



*Promising Practices to  
Fostering a Climate of Inclusion  
for Faculty and Staff:  
From **A** to **Z***

University of Mississippi Medical Center  
May 2020



This is a publication by the Office of Diversity and Inclusion at the University of Mississippi Medical Center. The Office of Diversity and Inclusion guides strategies for integrating diversity and promoting excellence into UMMC's three mission areas – education, research and health care.

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# Acknowledgements

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The University of Mississippi Medical Center's (UMMC) Office of Diversity and Inclusion is excited to share content within this guide to offer a roadmap for fostering a climate of inclusion within departments, schools, and across the institution. The authors acknowledge that this resource provides more dominant frames of inclusion in the context of increasing employee engagement, respect, and building collegial relationships.

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# Introduction

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As one of the largest employers in the state and the only academic medical center, the University of Mississippi Medical Center (UMMC) is committed to the pursuit of obtaining and retaining the best talent across our three mission areas – education, research and health care. UMMC seeks to recruit, engage, and retain an outstanding and diversely rich faculty and staff who are equipped with maintaining our excellence in academic medicine.

This resource guide provides tools for employees to promote and foster a climate of inclusion for faculty and staff by reviewing the myriad of ways to ensure every member of the UMMC community feels welcomed, supported, and visible. The content of this guide highlights the importance of a positive culture so that all employees will be more engaged and productive in an environment of dignity and respect.

Content should be used to reinforce understanding, enhance or complement current practices, and strengthen workplace behaviors. It is not intended to supplant approved institutional policies or guidance outlined in the UMMC Faculty Staff Handbook.



# Important Statements for the University of Mississippi Medical Center

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## **Mission**

The mission of the University of Mississippi Medical Center (UMMC) is to improve the health and well-being of patients and the community through excellent training for health care professionals, engagement in innovative research, and the delivery of state-of-the-art health care.

## **Vision**

UMMC will be a premier academic health sciences system that is recognized nationally for high-quality clinical care, for innovative research and for training committed health care professionals who work together to improve health outcomes and eliminate health care disparities.

## **Diversity and Inclusion**

Diversity and inclusion are integral to the core mission and vision of UMMC and its three mission areas – healthcare, research, and education. UMMC commits to attracting and retaining a diverse and inclusive workforce and student body in order to achieve outcomes among the UMMC community. In addition, teaching, curricula, and learning environments must foster a culture of inclusiveness where individuals are respected and differences are recognized as strengths that enhance the educational and patient-care experience.

## **Equal Opportunity in Education and Employment**

UMMC adheres to the principle of equal educational and employment opportunity without regard to race, creed, sex, color, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, national origin, disability, veteran status or genetic information. This policy extends to all programs and activities supported by the Medical Center. Under the provisions of Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, UMMC does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs or activities with respect to admissions or employment.

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# A: Accommodating Others



Workplace **accommodations** may include specialized equipment, modifications to the work environment, or adjustments to work schedules or responsibilities. More commonly, this definition has applied to persons with disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) mandates that employers provide reasonable **accommodations** to people with disabilities. Barriers have included lack of transportation work workplace not accessible.<sup>1</sup> *The Employer Assistance and Resource Network on Disability Inclusion* provide examples of reasonable **accommodations**, but not limited to:

- Job restructuring such as altering when and/or how an essential function of a job is performed or reallocating job functions that an employee is unable to perform because of a disability.
- Modifying work schedules to allow an employee with a disability to attend to matters related to treating the disability such as medical appointments or medication schedules.
- Acquiring or modifying equipment or devices such as adjusting a desk height for wheelchair users or providing a quadriplegic employee a mouth stick device to type on their computer.
- Adjusting or modifying tests and training materials such as providing materials in alternate formats, such as braille, CD or large print.
- Providing assistive technology or devices such as computer screen readers for employees with visual impairments or a specific telephone that is compatible with an employee's hearing aid.
- Reassigning an existing employee with a disability to a vacant position for which they are qualified when no longer able to perform the current job with or without **accommodations**.<sup>2</sup>

## Research on Aging

According to the U.S. Census, by 2050, 19% of the workforce will be age 65 or older, a 75% growth of the number of workers in this age group as compared to a 2% growth among individuals ages 25–54. Evidence suggests that this population may also be subject to health and disability issues including physical limitations. Strategies listed above can also support aging employees.

