throughout history, there have been different examples of cultural assimilation that have included voluntary and involuntary assimilation. Assimilation could also involve acculturation, where individuals and groups adopt and adjust to new cultural environments.

Diversity

Diversity is the combination of unique skills, experiences, perspectives, and cultural backgrounds that make us who we are and ultimately benefit our global customers. It's a full range of visible and invisible identities, including (but not limited to) gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, physical and cognitive ability, sexual orientation, military status, education, religion, age/generation, social class, and language. Individuals and groups are not one-dimensional, but are shaped by multiple and intersecting identities.

Dominant Culture/Insider Culture

Dominant culture/insider culture may include norms and values of individuals who do not form the majority and/or have relatively little decision-making power in an organization. These norms may include many things that do not look, sound, or feel like the dominant culture.

Glossary of DEI Terms (Cont'd)

Equity

Equity is the fairness of access, opportunity, and advancement for all. Equity looks to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. It's also about ensuring that policies, practices, and systems provide all individuals access to the opportunities, resources, and recognition to be successful.

Ethnicity

Ethnicity refers to a person's identification with a group or groups based upon characteristics such as shared history, ancestry, geographic and language origin, and culture.

Group Membership

Group membership is how we identify ourselves and how the world identifies us. These can be visible (e.g., skin color) and invisible (e.g., education).

Inclusion

Inclusion means providing an environment where our employees feel valued, trusted, connected, and informed. It's about recognizing and valuing the different lived experiences of our teams and leveraging their unique competencies and perspectives, so that everyone may experience ownership and empowerment.

Micro-affirmations

Micro-affirmations are a way to counter the micro-aggressions we see or experience. They are small gestures of respect and inclusion that anyone can make and are a way of becoming more consciously fair, more thoughtful about our biases, and more respectful in our perceptions of others. Some examples might include simply affirming others; acknowledging contributions; saying hello, thank-you and goodbye; and using someone's name correctly.

Micro-aggressions

Micro-aggressions are small or subtle slights that take a toll on the target. They are often the result of biases and are the small ways in which we see bias at work. Micro-aggressions are actions that are sometimes so subtle that they leave the targets wondering if they were really slighted or are just being overly sensitive. Some examples may show up in terms of who you sit next to on the bus or tram, who you hold the door open for, eye-rolling, mispronouncing a person's name repeatedly, or failing to give credit where it's due.

Perception Trap

A perception trap is our immediate reaction toward an event or occurrence that may be different from the perception of the individual or group directly experiencing the event.

Race

Race is a social construct referring to the categories society places on individuals based on physical characteristics such as skin color, hair type, facial form, and eye shape. It is now widely accepted that this classification system was created for social and political reasons. In fact, there are more genetic and biological differences within racial groups (as defined by society) than between them.

Racism

Racism is a belief that race is the primary determinant of human traits and capabilities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race. Racism drives the marginalization and/or oppression of people of color based on a socially constructed racial hierarchy that privileges white people.

Sorting

Sorting is a critical way to support inclusive behaviors by looking at situations from multiple levels and perspectives.