Introduction

Diversity in the Workplace

Valuing in the Workplace

Summary

Valuing Diversity in the Workplace

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Page

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Press the Next button in the upper right to begin...

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Enter The Course

Please indicate whether or not you will be using assistive technology with this course.

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Important Course Instructions - Please Read

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Important Course Instructions - Please Read

Navigating This Course

Click each button below to learn about the different controls you will use to navigate through this course.

Left Hand Menu

The left hand menu allows you to skip to the different sections in the course.

Navigation Controls

The general navigation controls can be used to take you to the next page or back to a previous page. The middle button is the “home” button and can be used to take you back to the beginning of the course.

The general navigation controls can be used to take you to the next page or back to a
About This Course

This course is 2.5 credits and will take you approximately 2.5 hours to complete including passing the final exam and taking the course summary.

To complete the course and receive continuing education credits you must achieve an 80% score on the post-test and complete the course evaluation.

Click on the image to the left to view and/or print a copy of this course. Note: this copy is for reference only. This course must be viewed online to receive full credit.

Learning Objectives

After you finish this course, you will be able to:

1. Explain key dimensions of diversity.
2. Summarize ways that diversity impacts the workplace.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of ways to establish an inclusive work climate that reflects a value for people from diverse backgrounds.

About This Course

This course highlights the importance of recognizing and valuing diversity in the workplace. The quotation above suggests two very important foundations to working effectively with the diverse workforce in the United States today:

It is perfectly all right to disagree with one another.

It is essential to show respect for ourselves and our co-workers.

The differences and similarities that we share with our colleagues contribute to the successes and difficulties we experience. The key to valuing differences is to be appropriate about recognizing them so that they don’t hold us back from performing at the highest level possible. We will explore this idea in more detail in the next sections of this course.

3. Variety or multiformity: "Charles Darwin saw in the diversity of species the principles of evolution that operated to generate the species: variation, competition and selection" (Scientific American).

2. A point or respect in which things differ.
1. The fact or quality of being diverse; difference.

The word ‘diversity’ is one that you may be accustomed to hearing in a variety of contexts. People use it in many different ways, so let’s first take a look at the American Heritage Dictionary definition of the word:

**What is Diversity?**

In this course, diversity reflects ways in which individuals differ, but it is also about more than just differences. It’s about recognizing differences, accepting them, and allowing them to change our perceptions. Even when two people come from very different backgrounds, the very act of working to understand each other represents a very important point of commonality!

Some employees have real difficulties adjusting to a diverse workplace and interacting with different types of people. There is no one correct way to value diversity – In fact, working with people different from you in important ways may feel like a problem. If so, it may be a good idea to question how you - and your assumptions - might be part of the problem!

**It’s More Than Just Differences**

**Dimensions of Diversity**

For many people, the idea of addressing diversity means addressing race/ethnicity and gender. However, there are a great deal more dimensions of diversity that may be very important to how we see ourselves and each other. Some of the dimensions most often address include:

- Race
- Ethnicity
- Sex
- Gender
- Age
- Sexual Orientation
- Physical Ability
- Mental Ability
- National Origin
- Economic Status
Language
Regional Affiliation

Dimensions of Diversity in Business

Fast Learner - Slow Learner
Introvert - Extrovert
Controlling type - People person
Liberal - Conservative
Scholar - Sports orientated
Married - Single

........
........
........
........
........

Single
Sports orientated
Conservative
People person
Extrovert
Slow learner
Married

In a business environment we have even more differences that have to be recognized:

Scholar
Liberal
Controlling type
Dimensions of Diversity in Business

Seniority, experience, position level, salaried/exempt, union/non-union, education, and training are also key aspects of diversity that impact how a person behaves and how others may treat her/him. Co-workers with different “functional diversity” basically have different kinds of technical training. That training may relate to how they see themselves, how they see the nature of the organization, and how they treat their co-workers.

