

Examples of Organizational Cultures Related to Diversity and Inclusiveness
<http://www.nonprofitinclusiveness.org/examples-organizational-cultures-related-diversity-and-inclusiveness>

David A. Thomas from the Harvard Business School and Robin J. Ely from Columbia University School of International and Public Affairs have studied organizational culture in relation to diversity and inclusiveness. Their research has uncovered three types of organizational cultures:

- Discrimination-and-Fairness Culture: Assimilation
- Access-and-Legitimacy Culture: Differentiation
- Connecting Diversity to Work Perspectives: Integration

Thomas and Ely suggest that of the three types, only the third provides a model for maximizing the potential of a truly inclusive organization.

The following illustrates the interrelationship between the core levels of organizational culture (surface-level culture, espoused values, and basic assumptions) and their expressions within the types of organizational cultures that relate to diversity and inclusiveness (assimilation, differentiation, or integration):

SURFACE Assimilation Images in publications and around the facility are mostly homogeneous.

SURFACE Differentiation Images of people of color in publications and around the facility are generally found in specific places where people of color are most likely to view them (e.g., a brochure for a particular program targeted at communities of color).

SURFACE Integration Images in publications and around the facility are mostly heterogeneous.

ESPOUSED Assimilation The leader articulates a belief in a color-blind management approach and states that he or she doesn't see differences; encourages others in the organization to do the same.

ESPOUSED Differentiation The leader actively seeks diversity for the staff and board with the intent of having people of color work on programs, outreach, fundraising, etc., that are specifically targeted at communities of color.

ESPOUSED Integration The leader communicates and actualizes a clear vision of a diverse and inclusive organization where the needs, viewpoints, and assets of all people are valued and integrated into the organization.

BASIC ASSUMPTIONS Assimilation Organizational culture reflects white dominant culture; norms go undiscussed or unchallenged; people from diverse backgrounds are

expected to act like the dominant culture, e.g., women are expected to act like men and people are expected to act the same regardless of racial, ethnic, or cultural background.

BASIC ASSUMPTIONS Differentiation Organizational culture values differences between groups, but the full contributions of people of color are undervalued except insofar as they provide access to communities of color.

BASIC ASSUMPTIONS Integration Organizational culture values people from all backgrounds and encourages people of color to utilize their skills and knowledge to increase the organization's relevance to communities of color; and organization encourages people of color to be full participants in the work of the whole organization.

Thomas and Ely found the following components to be present in most of the successfully inclusive organizations they studied:

1. The leadership understands that a diverse workforce embodies different perspectives and approaches to work and truly values the variety of opinions and insights that people with different cultural backgrounds bring to the organization.
2. The leadership recognizes the opportunities and challenges that diversity presents to the organization, embraces those opportunities, and commits to finding healthy solutions to the challenges.
3. The organizational culture creates expectations of high standards of performance from everyone regardless of their racial or ethnic background.
4. The organizational culture is such that training and education programs nurture personal development, and carefully designed jobs maximize the potential of different staff people without relegating them to isolated niche areas within the organization.
5. The organizational culture encourages debate and constructive conflict.
6. Workers feel valued and are encouraged to apply their background and skills in creative ways to improve the work of the organization.
7. The mission and goals of the organization are well articulated and widely understood, which keeps discussions about differences focused on the organization's work.
8. The organizational culture and structure are relatively egalitarian and people are encouraged to be themselves, unencumbered by unnecessary bureaucratic systems that control and limit the activities of the people within the organization.

Thomas, David A., and Robin Ely, "Making Differences Matter: A New Paradigm for Managing Diversity," *Harvard Business Review*, September 1, 1996.