## Research on Breastfeeding

Despite recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics and the World Health Organization, initiating and sustaining lactation remains a challenge for many women.<sup>3</sup> Physicians who are mothers face substantial challenges and negatively affected by shorter durations of maternity leave, financial losses, and inflexible work schedules. Inclusive workplaces may improve the ability of all mothers to continue lactation after they return to work to allow for pumping in the dedicated private lactation spaces or private offices.<sup>4</sup>



## B: Belonging



Inclusion is a core element for successfully achieving diversity and can be attained when the climate and culture of the institution is cultivated through professional development, education, policy, and practice. Everyone in the organization is responsible for creating a climate that fosters **belonging**, respect, and value for all and encourage engagement and connection throughout the institution and community-at-large.<sup>5</sup>

## C: Civility



As a large, diverse institution committed to attracting and retaining a diverse and inclusive workforce, **civility** should be the center of UMMC's culture. Workplace **civility** is described as behaviors that help to preserve the norms for mutual respect in the workplace; **civility** reflects concern for others. **Civility** is necessary because we work with others who have different experiences and backgrounds. All employees, including learners and visitors, should demonstrate basic decency during interpersonal exchanges.

The decision to no longer exercise respect and decency negatively influences workplace environments and communities served. Incivility disrupts work patterns and diminishes the effectiveness of its targets and others.<sup>6</sup> Rude and discourteous behavior directly correlates with low staff morale, which eventually effects the bottom line of any organization. An environment where managers continually assess and maintain a positive culture is required to ensuring civil workplace behaviors and practices. In order to achieve an organizational culture that promotes **civility**, corrective and protective actions by leaders and managers may be required which include:



Setting clear expectations during the beginning of onboarding new employees



Encouraging on-going staff professional development and training



Practicing effective communication and continuous feedback



Planning for employee departures or transition

## D: "Don't Blame the Messenger"

Divergent, dissident voices are the key to growth and innovation.<sup>7</sup> Although it is hard to accept shortcomings, you do not always have to deflect and defend.

- First, notice and accept the problem.
- Second, determine gaps and processes to work towards solutions.
- Third, celebrate the agitation.



## E: Employee Resource Groups

### Example of an ERG at UMMC

The mission of the University of Mississippi Medical Center's Group on Women in Medicine and Science (GWIMS) is to advance the full and successful participation and inclusion of women faculty and learners within academic medicine. The local UMMC chapter will focus on the four GWIMS goals of gender equity, recruitments and retention, awards and recognition, and career advancement. For more information, contact [GWIMS@umc.edu](mailto:GWIMS@umc.edu).



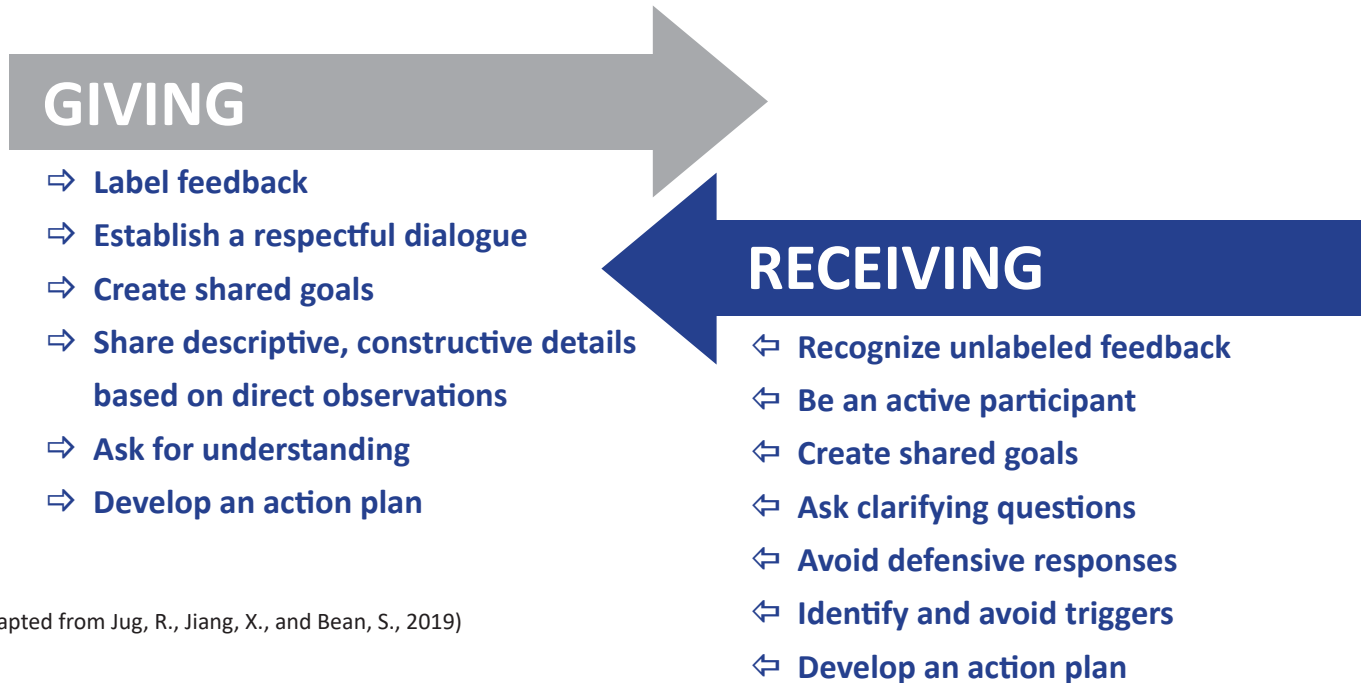
**Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)** are voluntary, employee-led groups formed in the workplace based on shared characteristics of workplace or life experiences and interests.<sup>8</sup> These type of groups foster a diverse and inclusive environment, and increase employee engagement. **ERGs** were previously called Workplace Affinity Groups when created in the 1960s, in response to racial strife.<sup>9</sup> In present day, many **ERGs** may focus on issues relevant to African Americans, women, the LGBTQ community, internationals, or veterans that may include activities such as knowledge-sharing, leadership and professional development, mentoring, and community outreach. These organizations can also influence employee recruitment and retention positively including business impact.<sup>10</sup>