It might seem a bit overwhelming, but the dimensions of diversity that we need to value most actually include all the differences and similarities we encounter. The key is not to be a “mind reader” regarding how to work with others, but rather to understand how to go about learning ways to work most effectively with those who may have different perspectives than our own.

In the past ten years, the United States workforce has changed tremendously. The modern workplace is made up of individuals who are often very proud of some aspects of who they are: gender, sexual orientation, religion – basically, all the other components that make her/him unique.

The challenge at work is: How can we empower these diverse individuals to work as a team? Organizations that aren’t able to develop effective teamwork generally fail. In this way, failing to embrace diversity may have serious legal costs for corporations.

Valuing others is something that happens in our minds as well as our action. In order to communicate effectively, our perceptions and vocabulary must change with the times.

*Click here to read more.*

The Changing Face of the United States

Take a Minute to Think

To be clear, the idea is not that we should feel the same about everyone, nor that we should feel positively about everyone all the time. More important than having “fluffy, happy thoughts” about everyone we work with (which is not realistic), is to be more consciously aware of the perceptions that we have about certain groups and people.

We all have these attitudes whether we like them or not.

In the drop down box below are some sentence stems. Read each one and then complete them with your own first reaction.

You don’t need to type them in, but you might want to write them down on a piece of paper for your own purposes.

Men are .....
Women are ....

African-Americans are ....

Latinos are ....

Asians are ....

Caucasians are ....

Gays are ....

Lesbians are ....

Native Americans are ....

Teenagers are ....

Click here when you have finished.

Eye contact is highly affected by cultural background. Many cultures view direct eye contact as a sign of defiance or disrespect, but in the United States mainstream culture maintaining eye contact is generally interpreted as a sign of respect and assertiveness.

It should now be clear that the heart of valuing diversity is having a conscious awareness of the differences and similarities we have with other INDIVIDUALS (not groups). Growing up in different regions, countries, and backgrounds results in types of behavior that might seem confusing or even threatening to those not accustomed to people acting that way. No matter who you are, your culture has conditioned you to see some behaviors - yours - as largely “normal,” while other kinds of behavior are “different.” The following are some examples of ways that culture affects our interpersonal style, including in the workplace:

Proxemics basically means our physical “comfort zone” in terms of how much physical space we prefer to have between ourselves and other people. Some cultures value giving people a wide berth, while in others, keeping a distance would be interpreted as an insult.

Cultural Behavior

Food preference and style of eating are also highly socialized cultural behaviors. Everything from the smell and texture of food to means of eating (with hands, knife and fork, chopsticks, etc.) is shaped by one’s culture and may have cultural significance that is not clear to others.

Religious ceremonies are often deeply personal and meaningful, so asking a person to explain what her/his religion is, and what it means to her/him may be an excellent way to understand her/him better. On the other hand, many people value “keeping work separate,” and may not be inclined to discuss religion (or politics, money, family matters,
etc.) with co-workers.

**Treatment of authority** is a culture-bound behavior that is likely to play out at work regardless of a person’s specific background. Many cultures have developed complicated and/or rigid hierarchies, and so individuals with this background may pay a lot of attention to rank or seniority. This hierarchical perspective highlights a way in which co-workers’ backgrounds may translate into highly different interpersonal styles at work as compared to their personal lives.

**Cultural Behavior**

Religious beliefs and/or worship practices?

Foods that your co-workers like to eat?

More employees who are 65 years or older?

The number and types of roles that women have?

The prevalence of people with disabilities?

*Click here* to find out more.

**How Does Diversity Affect Work?**

Take a moment to consider your own place of work. What changes in the workforce have you noticed since beginning your own professional life?

Have you experienced any difference in:

**Affirmative Action (AA)**-A plan put in place by President Lyndon Johnson in 1965. It requires a business’ workforce to mirror the community. For example, if a community is 85% Asian and 25% Mexican, one would expect the workforce to have the same sort of proportion.