Video – *Aspire: A Plan for Princeton* featuring David Spergel '82 and Jared Crooks '11
<http://aspire.princeton.edu/facesofaspire/davidandjared/>

Excerpts from *Vital Voices: Lessons Learned from Board Members of Color* by Vernetta L. Walker, Director of Consulting & Deborah J. Davidson, Vice President, Governance Research and Publications at BoardSource
<http://www.boardsource.org/UserFiles/File/pdf/Arnova-Vital%20Voices.pdf>

In order to function at the highest level, nonprofit boards need to ensure that their members represent diverse points of view. It is not enough, however, to “diversify” a board; boards must be *inclusive* in their policies and practices, thereby *creating a culture that encourages and nurtures diverse expression*. [*Italics added.*]

We believe our survey results validated our belief that there are specific board practices that are effective in helping to foster inclusivity and recommend that boards begin by incorporating the two that our sample found most effective: *actively recruiting board members from diverse backgrounds* and *incorporating diversity into the organization’s core values*. [*Italics added.*]

Excerpts from *Inside Inclusiveness: Race, Ethnicity and Nonprofit Organizations* a research report on nonprofit organizations in Metro Denver prepared for The Denver Foundation’s Expanding Nonprofit Inclusiveness Initiative – Executive Summary
http://www.nonprofitinclusiveness.org/files/Inside_Inclusiveness_Exec_Summ_1.pdf

BEST PRACTICE #1: *The CEO of a nonprofit organization almost always establishes the level of commitment, the attitude, the pace, and the behaviors related to an organization’s overall inclusiveness practices.* The role of a board of directors in influencing change is also significant, but is limited by the CEO’s attitude and behavior regarding inclusiveness practices. *One of the most important actions a board can take is to institutionalize the change it envisions by hiring a CEO who reflects the board’s commitment to inclusiveness.* [*Italics added.*]

BEST PRACTICE #2: *The most important quality that is found in leaders of organizations that are highly inclusive is that these leaders take a long-term, holistic approach to inclusiveness and integrate it into all of the work of the organization.*

Case studies demonstrate that organizations taking an integrated approach to inclusiveness:

- examine how their *programs* are designed and implemented;
- look at how they *recruit, retain and treat* diverse staff and board members; and
- nurture an inclusive organizational *culture and environment*.

In essence, these organizations embrace core values of inclusiveness in all that they do. Rather than considering inclusiveness to be one more thing that has to be done in a busy day, it is a fundamental part of the everyday work so, it is neither perceived as a burden nor an additional responsibility.

BEST PRACTICE #3: *Highly inclusive organizations recognize that people of color represent every socio-economic class and bring with them a variety of assets that will be valuable in achieving the organization's mission.*

BEST PRACTICE #4: *Inclusive nonprofits benefit from having a staff that is able to effectively communicate with constituent groups and the public. Developing an inclusive staff requires a concerted effort to recruit and retain staff members of color. Highly inclusive organizations make a concerted effort to reach out to communities of color in the hiring process. This goes beyond simply advertising in newspapers aimed at specific ethnic groups. In some cases, recruitment efforts build on reciprocal relationships with other nonprofits serving or involved with communities of color. Once a diverse staff is recruited, retaining staff members does take work. However, most of the work is no different than other good management practices.*

Organizations also benefit from *formalizing performance review and professional development programs*, giving all staff a clear sense of their standing within the organization and concrete information about their future career opportunities.

BEST PRACTICE #5: *Inclusive nonprofit organizations develop their programs with an awareness of people from different cultural backgrounds.*

BARRIERS

BARRIER #1: *The most significant barrier to inclusiveness that organizations face is the perception that the focus of their work is not relevant to communities of color.*

BARRIER #2: *Being “color blind” does not work. ...However, many nonprofit jobs do require an awareness of and sensitivity to the needs of diverse communities.*

Inclusive leaders recognize that culture matters when providing services or engaging in advocacy work or creating cultural or artistic experiences. Creating a more inclusive culture requires paying attention to race, ethnicity and culture rather than turning a “blind eye” to these differences....Those hired need not be people of color, but must have an understanding of diverse communities.