### ERGs can maximize their effectiveness by:

- Ensuring formal governance, define roles and reporting structures, and expected outcomes;
- Establishing measurable internal and external goals;
- Employing cross-collaborations to support synergies around recruiting, retention, talent development, knowledge transfer and other institutional priorities across different ERGs;
- Utilizing collaborative technologies to build visibility, share success stories, and promote integration within the institution;
- Promoting leadership development that allows participants to hear from experts, participate in conferences and workshops, and share strategies and solutions in a networking environment.<sup>10</sup>

# F: Feedback

**Feedback** is described as personalized information based on direct observation shaped and delivered so receivers can use the information provided to achieve their best potential. Regardless of job title and experience, all employees give and receive **feedback** on a daily basis. This is crucial to the delivery and maintenance of quality patient care.<sup>11</sup>



(Adapted from Jug, R., Jiang, X., and Bean, S., 2019)

## Conflict resolution

Communication and emotions are two major causes of conflict in the workplace.<sup>12</sup> Communication becomes an issue when it is not clear, concise, accurate, and timely. This can be corrected through use of effective communication strategies. Emotions driving decisions leads to conflict and can be difficult to manage. In order to handle the two major causes of conflict, the following are suggested:

**Define acceptable behavior** by clearly defining roles and articulating expectations.

**Understand the "What's In It For Me?" Factor,** which recognizes other's motivations.

**Hit conflict head-on** by seeking out potential conflict and proactively intervening.

**The "Importance Factor"** helps determine what is at stake and how to resolve the issue.

**View conflict as opportunity.** Smart leaders look for the positive when opinions differ.

## G: Governance

**Governance** is inclusive when it effectively serves and engages all people; takes into account gender and other facets of personal identify; and when institutions, policies, processes, and services are accessible, accountable and responsive to all members of society.<sup>13</sup>

### How Boards or Committees May Embed Inclusion into Governing Principles<sup>14</sup>

What should boards or committees ask?	What should boards or committees do?
<p>How do boards or committees make decisions?</p> <p>If relevant, how is inclusion, and not just diversity, explicitly factored into those decisions?</p>	<p>Consider both diversity and inclusion implications when making decisions, even those in areas that are not traditionally associated with diversity and inclusion.</p> <p>Ensure that all board or committee members involved in decision-making are heard and respected.</p>
<p>Do board bylaws or committee charters lay the foundation for inclusive behaviors in all relevant board processes?</p>	<p>Embed inclusive language, thinking, and actions into all relevant proceedings and practices.</p>
<p>If inclusion is not already practiced, how can the board or committee best begin to foster inclusion through its operating principles and behaviors?</p>	<p>Conduct a self-assessment of inclusion governance practices and develop a plan to embed inclusion into all board or committee processes.</p> <p>Consider forming an inclusion-specific committee or designating an inclusion champion within the board as a starting point.</p>
<p>Does the data informing the board's or committee's operations and decision-making come from a diverse and inclusive set of sources and perspectives?</p>	<p>Avoid confirmation bias by seeking out accurate information and research from multiple, diverse sources and perspectives.</p>

