Diversity and Inclusion

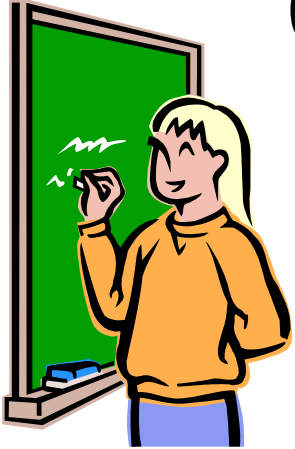**RPJ Housing**
Providing Caring Homes Since 1978

Prepared for RPJ Housing

By

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Objectives of this Training

- To provide a clear understanding of what diversity is and what it isn't.

- To raise a greater awareness and sensitivity to diversity issues that go well beyond the assumed categories.

Diversity Defined

Diversity is the mosaic of people who bring a variety of backgrounds, styles, perspectives, values and beliefs as assets to the groups and organizations with which they interact.
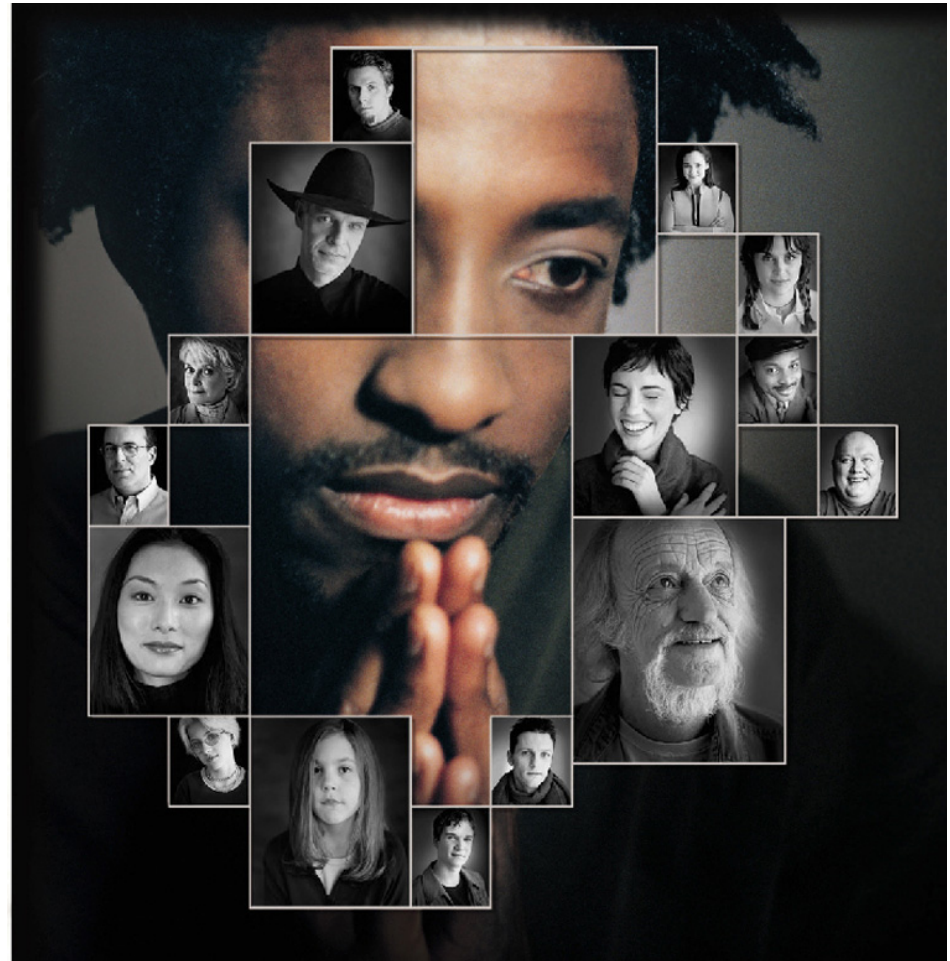
Distinction Between EEO, Affirmative Action and Diversity & Inclusion