BARRIER #3: *Leaders of organizations that have been less successful in their efforts to become more inclusive often fail to recognize the human resources around them. More specifically, organizations sometimes fail to recognize that they have potential board and staff members of color all around them, among current constituents and volunteers.*

BARRIER #4: *Nonprofit organizations with board and board leadership terms that are either very short or very long have the most difficult time implementing changes to inclusiveness practices.*

Excerpt from *Caution: A Color-Blind Approach In Organizations Is Ineffective* from the Denver Foundation's Inclusiveness Project

<http://www.nonprofitinclusiveness.org/caution-color-blind-approach-organizations-ineffective>

A recent study, "Is Multiculturalism or Color Blindness Better for Minorities?" (Plaut, Thomas, and Goren, *Psychological Science*, 2009), found that the more color-blind a workplace purported to be, the more racial bias employees experienced. Organizations with a more multicultural approach are more productive and profitable. Creating a more inclusive culture and organization requires paying attention to race, ethnicity, and culture rather than turning a "blind eye" to these differences.

Excerpts from *Blue Avocado - Recruiting for Board Diversity: Part 3 in Diversity Series* by Jan Masaoka, December 14, 2009

<http://www.blueavocado.org/content/recruiting-board-diversity-part-3-diversity-series>

Four principles to follow when recruiting a more diverse board

1. Focus on what people *will* do, rather than on what they are, or on what their skills are. Just because a person is wealthy doesn't mean he will make a large donation, and just because she's Chinese doesn't mean she'll help connect the organization to the Chinese community. Too often individuals are recruited because we believe they will do something, but we consider it rude to ask them to commit to it as part of the recruitment discussions.
2. When changing the diversity on the board, bring on two or three new people at once. When you have just one African American, or one client, or one public school parent, that person is put in the dubious position of "representing" a constituency. Having three African Americans, three clients, or three public school parents as members exposes the board to different opinions within these communities, prevents any one individual from laying claim to a whole community's views, and encourages new individuals to take leadership roles.
3. Recruit for a path of stepping stones, rather than two opposite shores. At an art center, for instance, if all the artists are poor, and all the non-artists are wealthy, the board ends up in two camps. Try to recruit some well-to-do artists and some non-artists who are low-income.
4. If you have board requirements that act to exclude people you want to recruit, rather than making exceptions for "diverse board members," change the requirements. For instance, if your organization requires board members to donate \$5,000 each, it may not be possible for people who benefit from your elder care services to be on the board. Rather than waive the requirement for family members of clients, get rid of the requirement. Instead, ask everyone to give at a level that is meaningful for them.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO IMPROVE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AT YOUR ORGANIZATION?

Here are a few suggestions:

1. Eliminate Gender Biased Language From All Of Your Materials: For example, the leader of your board of directors is the chair not the chairman or chairwoman.
2. Proactively Include Vegetarians: For example, change your luncheon registration forms to include a box participants can check to indicate if they “want/need a vegetarian meal”.
3. Complete a Diversity and Inclusion Assessment: For example, you could determine how well your organization reflects the Eight Components of Successfully Inclusive Organizations from Thomas and Ely or the five Best Practices from *Inside Inclusiveness*.
4. Use Your Core Values to Guide Your Decision-Making Processes and Behavior: Ask 5 people in your office to write down your organization’s core values from memory. Let the results be your guide. If you get 5 different answers, you probably have some work to do. If you need to work on your core values, create them as beliefs with corresponding behaviors.

ADDITIONAL FREE RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Blue Avocado - *A Fresh Look at Diversity and Boards*

<http://www.blueavocado.org/node/469>

Blue Avocado - *Diversity & the Nonprofit Ecosystem: Part 2 in the 3-Part Diversity Series*

<http://www.blueavocado.org/content/diversity-nonprofit-ecosystem-part-2-3-part-diversity-series>

The Denver Foundation’s Inclusiveness Project

<http://www.nonprofitinclusiveness.org/introduction-considering-inclusiveness-initiative>

Evolving Approaches to Diversity: Weaving a New, Stronger Fabric by AFP
Kaleidoscope

http://www.afpnet.org/newsletters/k/0809/kaleidoscope0809_approaches.html

Learn to Embrace the Tension of Diversity, HBR Blog Post by Marshall Goldsmith on
June 16, 2010

http://blogs.hbr.org/goldsmith/2010/06/learn_to_embrace_the_tension_o.html