(Adapted from Deloitte analysis, Deloitte Insights)

## H: Holidays

In a large, complex and diverse institution such as UMMC, it is almost impossible to avoid scheduling events or hosting celebrations on **holidays**. There are **holidays** that are widely acknowledged including those that include religious practices due to timing or dietary requirements based on faith and beliefs. Managers or supervisors should solicit and welcome employee input before finalizing schedules or meetings. This allows the employee an opportunity to determine if the activity or event interferes with religious **holidays** or practices. Managers or supervisors can also embrace diversity and inclusion by not linking gatherings to religious **holidays** or by ensuring that attendance to celebrations is voluntary. For environmental safety purposes, UMMC provides guidelines on **holiday** decorations that must be adhered to.

# I: Inclusive Search Processes

Mississippi reflects many dimensions of diversity and our faculty and staff, at all levels, and should reflect the same as our state. Making a concerted effort to create an **inclusive search process** to hire talented and qualified faculty and staff members should increase opportunities for individuals from underrepresented groups. The search process is an important step towards fostering a climate of **inclusion**. A more diverse community welcomes a richer environment for collective minds to transform the lives of Mississippians. This pursuit of excellence must begin before the search for a new employee begins.

## Before the search:

- Create a diverse search committee that includes underrepresented racial/ethnic minorities, women, or other underrepresented groups.
- Appoint a diversity advocate to the committee to help ensure consistency with best practices.
- Leadership should meet with committee at beginning of the search process to reinforce importance of a strong, diverse applicant pool.
- Create a plan to advertise new positions broadly to reach various audiences and groups.
- Add language to job descriptions as signaling a special interest in candidates who contribute to the school/department diversity priorities. Examples include:

*“The school/department seeks candidates whose research, teaching, or service has prepared them to contribute to our commitment to diversity and inclusion.”*

*“Applicants are encouraged to describe in their cover letter how their scholarship contributes to building and supporting diverse communities.”*

## During the search:

- The search committee chair and members should reach out to colleagues at institutions that have diverse faculty and/or students to assist by promoting open positions.
- Discuss, prior to interviewing candidates, how criteria listed will be weighted and valued.
- Ask candidates about their demonstrated commitment to diversity and inclusion, and experience working in diverse environments.
- Ensure that each candidate is evaluated on all criteria listed in the job advertisement and identified as meaningful in the search.
- Leaders should review all candidates before any offer is made to the preferred candidate.

## After the search:

- Connect final-round candidates with those that share similar backgrounds and interests.
- Conduct a post-search debrief to review how the process went for the search committee, chair, and new hire.
- Discuss what might have been done to make a failed recruitment process more successful.<sup>15</sup>

## J: Juggling Priorities

Health systems and hospitals are managed like a business with strong dependency of employees to render quality services with compassion, emotional intelligence and sensitivity. Such behavior cannot be expected if “work life” balance is poor. When an employee experiences better work life balance, they have feelings of well-being, express greater job satisfaction resulting in positive work related behavior such as higher productivity, reduced absenteeism and/or attrition.<sup>16</sup>

Develop self-managed teams to promote a sense of belongingness and team spirit.



Celebrate employee life events such as graduations, birthdays, and anniversaries.



Host an annual gathering to include employees and their families.



## K: Knowledge Sharing

**Knowledge sharing** is defined as the transfer of wisdom, skills and technology between organizational subunits.<sup>17</sup> **Knowledge flows** include the creation, transfer and integration of distributed **knowledge**.<sup>18</sup> Below is a list of recommended actions relevant to facilitating and encouraging **knowledge sharing** among employees.

Workflow Design	Creating cross-functional teams gives employees the opportunity to work closely with others; enhances interdependency, collaboration, and leverages knowledge flows.
Recruitment	Hire individuals that share organizational values.
Training and Development	Training and cross-training increases the likelihood of interactions, shared language, building social ties, trust, and employees' awareness of the demands of different job responsibilities.
Performance Evaluations	View annual performance evaluations as a “developmental” opportunity. Research shows that employees are more inclined to share creative ideas with this type of evaluation more than those receiving critical evaluations.
Rewards	Recognize and reward employees based on group and organization-level outcomes to reinforce collective goals and cooperation.
Culture	Organizational culture can influence knowledge by creating an environment with strong norms of promoting and encouraging knowledge sharing.
Technology	Well-designed and user-friendly technology helps simplify the task and reduces time necessary for sharing ideas with others.