Equal Employment Opportunity	Affirmative Action	Diversity & Inclusion
The enforcement of statutes to prevent employment discrimination	The effort to achieve parity in the workforce through outreach and eliminating barriers in hiring	Leveraging differences in the workforce to achieve better results

Primary and Secondary Dimensions of Diversity
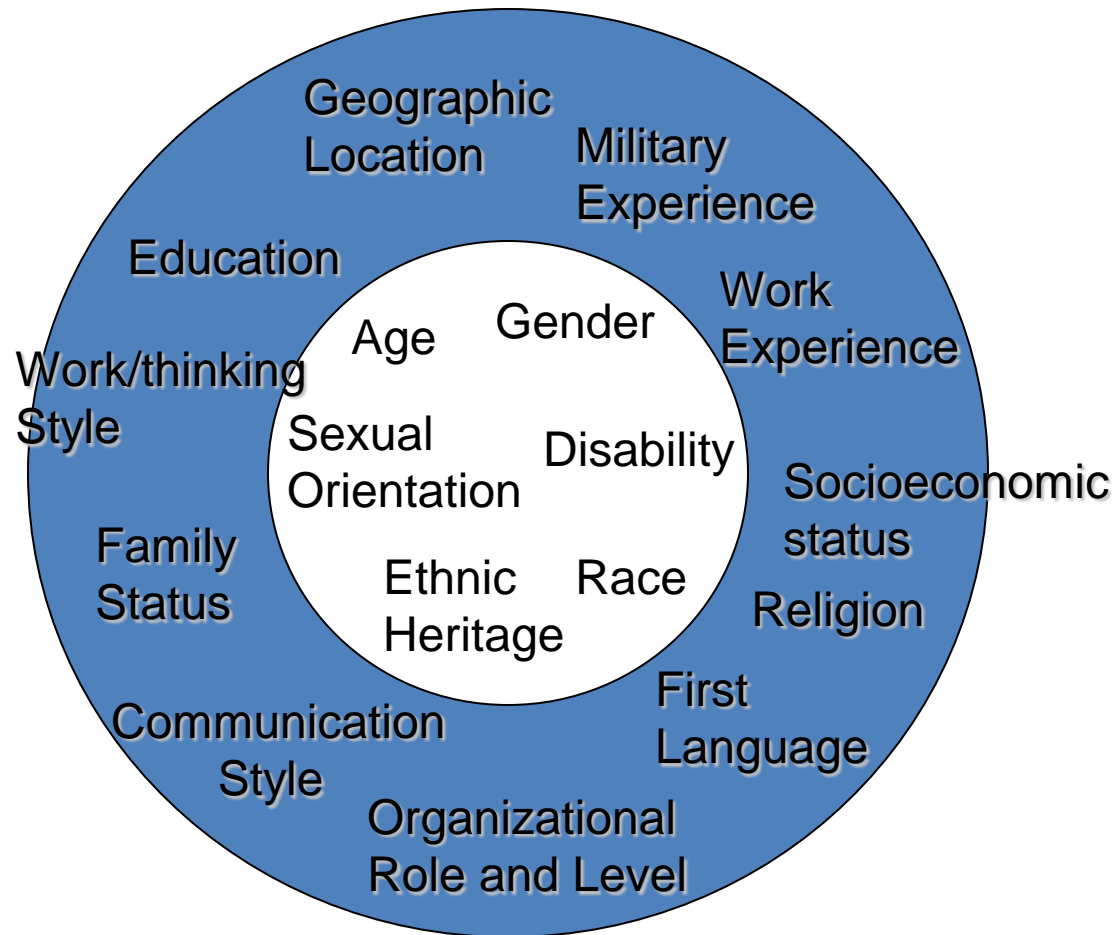
# All Communication is Filtered Through Your Cultural Perspective