**Assimilation**-A process where a minority culture is expected to adopt the behaviors and standards of the majority culture. For example, when women first joined the workforce in the 1960's and 19760's, they were often expected to wear business suits and de-feminize their appearance to match the norm of the time: men in business suits.

**Bias**-An inclination towards a certain belief, often interfering with objective judgment.

**Cultural Voyeurism**-This term refers to a way that people may try to learn about others in a way that ultimately “exoticizes” them and highlights the ways in which they are different.

**Discrimination** is the ACT (i.e. a behavior) of giving unequal treatment to an individual or group of people because they are members of a certain culture or race, or because of other differences. People are denied equal opportunities because of their differences.
Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) - Introduced as part of civil rights legislation in 1964, this effort attempted to ensure positions in the workplace for “protected classes,” which included groups like women, veterans, African-Americans, and people with disabilities. Because this program was not entirely effective, Lyndon Johnson introduced the Affirmative Action mandate in 1965.

Ethnocentrism is the tendency to look at the world primarily from the perspective of one’s own culture. Ethnocentrism often entails the belief that one’s own race or ethnic group is the most important and/or that some or all aspects of its culture are superior to those of other groups.

Organizational/Office Culture - Work settings vary widely in terms of how they prioritize accepting and valuing diversity. The case may be that the management and mission of an organization are proactive about emphasizing the importance of diversity to the organization’s success. On the other hand, some organizations may focus on the financial “bottom line” without drawing much attention to the important roles that diverse individuals play.

Prejudice - An opinion based on biases, without complete information. Also refers to an irrational hatred of a specific group (often ethnic or religious).

Sexism - A prejudice against a particular gender. Often appears in the form of role stereotyping.

Stereotype - A conventional, usually oversimplified opinion applied to a particular group.

These beliefs, feelings, thoughts, contexts, and laws are the factors that we can use to value or to work against diversity and harmony at work. Fortunately, there are a number of specific skills and techniques to increase our awareness and appreciation of diversity in the workplace.

Legislation and Key Terms

Affirmative Action (AA)
Assimilation
Bias
Cultural Voyeurism
Discrimination
Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)
Ethnocentrism
Organizational/Office Culture
Prejudice
Sexism
Stereotype
Summary

Click on each of the terms below, then on Summary:

The recognition of having privilege can be very difficult to deal with, particularly when it plays out with another person, even at work. For this reason, if you find yourself thinking something like, “I don’t see race/physical ability/sexual orientation/etc. - I only see people,” you are exhibiting a naive- and potentially problematic avoidance of important dimensions that make individuals unique. For people who feel dis-empowered or marginalized, these factors are not something they can avoid in daily life, whereas those with privilege may do so.

Privilege

Most societies have some groups that are given a disproportionate amount of resources or power. In the United States, males, Caucasians, young people, those with formal education, people in the middle-to-upper-class, wealth, and status in the community and/or the workplace are all characteristics or groups that enjoy privilege in this country.

Those with privilege may feel some sense of discomfort about having it - particularly if the privilege comes from something like racial/ethnic status or gender. These are not factors that one can generally control, but they do allow individuals to have unearned advantages in a number of contexts including work.

It is the law

It makes good business sense.

It creates a more inclusive environment.

People with disabilities must be consulted before an accommodation is offered or created on their behalf. Focusing on the availability of ramps, escalators, and assistive technology accommodates employees with a range of abilities and disabilities.

Americans with Disabilities Act

Americans with disabilities are involved in most all employment settings, and make significant contributions to our country’s economy. There are an estimated 54 million Americans with disabilities, so businesses who incorporate employees and consumers into their organization vastly increase the scope of their services. A key factor related to Americans with disabilities has to do with physical access to facilities. Such access should be provided because:

Activity
Click on the correct response.

Treatment of authority is a culture-based behavior that is likely to play out at work regardless of a person's specific __________.

A. culture  
B. background  
C. position  
D. tenure  
E. All of the above

Keep trying.  
Keep trying.  
Keep trying.  
Keep trying.  
Keep trying.

