

## Diversity & Inclusion: Starting the Conversation

<b>Session Time:</b>	45 minutes
<b>Session Purpose:</b>	The purpose of this session is to introduce the concepts of diversity and inclusion and to discuss how we can begin having productive conversations about these topics in the workplace.
<b>Session Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Define diversity and inclusion</li> <li>● Discuss what diversity and inclusion looks like in participants' life and work</li> <li>● Discover tips for having a productive conversation about diversity and inclusion</li> </ul>
<b>Materials Needed:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 1 onion per participant (or pair of participants)</li> <li>● 1 knife per participant (or pair of participants)</li> <li>● Cutting surfaces - boards, cardboard, paper towels, etc.</li> <li>● Ball - any size or type</li> <li>● Session Handout</li> </ul>
<b>Room Set-Up:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Place the onions and cutting supplies in the middle of the table</li> <li>● Place handouts at each seat</li> </ul>

Section	Time	Description / Directions	Slide
The Onion is Worth It	8 min	<p><b>Welcome Participants:</b></p> <p><i>Thanks for coming to today's lunch and learn! We are so glad you're here. While we eat, we're going to be taking a look at diversity and inclusion, what they mean, and how we can begin having productive conversations about these topics here at work. Let's jump in!</i></p> <p><b>Chop the Onions:</b></p> <p><i>How many of you enjoy cooking? Who would say they are skilled at the art of preparing food? To kick us off, we're going to practice one of the most basic kitchen skills together - chopping. In this case, we'll be chopping onions.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Grab an onion, a knife and a cutting board</li> <li>● Chop your onion as finely as possible</li> <li>● Coach each other on the fine art of chopping as needed</li> <li>● You have 3 minutes.</li> </ul> <p><b>Group Discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Who enjoyed this exercise?</li> <li>● Who was this difficult for?</li> <li>● Starting the conversation around diversity and inclusion can</li> </ul>	

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		<p>have a lot of parallels to chopping an onion. What are some parallels you can anticipate?</p> <p><i>(Elicit responses; tailor transition below according to responses you receive)</i></p> <p><b>Transition:</b></p> <p><i>Just like chopping an onion very finely, sometimes these conversations can be difficult, and they take practice. Sometimes they produce strong reactions - they stink, they might make us wrinkle our nose, or even produce some tears. Just like the smell of an onion lingers, the conversations will likely stick with us and make an impact. And despite the potential difficulties or drawbacks, these conversations are worth it - the same way an onion adds depth and great flavor to food, learning to have productive conversations around diversity and inclusion will create a richer, deeper, and more enjoyable place to work, team dynamics, and will even flavor our personal lives for the better. Let's get started by taking a look at what we mean when we say the words "diversity" and "inclusion."</i></p>	
D&I: Defining our Terms	10 min	<p><i>Words are powerful. They are the containers that make difficult concepts communicable and shareable, the means by which we can understand one another.</i></p> <p><i>It can be easy to assume that we all mean the same thing when we throw out words like, "diversity" and "inclusion," but in order to have the most productive conversations, it's important that we define our</i></p>	

	<p><i>terms and not take it for granted that we are on the same page.</i></p> <p><b>Define &amp; Discuss Diversity:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Diversity:</b> At its most basic, diversity simply means variety. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ At work, we can define this variety in different ways: diversity of ideas, educational diversity, or demographic diversity.</li> <li>○ Diversity can only exist in relation to others. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ An individual cannot be “diverse,” but a team can be.</li> <li>■ An all-female work environment would be low diversity, not high.</li> <li>■ High diversity = high variety.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>● Have a conversation with someone next to you about what diversity looks like in three areas: your personal life, on your team here at work, and in our company at large.</li> </ul> <p><b>Define &amp; Discuss Inclusion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Inclusion:</b> Inclusion allows individuals with different identities to feel they belong within the group, usually because they are valued, relied upon, welcomed, and empowered.</li> </ul>	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Inclusion typically comes down to whether everyone is welcomed and feel they belong.</li> <li>● Have a conversation with a new person next to you about what inclusion looks like in those same three areas: your personal life, on your team here at work, and in our company at large.</li> </ul> <p><b>Transition:</b></p> <p><i>So although they are usually lumped together in conversations, there is a key difference in diversity and inclusion. Verna Myers sums it up well by putting it like this:</i></p> <p><i>“Diversity is being invited to the party. Inclusion is being asked to dance.”</i></p> <p><i>With that in mind, let’s bring these concepts into our world and talk a little bit more about our own experiences with diversity and inclusion.</i></p>	
Let’s Get Real	18 min	<p><b>Take a Page:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● On your handout, you will see four questions.</li> <li>● Take the next six minutes to reflect on these questions and jot down your thoughts.</li> </ul> <p>Handout Questions:</p>	

