

# How to Create an Inclusive Environment

Work environments are becoming increasingly more diverse with people bringing many different experiences, perspectives and beliefs. This diversity of thoughts and ideas brings enormous value to the workplace. When people work together respecting each other's perspectives and experiences, problem-solving and innovation can flourish.

The key to unlocking the power of this diversity is inclusivity. An inclusive workplace values and celebrates the differences we all bring to work, and creates space for everyone to contribute, without the risk of fear or shame. In an inclusive workplace everyone matters; regardless of age, race, colour, sex, sexual orientation, physical disability, mental illness or position within the organisation.

## TIPS FOR BUILDING A MORE INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE:

### 1. Inclusion starts with "I"

Each one of us is responsible for the way we treat others. We wish to be heard and treated with respect, but do we do the same for others? How can we act more inclusively? How can we stay open minded and respectful when dealing with contrasting ideas or opinions? Modelling inclusive behaviour applies to everyone, but especially if you are a manager or in a position of influence and others take cues from your behaviour.

### 2. Recognise unconscious bias

Are you aware of your own unconscious biases? Could they be impacting your efforts to be more inclusive at work? We all hold certain beliefs, whether we're fully aware of them or not. Learn more about your unconscious biases and think about how to address them with Harvard's Implicit Association Test: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/australia/takeatest.html>

### 3. Set the tone early

Make inclusion a priority for your company by adding a section on it in your onboarding or employee orientation. Highlight the benefits of an inclusive workplace and help new team members understand their role in fostering diversity and inclusion at work.

### 4. Start a Diversity and Inclusion Committee

A voluntary committee where staff of all departments and levels can come together to discuss ways to strengthen their workplace through diversity and inclusion initiatives. Perhaps it's introducing accessible parking, or gender-neutral bathrooms. Maybe it's finding out what religious or multicultural traditions or days your staff/clients/patients/customers celebrate and marking them on the office calendar.

### 5. Book training for staff

External trainers are skilled at facilitating earnest and thought-provoking discussions. Converge International's Diversity and Inclusivity training is perfect for helping staff identify potential unconscious biases, discover new ways to think and act more inclusively, and tap into the power of diversity.

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