Great, all answers are correct.

Take the Assessment

Orientation Toward Diversity

Before we get into specific areas to target regarding valuing diversity in the workplace, please complete the following brief assessment.

PLEASE NOTE these results will not be seen by anyone but you - this exercise is intended to give you a concrete look at some of the ways you experience yourself and others.

When you are ready to begin please click the Take the Assessment button below.

Individual Diversity Skills

As you may have guessed from reading your scores on the diversity assessment, there are three basic areas where individuals can develop diversity skills.

Click on each:
Knowledge

Facts of historical developments, cultural differences, causes of exclusion.

Attitudes

Flexibility, willingness, warmth, empathy.

Behaviors and Skills

Communications, negotiation, and conflict management.

As noted earlier, the first step in valuing diversity is to take a clear look at your automatic beliefs regarding others. Once you have a concrete understanding of what those assumptions are, you can be proactive in deciding whether those thoughts are accurate. Armed with that knowledge, you can interact more effectively with a wide variety of people because you will be behaving based on what you KNOW about a person, not simply reacting to old, generalized beliefs.

Individual Diversity Skills at Work

You’ve already taken a first step toward valuing diversity by taking this course! In this section, we focus on some specific skills you can use to increase your awareness and appreciation of people from diverse backgrounds at work.

Individual Diversity Skills at Work

We already noted the importance of learning historical facts about different groups so as to understand how individuals in those groups may experience the work environment. A simple search online may help to illuminate what are the major historical events that are relevant for people in a given group. Similarly, finding out what are the current events related to a person will be likely to fill out your knowledge base of what s/he brings to work.

Equally important is to not assume that an individual person “represents” or embodies any group as-a-whole. You can avoid stereotyping by asking questions to understand the person that much better. You might want to refer back to your responses in the “Diversity Assessment” you completed in the previous section. Your responses reflect an important part of what you bring to the table - your own assumptions!

Empathize by expressing appreciation for the person’s perspective. Doing so will make it much more likely that s/he may feel more comfortable with you.

Ask open questions (ones that can’t be answered “yes” or “no”: “What is that like for you?”)

Restate what s/he has said to show that you’re listening, and to get clarification (“So you’re saying that there are times when you feel uncomfortable during meetings?”)

Often, increasing your knowledge involves having appropriate conversations with your
co-workers. The basic principles of “active listening” apply here:

Expanding Your Knowledge

Each of these techniques is likely to enhance your ability to value people from diverse backgrounds at work.

Some other ideas to keep in mind regarding increasing your knowledge of diversity in your workplace include *(click on each)*:

Don’t pretend to know what you don’t!

Identify your own cultural identity

Learn about your organization

Expanding Your Knowledge

Attitudes

The key to understanding how attitudes relate to valuing diversity at work is evident in the following scenario:

What do you think is the supervisor’s basis for asking the new employee to change how she self-identifies?

A supervisor at a community mental health center is meeting with a new administrative assistant. The Supervisor is a White male from the Northeast of the United States, and the new employee is a first-generation Korean-American woman named Jung-Heouk from Northern California.

The supervisor has difficulty pronouncing Jung-Heouk’s name, and finally sighs and says “Is there any way you might be willing to be called June or something more common like that?”

Attitudes

The idea of a “common” or “normal” name is itself based on the supervisor’s own life experience as a White male, rather than any objective standard of “good” versus “bad” names.

In the scenario, it would be far more appropriate for the supervisor to simply own the fact that he will need to make an effort to learn how to pronounce Jung-Heouk’s name appropriately. Doing otherwise is an example of *ethnocentrism*.

The most important aspect of improving one’s attitudes is to recognize the thoughts that make up an overall attitude. It is much easier to be flexible and empathic with culturally dissimilar co-workers if you recognize that your attitudes are just thoughts, rather than objective facts.
Look for consistency—do you have the same first thought each time you meet a person from this group? If so, push stereotypes aside—learn to shove the first thoughts aside long enough to see the individual!