(Adapted from Cabrera and Cabrera, 2007)

## L, M, N, O, P: Positive Work Environments



Creating and maintaining a positive work environment is important and cannot be achieved without effective communication. Harvard Business Review reports that 57% of employees feel they are not given clear directions and 69% of managers are not comfortable communicating in general.<sup>19</sup> Effective communication builds positive workplace culture, eliminates confusion, creates accountability, and delivers purpose.

**L**isten and observe with intention. It is important to listen and observe employees. Not only does it help managers hear and see the perspective of others but allows the employee unveil their thinking and insight. Surveying employees and observing workflows can also address underlying factors that impact productivity.

**M**eet regularly your staff, even when problems do not exist. This supports team building and helps to build camaraderie. Even if it feels as there is nothing pressing, employees should be encouraged to share projects they are working on, successes, or obstacles faced. Dedicate time for employees to share with managers what they need from them. No employee is immune to workplace stress or daily pressure. Be empathetic and engage with your employees.

**N**ominate team members for awards. Employees want to feel valued and appreciated for the work that they do. UMMC has numerous awards and recognition programs (See UMMC Awards Nominations webpage). Managers can also share successes of team members through announcements, newsletters, or other communications. It is important to celebrate successes and achievements of team members or the department, whether big or small. This helps to build a sense of community and belonging.

**O**pen door policies help simplify communication channels between managers and subordinates. Empower employees by creating environments where they feel comfortable and have access to share ideas, make suggestions, or discuss challenges.

**P**ositive work environments promote inclusion, where everyone's voice can be heard. It also helps to break down silos and encourages collaboration. Investments made to an employee's growth and professional development, team-building activities, and community outreach or social outings are influencers to an inclusive workplace culture.

Utilizing effective communication strategies is not only an important business practice for a productive and committed workforce, but it distinguishes good organizations from great ones. The power of effective communication in the workplace results in overall better patient relationships, profitability, team effectiveness, and employee engagement.

## Q: Quality

qual·i·ty | \ 'kwä-lə-tē<sup>20</sup>

*plural* qualities

### Noun:

1. peculiar and essential character; an inherent feature; capacity, role
2. degree of excellence; superiority in kind
3. social status; aristocracy
4. a distinguishing attribute; an acquired skill
5. the character in a logical proposition of being affirmative or negative



### Adjective:

1. being of high **quality**

## R: Respect

A culture of **respect** is a “precondition” for the changes needed to make health care safe including collaboration and teamwork, which lead to successful implementation of safety practices. Without mutual **respect** and a sense of common purpose, employees cannot and will not work effectively together. Creating a culture of **respect** requires several actions such as:

**Modeling respectful conduct;**

**Educating students, clinical staff, and non-clinical staff on appropriate behaviors;**

**Conducting performance evaluations to identify those in need of help;**

**Providing counseling and training when needed;**

**Supporting operational changes that increase the sense of fairness, transparency, collaboration, and individual responsibility.<sup>21</sup>**



# S: Spirituality in the Workplace



Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits employment discrimination based on religion. Included in this act is the refusal to accommodate sincerely held religious beliefs or practices; the only exception is if the accommodation would impose undue hardship on the operation of the business. Title VII, when viewed through the lens of the national education system and other social constructs, can be very challenging to adhere to for most organizations due to the belief of separating church and state, or simply, compartmentalizing faith.

Religion includes Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, other not part of a formal organized religion sect, and not just Christianity. Legal risks are created when organizations can be viewed as prioritizing one religion, or one set of beliefs. To avoid vulnerabilities organizations should be open to accommodating requests and not associating the event with promotion, performance evaluation, and/or coercion.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) requires that employers try not to suppress all religious expression in the workplace. Attire, grooming, jewelry, and tattoo policies should ensure that employers are seeking to protect the employees and others from injury but also should not discriminate against employee's practices. Employers have the right to set policies but should also be able to make accommodations that meet both the religious belief and job requirements.

Permitting spiritual expression such as prayer, Bible Study, or proselytizing in the workplace, is cautioned by the EEOC for employers to not speculate on whether or not the practice will be disruptive. Instead, managers should be able to identify accommodations to avoid disruption, which can be learned through training.<sup>22</sup>

## ***Spiritual beliefs***

A reasonable religious accommodation is any adjustment to the work environment that allows employees to practice their religion or sincerely held ethical or moral beliefs.

Modifications to workplace practices, policies or procedures, such as flexible scheduling, voluntary substitutions, swaps, job reassignments and lateral transfers, are a few examples of how an employer might accommodate an employee's religious beliefs, practices and observances.