- Age
- National origin
- Race
- Sexual orientation
- Religion
- Disability
- Gender
- Education
- Work role/experience
- Personality
- Customs
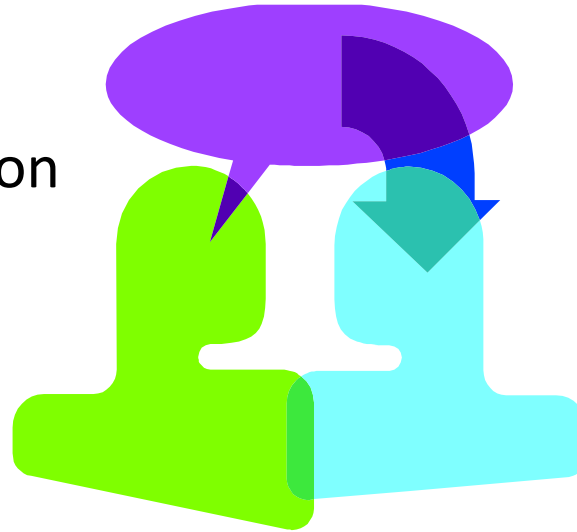
- Geographic location
- Functional discipline
- Languages used
- Values
- Communication style
- Work Style
- Learning style
- Economic status
- Family situation
- Military experience
- Philosophical perspective

A New Metaphor for American Culture

- The "melting pot" theory of American society has evolved, instead consider a vegetable soup metaphor.

- You can easily identify and taste the unique flavors of the individual parts.

- Members of various cultural groups may not want to be assimilated, they want their tastes, looks and texture to remain whole.

- To reap the business benefits of diversity, you must employ *inclusive* work strategies.
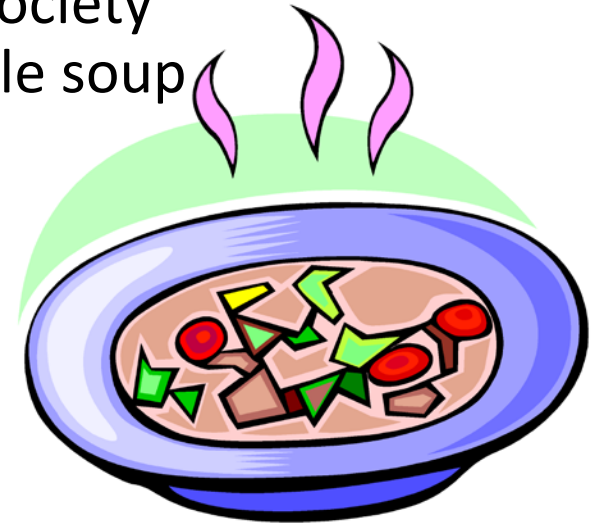
Benefits of Workforce Diversity & Inclusion

- Improved understanding of those you work for, with, and around.
- Creates a work environment that allows everyone to reach their full potential.
- Provides multiple perspectives on problem solving.
- Better performance outcomes.
- Increases employee productivity.
- Increased retention rates.
- Boosts employee morale.
- Improved customer relations.
- Reduces complaints and grievances.
- It's the right thing to do!

The Business Imperative:
What does the research show?

- Workforce diversity is *positively* associated with higher business performance outcome measures.

- Racial diversity is *positively* associated with higher performance in organizations that integrate and leverage diverse perspectives as resources for product delivery.

- Gender diversity is *positively* associated with more effective group processes and performance in organizations with people-oriented performance cultures.

- Diverse teams are more creative and perform better in problem solving than homogeneous teams.*

- The effects of diversity on group processes and performance are highly dependent on the presence of *facilitating* or *inhibiting* conditions in the organization; absent *facilitating* conditions, the aforementioned outcomes are reversed.

Conclusion: *Diversity enhances performance but requires attention.*

The Effects of Diversity on Business Performance: Report of the Diversity Research Network, November 2002: Five year longitudinal study on workforce diversity and performance measures in Fortune 500 companies.