Having open communication with colleagues rather than avoiding those who are different is the best way to learn about how their attitudes overlap and differ from your own.

Ethnocentrism is the tendency to see the world primarily from the perspective of your own culture. It involves believing that your own group is superior to other groups in some ways. This perspective is the opposite of valuing diversity.

Behavior and Skills

Behavior involves things that we do (such as talking, gesturing, and nonverbal body language) as well as things that we do not do (avoiding a colleague). There are some specific actions we can take to make a positive contribution to the office climate, and most of them involve being inclusive and having respectful, open communication.

The words we use have power, so it is important to be thoughtful about what we say. To complicate things, the appropriate terminology changes over time, leaving some people more likely to simply avoid others rather than risk offending them.

*Click here for an example.*

Behavior and Skills

There has been a tendency for “political correctness” to ironically stifle the flow of communication that would ultimately improve relationships at work. In most cases, asking a person how s/he identifies in terms of her/his cultural background is a key first step to having clearer communication.

Also remember that some people communicate more with their nonverbal behavior, so a given person's communication style may not match a person who tends to be more verbally -direct. Attending to nonverbal cues such as proxemics, facial expression, and eye contact will also give valuable behavioral cues about how to communicate effectively.

Develop clear behavioral expectations, and equally clear procedures for dealing with those who violate them.

Develop a management style to encourage diversity.

Know what to do if you or someone else feels discriminated against.
You can tell your colleagues, coworkers and staff how much you value them and their contribution any day of the year. You really don’t need an occasion—little surprises and tokens of your appreciation spread throughout the year help the people in your work life feel valued all year long.

Behavior and Skills - Tips

Some other tips for setting up a climate in which diverse perspectives are valued include:

- growth in the hiring, retention, and promotion of women and minorities
- increase in business with clients that explicitly value and reward diversity
- nurturing of an inclusive workplace culture

Individuals make up the workplace, and leadership in any organization plays an important role in setting the tone for the role of diversity. Most organizations have some sort of diversity initiative. The success of diversity programs is usually measured through several factors including:

Organizational Diversity Initiatives

- a challenge of the status quo
- an understanding of what a diversity issue is
- supportive and committed leadership
- an organization-wide assessment

Some organizations are very active in promoting diversity, while others may not see diversity as a key issue. Organizations that maintain an active, thriving diversity initiative generally do so by incorporating four essential components:

Organizational Diversity Initiatives - Four Essential Components

*Click here* to see ways in which an organization can show an enduring commitment to valuing diversity in the workplace.

- A policy or business practice (formal, informal, internal, or external) has a **different** impact on a particular group.
- Some practice **happen more frequently** to a particular group (for example, who gets to go to meetings—who runs them, who is present to observe and who is not, or who gets real feedback on their work and who does not).
• The potential barrier is **more difficult for one group to overcome** (upward mobility for a particular group within an organization, including who is represented in leadership positions and who is not—"glass or color ceilings").

An organization has a clearly-defined diversity issue (opportunity or problem) when one or more of the following situations is evident:

**Indicators of a Diversity Issue at Work**

A diversity issue exists when the company policy or business practice affects employees of different backgrounds unequally. In other words, certain practices produce outcomes that affect the majority differently from the up-and-coming minorities in the organization. If the practice is inclusive, everyone benefits. If the practice is exclusive of difference, certain underrepresented employees might suffer adversely.

Having a diversity issue is not necessarily a bad thing. Doing nothing about it is where organizations go wrong.

**Top 5 Organizational Best Practices for Valuing Diversity**

*Click on each best practice below:*

1. Develop and communicate the business case

The most important driver to an active commitment to diversity is a business case. Leadership in most organizations understand their key driver is client demand, but there may be other existing potential business reasons as well. It is key to examine these reasons to build the strongest business case possible for leadership.