Title VII also prohibits discrimination and workplace harassment based on religion, which may occur when applicants or employees are required or coerced to abandon, alter or adopt a religious practice as a condition of employment, or when applicants or employees are subjected to unwelcome remarks or conduct based on religion. Applicants or employees who profess to have no religious beliefs are also protected from discrimination and harassment under Title VII.

Religious accommodation involves and provides applicants and employees with protection from discrimination and harassment so they may practice and observe their religious, ethical or moral beliefs free from conflict between their employment responsibilities and their religious beliefs, needs and practices.

## ***Prayer at meetings and employer-sponsored holiday parties or events***

Employers can create legal risks and vulnerabilities by proselytizing or by favoring one religion or one set of religious, moral or ethical beliefs over another, or by their favoring belief over nonbelief.

## T: “To be or not to be?”

### *Mentor vs. Sponsor*

**Sponsors** are often confused with **mentors** and perform a different set of tasks in the success of rising talent. While **mentors** give advice, direction, and emotional, or social support, they often fall short of making a significant difference in the careers of others. **Mentors** are not accountable for the success of another individual. **Mentors** also typically do not have the power to help one advance. In contrast, **sponsors** are those in positions of power. They are senior leaders who stick their necks out for others. **Mentor** and **sponsors** are accountable for and committed to one’s career success, and spend time investing in their career advancement. In short, **mentors** give and **sponsors** invest.

### Mentors



*Gives support*

*Offers guidance*

*Shares knowledge or advice*

*Trains novices*

*Facilitates processes*

### Sponsors



*Senior leader*

*Serves as an advocate*

*Supports those with high-potential*

*Takes risks for mentees*

*Uses their influence*

## U: Unusual Suspects

Frontline employees are service personnel whose personal interactions can influence customer satisfaction as well as perceptions of quality service.<sup>26</sup> There is also a strong assumption that if employees are involved in planning, adequately informed, or afforded the opportunity to make decisions relevant to their work then there will be benefits for both the individual and the organization. Not only will cooperation and communication improve, so will gaining a sense of ownership, productivity and effectiveness.<sup>27</sup> Understanding employees or team members is the key to inclusion. Inclusive leaders demonstrate a collection of six behaviors:



The real question is how many leaders use these factors into everyday practice. Think about these two questions:

1. *What is your department doing to promote inclusion?*
2. *Have you considered that the next best idea may come from the employee you least expect?*

## V: Volunteerism

Studies show that employee **volunteerism** boosts employee engagement and morale. In addition, employee volunteerism:



- ☑ Improves the image of the organization;
- ☑ Increases employee teamwork and collaboration;
- ☑ Builds employee skills, character and pride; and
- ☑ Gives back to the community.

## W: "Win-Win"

In change management processes, functional discourse uses participation, information, and communication to find congruent collective aims and suitable incentives to establish mutual benefits and to reduce resistance. Employees are likely to accept "**win-win**" solutions if credibility is demonstrated by managers and institutions. If employees believe there is a hidden agenda, the idea of "**win-win**" will be blemished and organizational change may fail.<sup>28</sup>

## X: Xenophobia

xe·no·pho·bia | \ ,ze-nə-'fō-bē-ə<sup>29</sup>

### Noun:

1. fear and hatred of strangers or foreigners or of anything that is strange or foreign

*Cross-cultural or inter-group contact, diversity training and peer learning are a few interventions identified to help reduce prejudices or discrimination against specific groups.*

## Y: "Yes or No?"

Inclusive leadership considers differences among team members. It supports their belongingness to facilitate each member's contributions, rather than emphasize the need to assimilate toward collective needs or goals, as is central to transformational leadership.<sup>30</sup>

If you can answer "Yes" to these six questions, you may be on your way to being an inclusive leader. <sup>31</sup> Mark your answer in the "Yes" or "No" box.	YES	NO
<b>1. Belief:</b> Do you wholeheartedly believe everyone is created equal?		
<b>2. Awareness:</b> Are you aware of the conscious and unconscious biases you had (or have) towards others?		
<b>3. Boldness:</b> Are you honest with others about your shortcomings or misperceptions?		
<b>4. Curiosity:</b> Are you open to unlearning and relearning from others?		
<b>5. Action:</b> Are your behaviors and actions towards others aligned with your belief in equality?		
<b>6. Commitment:</b> Do you consistently hold yourself and others accountable to a culture of inclusion?		