Work Team Dynamics and Productivity in the Context of Diversity Conference, Center for Creative Leadership, N.Y.U, A.P.A, ,October, 1994

The Economic Imperative:
What does the research show?

- Racial and gender diversity are *positively* associated with higher establishment productivity, product quality, and economic benefits.
- Demographic shifts in population portend shifts in purchasing power and consumer trends. Workforce diversity reflecting consumer/ market diversity results in:
  - New product development
  - Consumer confidence
  - Increased product/service marketability
  - Significant revenue growth (e.g., McDonalds, Pepsi-Cola, IBM – 3000% growth form 1998 - 2001 attributed to diversity market)*
- Discrimination and poor diversity management pose a human and economic cost:
  - The average EEO complaint costs the organization approximately $250,000
  - 25-40% of workforce attrition rate and 5-20% in lost productivity can be attributed to poor diversity management; turnover costs 75-150% of the replaced employee's salary.
- Achieving and maintaining workforce diversity requires investment., but the return on the investment, in terms of both economic and "good will branding" capital, outweighs the cost.

Conclusion: *Diversity should be strategically aligned with business goals; diversity requires investment, but pays dividends.*

Workforce Diversity and Productivity: An Analysis of Employer-Employee Matched Data, Linda Barrington, The Conference Board, and Kenneth R. Troske, University of Missouri-Columbia, April 18, 2001: Analysis of workforce diversity and economic performance of establishments in manufacturing, retail trade, and services sectors.

The New Diversity, Carol Hymotiz, Wall Street Journal, November 14, 2005.

The Human Imperative:
What are the lessons learned?

- Notwithstanding the economic costs, the human costs of intolerance to diversity is incalculable.
- Defining diversity solely as race and gender can have a detrimental effect; "understanding the multidimensional nature of identity is important in defining diversity in work teams."*
- A framework for diversity in work groups should include:**
  - personal demographics
  - knowledge, skills, and abilities
  - values, beliefs, and attitudes
  - personality and cognitive and behavioral style
  - organizational demographics
- When defining diversity in multidimensional terms, including DIVERSITY OF THOUGHT, it naturally brings in aspects grounded in race, gender, and ethnicity.

*Nkomo, S. M. (in press). Identity and the complexity of diversity.

**McGrath, J., Berdahl, J., & Arrow, H. (in press). Traits, expectations, culture and clout: The dynamics of diversity in work groups. In S. E. Jackson & M. N. Ruderman (Eds.), Work team diversity: Paradigms and perspectives. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

The Human Imperative:
What are the lessons learned?

Case in Point: NASA

" **Organizational culture refers to the values, norms, beliefs, and practices that characterize the functioning of a particular institution."***

- Causes that contributed to the Columbia accident included:
  - An organizational culture that squelched dissent
  - A performance culture that stifled differences of opinion
  - Resistance to external criticism and doubt
  - Imposition of the "party line vision… (which) led to flawed decision-making, self-deception, introversion, and diminished curiosity"
  - Organizational barriers that prevented open, effective communication

  NASA has since implemented one of the strongest diversity management programs in Federal government

*Report of the Columbia Accident Investigation Board, March 2003.

Take-Aways

What does this mean for the RPJ workforce?

- Workforce diversity enhances performance and productivity.

- To be a high performing organization, diversity should be broadly defined by traditional EEO demographics, social, cognitive, and behavioral perspectives.

- To be effective, diversity management must be strategically implemented and aligned with business goals; Diversity requires investment and attention in order to be effective.

- Intolerance and insensitivity to diversity breeds disastrous and costly results; agencies must empower employees and guarantee their EEO rights.

- Diversity principles must be incorporated in all aspects of an organization's performance culture, including:

    - Leadership communications   - Group work processes
    - Recruitment and retention strategies   - Succession planning
   - Rewards and developmental systems   - Strategic planning

Cultural Competence

Cultural Competence is the ability to respond effectively and appropriately to different cultural/generational contexts in the workplace.