2. Have leadership take the lead

Identifying someone in management to lead a diversity effort means a centralized that is more likely to attract the resources and to give the initiative lasting power.

3. Mandate top-down diversity training

Training in diversity and inclusion is essential to build awareness and create common language and understanding within the organization.
The most important driver to an active commitment to diversity is a strong business case. Leadership in most organizations understand that their key driver is client demand, but there may be other existing or potential business reasons as well. It is key to examine these reasons to build the strongest business case possible for leadership.

Identifying someone in management to lead a diversity effort means a centralized effort that is more likely to attract the resources and to give the initiative lasting power.

Training in appreciating diversity is essential to building awareness and creating a common language within the organization.

Top 5 Organizational Best Practices for Valuing Diversity

*Click on each best practice below:*

4. Establish accountability

Organizations that are serious about diversity have to reward and hold staff accountable for the success or failure of the recruitment and retention initiatives.

5. Develop mechanisms to have an effective mentoring program

Identifying someone in management to lead a diversity effort means a centralized effort that is more likely to attract the resources and to give the initiative lasting power.

Organizations that are serious about diversity have to reward and hold staff accountable for the success or failure of the recruitment and retention initiatives.

In most organizations, mentoring occurs all the time via informal relations at work and social networks outside the office, for example, at lunch. The challenge is to make effective mentoring accessible to all staff who want it.

Review

*Click on each best practice below:*

Sorry, try again!

Correct!

Sorry, try again!

__________ is the tendency to look at the world primarily from the perspective of one's own culture.

*Click your choice below*
The issues involved are complicated and can be difficult to deal with directly. However, avoidance and denial are not options for organizations that are committed to maintaining an inclusive culture for individuals from diverse backgrounds. You have learned how individuals’ knowledge, attitudes, and behavior are key components to enhancing a multicultural office setting. Similarly, you also know about some key indicators that there is a diversity issue in an organization as well as some ways to go about getting support from leadership.

We hope this information is useful in making your workplace as comfortable and effective as it can be!

Exit Course

Summary

Exit Course

Congratulations!

You have finished reviewing the course content.

Remember: this course is NOT complete until you pass the final exam/test.

For example, the U.S. Census Bureau’s 1997 Population Profile of the United States predicts that by the year 2050, the non-Hispanic White population is expected to decrease from 72% of the nation's population to less than 53%. At that time, the balance of the nation's population may be 15% Black, over 24% Hispanic descent and nearly 9% Asian and Pacific Islander. Although the percentage of the population does not necessarily change which groups have the most privileges and “social capital,” the dominant culture in society must change with the times and the demographics. Being
open-minded and making a conscious effort to show respect for diversity at work will go a long way towards positively impacting the culture at work and beyond.

First Reactions

This exercise was designed to have you get in touch with the associations and assumptions you have about groups of people. When dealing with a specific co-worker, it’s important to remember that our “first reactions” to her/him may be about a group that we associate with her/him rather than the individual.

The truth is that even the best training will not completely erase bias and stereotyping because they often reflect deeply held beliefs. However, training can help you to become more aware of your reactions. With that awareness, you can recognize them as beliefs that should be examined, rather than facts that need to be acted on.

More About the Workplace

The odds are that working in contemporary U.S. society has indeed brought you into contact with people from diverse backgrounds. Learning how to value such tremendous diversity affords the potential for a number of advantages including:

• Learning different points of view
• Improved productivity
• Enhanced teamwork
• Decreased turnover
• Attract business from a variety of sectors/geographical areas
• Improving your organization’s culture
• Lowered legal costs due to disgruntled and marginalized employees

Of course, some disadvantages can include conflict, favoritism, misunderstandings, increased turnover, and decreased productivity. The reality is that there are some very real barriers to recognizing and valuing diversity that need addressing in order to make progress.

Organizational Diversity Questions

The following questions are ones that will give a clear understanding of ways in which an organization can show an enduring commitment to valuing diversity in the workplace:

Do we have a workplace inclusivity strategic plan?