## Z: Zero Tolerance!

**Zero tolerance** is a policy of very strict, uncompromising enforcement of rules or laws. In the workplace, these policies are used to eliminate undesirable behaviors among employees such as harassment. Harassment is unwelcome conduct that is based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, age (40 or older), disability or genetic information.<sup>32</sup> It involves any unwanted physical or verbal conduct that offends or humiliates the recipient that interferes with their ability to work and learn or leads to adverse job-related consequences, and that any reasonable person ought to have known would be unwelcome.<sup>33</sup> Offensive conduct may include, but is not limited to, offensive jokes, slurs, epithets or name calling, physical assaults or threats, intimidation, ridicule or mockery, insults or put-downs, offensive objects or pictures.<sup>32</sup>

# Commonly Used Terms Related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

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The Office of Diversity and Inclusion at UMMC believes that the words that we use matter and reflect the incredible diversity that characterizes our society. Therefore, we have put together a list with the most commonly used terms related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. This list strives to identify inclusive terminology while offering useful descriptions. All the terms provided on this list are intended as flexible, working definitions.

- **Ableism:** Prejudiced thoughts and discriminatory actions based on differences in physical, mental and/or emotional ability.
- **Acceptance:** The quality or state of being accepted or acceptable.
- **Ageist:** Someone who practices discrimination or prejudice against an individual or group because of age.
- **Ally:** A person who is not LGBTQ but shows support for LGBTQ people and promotes equality in a variety of ways.
- **Androgynous:** A person appearing and/or identifying as neither man nor woman, presenting a gender either mixed or neutral.
- **Asexual:** A person who does not experience sexual attraction. Unlike celibacy, which people choose, asexuality is an intrinsic part of an individual.
- **Assigned Birth Sex:** The biological sex assigned (named) an individual baby at birth.
- **Bias:** A prejudice, either in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another, usually in a way that is considered unfair.
- **Biphobia:** An irrational dislike or fear of bisexual people.
- **Bisexual:** A person emotionally, romantically, or sexually attracted to more than one sex, gender or gender identity though not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way or to the same degree.
- **Classist:** Someone who practices discrimination or prejudice against an individual or group based on social or economic class.
- **Climate:** Current attitudes, behaviors, and standards of employees and students concerning the access for, inclusion of, and level of respect for individual and group needs, abilities, and potential.
- **Closeted:** Describes an LGBTQ person who has not disclosed their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- **Collaboration:** The act of working together with other people or organizations to create or achieve something.
- **Compassion:** Sympathetic consciousness of others' distress together with a desire to alleviate it.
- **Cronyism:** The hiring or promoting of friends or associates to positions without proper regard to their qualifications.
- **Culture:** Shared set of beliefs, assumptions, and practices through which we see and understand the world around us.
- **Disability:** A physical or mental impairment that limits one or more major life activities.
- **Discrimination:** Discrimination refers to the treatment or consideration of, or making a distinction in favor of or against, a person based on the group, class, or category to which that person belongs rather than on individual merit. Discrimination can be the effect of some law or established practice that confers privilege or liability based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender, gender expression, gender identity, pregnancy, physical or mental disability,

medical condition (cancer-related or genetic characteristics), genetic information (including family medical history), ancestry, marital status, age, sexual identity, citizenship, or service in the uniformed services.

- **Diversity:** Wide variety of shared and different personal and group characteristics among human beings.
- **Engagement:** Involvement, participation, intervention.
- **Equality:** The quality or state of being equal.
- **Equity:** The absence of avoidable or remediable differences among groups of people, whether those groups are defined socially, economically, demographically, or geographically.
- **Ethnic Identity:** A socially constructed category about a group of people based on their shared culture. This can be reflected in language, religion, material culture such as clothing and cuisine, and cultural products such as music and art.
- **Ethnocentrism:** Someone who practices discrimination or prejudice against an individual or group's culture based solely on the values and standards of one's own culture. Ethnocentric individuals judge other groups relative to their own ethnic group or culture, especially with concern for language, behavior, customs, and religion.
- **Family Leave:** The Family and Medical Leave Act is a labor law requiring employers with 50 or more employees to provide certain employees with job-protected unpaid leave due to situations such as the following: serious health conditions that make employees unable to perform their jobs; caring for a sick family member; or caring for a new child (including birth, adoption, or foster care). For more information, see (<http://www.dol.gov/whd/fmla/>).
- **Gay:** A person who is emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to members of the same gender.
- **Gender Expression:** External appearance of one's gender identity, usually expressed through behavior, clothing, haircut or voice, and which may or may not conform to socially defined behaviors and characteristics typically associated with being either masculine or feminine.
- **Gender Identity:** One's innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both or neither – how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. One's gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth.
- **Genderqueer:** A person whose gender identity is outside of, not included within, or beyond the binary of female and male, or who is gender nonconforming through expression, behavior, social roles, and/or identity.
- **Gender Non-conforming (or non-binary):** A broad term referring to people who do not behave in a way that conforms to the traditional expectations of their gender, or whose gender expression does not fit neatly into a category.
- **Gender Transition:** The process by which some people strive to more closely align their internal knowledge of gender with their outward appearance. Some people socially transition, whereby they might begin dressing, using names and pronouns, and/or be socially recognized as another gender. Others undergo physical transitions in which they modify their bodies through medical interventions.
- **Harassment:** Unwelcomed behavior that demeans, threatens, or offends another person or group of people and results in a hostile environment for the targeted person/group.
- **Heterosexist:** Someone who practices discrimination or prejudice against an individual or group based on a sexual orientation that is not heterosexual.
- **Homophobia:** An irrational fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against homosexuality and individuals who identify as or are perceived as homosexual.