- Acknowledge and accept differences in cognitive, behavioral, philosophical, social, and communicative styles that arise from different cultural generational contexts.

- Seek to understand; ask for clarification or reasons for the behavior

- Communicate policies, procedures clearly to employees if you are a manager
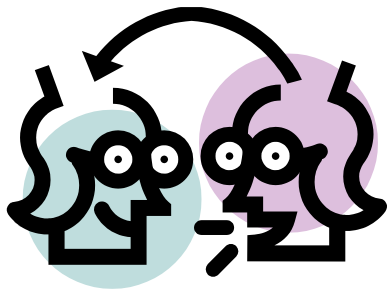
Cultural Competence
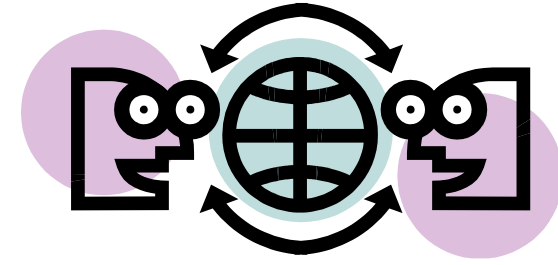
- Respect others' opinions.
- Acknowledge cultural/ generational differences and historical injustices without becoming defensive.
- Be open to learning about other cultures and ideas.
- Give others the benefit of the doubt in a dispute.
- Seek first to understand others' point of views; then to be understood.

- Don't stereotype.
- Don't judge others by your own cultural standards.
- Don't assume your culture's way is the only way.
- Don't talk down to anyone; communicate effectively.

Impediments to Cross-Cultural Communication

- Irrational Assumptions

- Misunderstanding

- Prejudice

- Fear
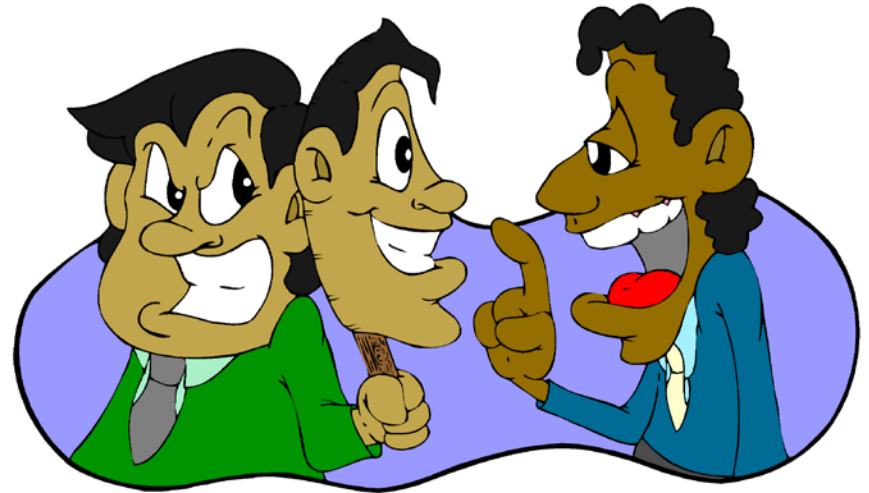
Irrational Assumptions

An irrational assumption is a belief that is founded on baseless supposition, often skewed by bias. One of the best examples of irrational assumptions are the stereotypes we formulate about people based on their association or membership with cultural or ethnic groups.

*"If we all worked on the assumption
that what is accepted as true is really true,
there would be little hope of advance."*

--Orville Wright

Misunderstanding

Misunderstandings are a normal part of communication either because we unintentionally or intentionally use the wrong words or because we don't understand what is being said to us. To prevent misunderstanding know who you're talking to, be respectful, and be sure of what you want to say.