Do we have formal policies and procedures in place for promoting inclusive work
environment?

Have we made the business case for all of our diversity initiatives?

Do we diversify our recruiting pool while maintaining high standards?

Do we conduct diversity training for managers, supervisors, and employees?

Have all of our employees completed sexual harassment training?

Do we offer more advanced courses in gender communications, problem-solving, and conflict management for diverse employees?

Have we developed an in-house diversity resource center complete with books, videos, newsletter, and other educational materials like multicultural calendars that are made available to our employees?

Do we acknowledge and celebrate the diversity within our employment ranks via culturally-inclusive events, activities, etc.?

If you answered “no” to any of the above questions, it suggests a way in which your organization might be able to make a change in order to foster a more inclusive environment.

Understanding and addressing diversity issues is a long-term process. Committed support requires consensus among the employees and, in particular, among leadership as to what, how, why, and when internal and external diversity issues will be addressed. This process demands time and hard work. Without it, any diversity initiative will likely falter.

**Nomenclature for African-Americans**

An example would be the nomenclature for African-Americans. Ever since the 1960’s, various individuals and groups have advocated using Black, Afro-American, African-American, or American of African descent.

The bottom line is that there is no one “correct” way to refer to a group of people, particularly when you recognize that it is a person - NOT a group - that you are talking with.

If you are using assistive technology to view this course, the following will help you navigate:

Right Arrow - Next Page.

Left Arrow - Previous Page.

It is important to note that you will need to press the Insert key - and while holding it press the 3 key (the screen reader will say "Enter Key to Pass Through") and then you can press the back and next arrow to move to one of the pages.
Screen Reader Navigation Information

What is Assistive Technology?

Assistive technology products are designed to provide additional accessibility to individuals who have physical or cognitive difficulties, impairments, and disabilities. When selecting assistive technology products, it is crucial to find products that are compatible with the computer operating system and programs on the particular computer being used.

Below are descriptions of the various types of assistive technology products that are currently available on the market today.

Screen readers are used to verbalize, or “speak,” everything on the screen including text, graphics, control buttons, and menus into a computerized voice that is spoken aloud. In essence, a screen reader transforms a graphic user interface (GUI) into an audio interface. Screen readers are essential for computer users who are blind.

Speech recognition or voice recognition programs, allow people to give commands and enter data using their voices rather than a mouse or keyboard. Voice recognition systems use a microphone attached to the computer, which can be used to create text documents such as letters or e-mail messages, browse the Internet, and navigate among applications and menus by voice.

Screen enlargers, or screen magnifiers, work like a magnifying glass for the computer by enlarging a portion of the screen which can increase legibility and make it easier to see items on the computer. Some screen enlargers allow a person to zoom in and out on a particular area of the screen.

Alternative keyboards featuring larger- or smaller-than-standard keys or keyboards, alternative key configurations, and keyboards for use with one hand.

Electronic pointing devices used to control the cursor on the screen without use of hands. Devices used include ultrasound, infrared beams, eye movements, nerve signals, or brain waves.

Touch screens allow direct selection or activation of the computer by touching the screen, making it easier to select an option directly rather than through a mouse movement or keyboard. Touch screens are either built into the computer monitor or can be added onto a computer monitor.

Braille embossers transfer computer generated text into embossed Braille output. Braille translation programs convert text scanned-in or generated via standard word processing programs into Braille, which can be printed on the embosser.
Keyboard filters are typing aids such as word prediction utilities and add-on spelling checkers that reduce the required number of keystrokes. Keyboard filters enable users to quickly access the letters they need and to avoid inadvertently selecting keys they don't want.

Text-to-Speech (TTS) or speech synthesizers receive information going to the screen in the form of letters, numbers, and punctuation marks, and then “speak” it out loud in a computerized voice. Using speech synthesizers allows computer users who are blind or who have learning difficulties to hear what they are typing and also provide a spoken voice for individuals who can not communicate orally, but can communicate their thoughts through typing.