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- Do you typically talk about issues of diversity and inclusion with family, friends, and colleagues?
- Why or why not do you believe the conversation about diversity and inclusion is important?
- Can you think of a time you, a friend or family member experienced discrimination or felt excluded?
- What specific things can you do this week to advance the conversation about diversity and inclusion in your own life?

**Ball Toss:**

- Following the order of questions, we're going to have the opportunity to share some of our thoughts with the group as we toss this ball around the room.
- You'll indicate to the group that you're willing to share an answer by holding your hands in front of you, ready to catch the ball. Only share what you feel comfortable with.
- When you're holding the ball it's your turn to share.
- After sharing, you'll look for who has their hands up ready to catch, and pass the ball to someone else.
- I will pose each question and cue us when it's time to move on to the next question. Let's begin.

(Elicit 3-4 answers for each question.)

- Do you typically talk about issues of diversity and inclusion with family, friends, and colleagues?
- Why or why not do you believe the conversation about diversity and inclusion is important?

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Can you think of a time you, a friend or family member experienced discrimination or felt excluded?</li> <li>○ What specific things can you do this week to advance the conversation about diversity and inclusion in your own life?</li> </ul> <p><b>Transition:</b></p> <p><i>Thank you so much for sharing your thoughts about things that can feel very personal. Thinking through and sharing questions like this is an important step in starting the conversation. It can be vulnerable, and even messy like we talked about in the beginning, but the effort and vulnerability required to move us closer to our goal of having great conversations.</i></p> <p><i>As we leave here, we want to be able to begin these productive conversations with others around us - on our team, other colleagues, even in our personal lives. We're going to spend the rest of our time together looking at tips for having a productive conversation about diversity and inclusion.</i></p>	
Beyond this Room	8 min	<p><b>Review Tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Gather in groups of three.</li> <li>● On your handout, you will find a list of six tips for having productive conversations about diversity and inclusion.</li> </ul>	

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Together with your group, have a conversation about each of these tips. Note how you can model this tip, as well as any questions you have about it.</li><li>● You have 4 minutes to review the tips.</li></ul> <p>Tips on Handout:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Make space for different viewpoints, perspectives, and experiences to be shared.</li><li>● Remember that each person’s experiences and feelings are valid.</li><li>● Listen carefully and actively</li><li>● Avoid making assumptions or jumping to conclusions. Ask questions to get more information.</li><li>● Model being authentic and honest, and support others in this as well.</li><li>● Celebrate your successes and bright spots!</li></ul> <p><b>Group Discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Let’s share some of our thoughts and questions on these tips.</li><li>● We’ll start with tip one. Who will share what your group discussed?</li></ul> <p><i>(Elicit 1-2 answers for each tip.)</i></p>	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Put a star by 2 tips that you want to focus on this week as you begin having conversations with others about diversity and inclusion.</li> </ul>	
Review & Close	1 min	<p><i>Thank you for coming today. Through defining diversity and inclusion, having some conversations about our personal experiences and thoughts, and reviewing how we can start productive conversations with others, we've taken the first step in starting the conversation. We hope that just like chopping an onion, you will find these conversations worth it and enriching, even through the hard parts as you engage in them more and more.</i></p>	

Resources:

- <https://d3n8a8pro7vhm.cloudfront.net/ynpnleaders/pages/303/attachments/original/1445622146/StartingTheConversation.pdf?1445622146>
- <https://theascent.pub/how-to-talk-about-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-96d5b582b25f>