"Listen, I'm going to talk to the Indians.
It's probably a misunderstanding."

--General Custer

Prejudice

By definition, prejudice is either a bias in favor of or against something. Such biases can of course be benign, however, those preferences having to do with people can be hurtful and cause problems especially in the workplace.

"Just as a child is born without fear,
so it is born without prejudice.
Prejudice, like fear, is acquired."

Marie Killea

Fear

Fear of change in the workplace is counterproductive, especially fear of ideas and people who are different from us.

"I think we have to own the fears that we have of each other,

and then, in some practical way, some daily way,

figure out how to see people differently

*than the way we were brought up to."*

--Alice Walker

Number 1 Rule for Diversity, Inclusion, and Constructive Conflict Management

- Dialogue! In order to understand the other's point of view, seek first to understand.

- Dialogue! In order to communicate your own position.

- Dialogue! In order to arrive at a mutually beneficial agreement that serves common goals.

Diversity Best Practices

- Leadership commitment.

- Effective communication and transparency.

- Equitable employment practices.

- Recruitment outreach.

- Continuous learning and career development.

- Coaching and mentoring.

- Early conflict resolution.

- Flexible work culture.
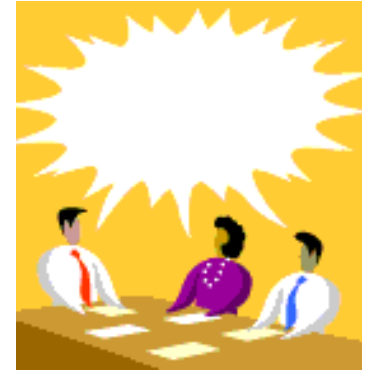
How Can Employees Promote Diversity?

- Practice positive, constructive work habits in the workplace; work cooperatively towards a common goal.
- Live up to the social contract; contribute to your fullest potential; strive for excellence.
- Recognize and respect others and their individuality.
- Think before you speak and be sensitive to others.
- Talk about your differences and ask tactful questions about how people want to be treated.
- Eliminate stereotypes and generalizations.

Diversity is only FAIR

Feedback/communication promotes understanding, reduces conflict; and enhances productivity.

Assist others to become culturally competent; support one another – we are all in this together!

Inclusion should be practiced; empower employees to fully perform and participate in pursuit of the organization's mission.

Respect is non-negotiable; honor the social contract.

Small Group Case Study Discussions

Case Study #1

An employee of a U.S. company was sent to Costa Rica to learn the operations in its satellite company for a month. When she arrived she was scheduled to meet with the Project Managers at 9:00 a.m. the next day, however had to wait a half hour for them to show up. The Costa Rican employees did not apologize or think anything of being late, which upset her so much that after the meeting she went to the head of operations in Costa Rica to complain about the incident but found him unresponsive to her concerns. She regarded tardiness as a sign of disrespect and could not understand why no one was sympathetic to the matter. What should she do? Is this a cultural issue?

Case Study #2

An employee who works for a division that is very diverse is troubled by the fact that many of the employees who are of the same cultural background tend to socialize with each other almost exclusively, even though most of the employees regardless of their culture seem to work well together. The employee believes that if everyone socialized more cross culturally this might help improve the work environment. Should the employee take it upon himself to try and promote more cross cultural socializing during lunch or after work? Is he right in his assumption?

Case Study #3

A first rate employee who has been with his company for ten years and has never had a single complaint lodged against him makes a controversial statement about a coworker's sexual orientation when he is asked a point blank question by another coworker. His remark causes nearly every employee in his division to complain about him to management and demand an apology. The employee who made the remark admits to having made the statement but refuses to apologize because he believes that he is entitled to his own opinion, especially since he was pressed on the matter. Should the employee in question be disciplined? Is he entitled to his own opinion in the workplace?

"When we feel a sense of belonging it is not because we are the same as everyone else, but because we have been accepted as we are."