Talking and large-print word processors are software programs that use speech synthesizers to provide auditory feedback of what is typed. Large-print word processors allow the user to view everything in large text without added screen enlargement.

TTY/TDD conversion modems are connected between computers and telephones to allow an individual to type a message on a computer and send it to a TTY/TDD telephone.

Source: http://www.microsoft.com/enable/at/types.aspx

2. Next, a display properties menu will pop up similar to the picture here. Click on the settings tab.

3. Next, adjust the screen resolution by dragging the green arrow with your cursor. The ideal setting for viewing our courses is 1024 by 768 pixels.

4. Click on Apply and then OK to save these settings.

To change your screen resolution settings following these simple steps:

1. Right click on your desk top (not on a file, document or while in a software program). A small window will open. Click on <properties> at the bottom of that menu.

Next

Print

Your Score is:

Orientation Towards Diversity - Knowledge Assessment

This exercise is intended to give you a concrete look at some of the ways you experience yourself and others. Answer each item honestly - your first answer is the best one. Also, focus on your life at work when you respond.

1. Read each statement and click in the radio button that best describes you. You must make a selection for
2. Click on Your Score is to see your score.

3. Click on the Print button to print out your results.

4. Click the Next button.

I know of a number of ways the people experience discrimination.

Does Not Describe Me At All
Describes Me Somewhat
Describes Me Very Well

I am aware of the main characteristics of my culture.

I know from experience how labels can negatively affect specific groups of people.

I know about the characteristics of the different cultures of the people I work with on a daily basis.

I understand how legislative developments related to diversity impact my workplace.

I know how my nonverbal body language can impact how others respond to me.

I am curious about different cultures and customs.

I understand how culture influences attitudes and behaviors in the workplace.

I am aware of times when I stereotype people from different cultural backgrounds.

Orientation Towards Diversity - Attitudes Assessment

This exercise is intended to give you a concrete look at some of the ways you experience yourself and others. Answer each item honestly - your first answer is the best one. Also, focus on your life at work when you respond.

1. Read each statement and click in the radio button that best describes you. You must make a selection for each response.
2. Click on Your Score is to see your score.

3. Click on the Print button to print out your results.

4. Click the Next button.

I consistently recognize people for good work.

Does Not Describe Me At All

Describes Me Somewhat

Describes Me Very Well

I ask people how they identify in terms of their own cultural backgrounds.

I use active listening skills.

When giving feedback, I emphasize both strengths and areas for development.

I focus on appreciating how my co-workers are different from me.

I allow for extra time and pauses when talking with people for whom English is not their first language.

I account for my own biases before making a decision.

I actively work to understand others' perspectives when I make a decision.

I actively look for similarities between my co-workers and myself.

Summary

Next

Print

Your Score is:

Orientation Towards Diversity - Behavior and Skills Assessment

This exercise is intended to give you a concrete look at some of the ways you experience yourself and others. Answer each item honestly - your first answer is the best one. Also, focus on your life at work when you respond.

1. Read each statement and click in the radio button that best describes you. You must make a selection for each response.
2. Click on Your Score is to see your score.

3. Click on the Print button to print out your results.

4. Click the Summary button.

5. Click the Next button.

I am comfortable talking about diversity.

**Does Not Describe Me At All**

**Describes Me Somewhat**

**Describes Me Very Well**

I do not feel frustrated by co-workers with foreign accents.

I prefer to work with people from different cultural backgrounds than mine.

I understand what kinds of cultural privilege I have.

I am comfortable leading discussions about the role of diversity at work.

I can tolerate ambiguity well.

I am comfortable taking risks.

I generally see the good in people.

I am flexible.

A response of 1 or 2 on any individual item, on any of the three assessments suggests a specific area to target.

Receiving a score of less than 3 on any of the three assessments reflects a general area you might choose to work on.

**Orientation Toward Diversity - Assessment Summary**

So, how did you do?