- **Inclusion:** Involvement and empowerment, where the inherent worth and dignity of all people are recognized.
- **Integrity:** The quality of being honest and having strong moral principles.
- **Intersectionality:** The interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.
- **Intersex:** Any one of a variety of conditions in which a person is born with a reproductive or sexual anatomy that does not seem to fit the typical definitions of female or male.
- **Lesbian:** A woman who is emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to other women.
- **LGBTQ:** Acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning.
- **Microaggressions:** Everyday insults, indignities, and demeaning messages sent to historically marginalized groups.
- **Motivation:** The reason or reasons one has for acting or behaving in a particular way.
- **Nepotism:** The hiring or promoting of family members to positions without proper regard to their qualifications.
- **Nonbinary:** Any gender, or lack of gender, or a mix of genders that is not strictly man or woman.
- **Non-Native English Speakers:** People for whom English is not their first language.
- **Pansexual:** Fluid in sexual identity and is attracted to others regardless of their sexual identity or gender.
- **People of Color:** People who self-identify as other than White.
- **Physical Characteristics:** Term that refers to one's appearance.
- **Position:** The status one holds by virtue of her/his role/status within the institution (e.g., staff, full-time faculty, part-time faculty, and administrator).
- **Queer:** A term people often use to express fluid identities and orientations. Often used interchangeably with "LGBTQ."
- **Questioning:** A term used to describe people who are in the process of exploring their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- **Racial Identity:** A socially constructed category about a group of people based on generalized physical features such as skin color, hair type, shape of eyes, physique, etc.
- **Racist:** Someone who practices discrimination or prejudice against an individual or group based on their racial identity.
- **Respect:** An act of giving particular attention, consideration; high or special regard, esteem; the quality or state of being esteemed.
- **Sexist:** Someone who practices discrimination or prejudice against an individual or group based on their assigned birth sex.
- **Sexual Assault:** Unwanted sexual assault is any actual or attempted nonconsensual sexual activity including, but not limited to: sexual intercourse, or sexual touching, committed with coercion, threat, or intimidation (actual or implied) with or without physical force; exhibitionism; or sexual language of a threatening nature by a person(s) known or unknown to the victim. Forcible touching, a form of sexual assault, is defined as intentionally, and for no legitimate

purpose, forcibly touching the sexual or other intimate parts of another person for the purpose of degrading or abusing such person or for gratifying sexual desires.

- **Sexual Identity:** A personal characteristic based on the sex of people one tends to be emotionally, physically, and sexually attracted to; this is inclusive of, but not limited to, lesbians, gay men, bisexual people, heterosexual people, and those who identify as queer.
- **Sexual Orientation:** An inherent or immutable enduring emotional, romantic or sexual attraction to other people.
- **Socioeconomic Status:** The status one holds in society based on one's level of income, wealth, education, and familial background.
- **Stereotype:** A belief that associates a group of people with certain traits or characteristics.
- **Transgender:** An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. Being transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation. Therefore, transgender people may identify as straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, etc.
- **Transphobia:** An irrational dislike or fear of transgender, transsexual, and other gender non-traditional individuals because of their perceived gender identity or gender expression.
- **Unconscious Bias:** Unconscious biases are social stereotypes about certain groups of people that individuals form outside their own conscious awareness. Everyone holds unconscious beliefs about various social and identity groups, and these biases stem from one's tendency to organize social worlds by categorizing.
- **Unwanted Sexual Contact:** Unwelcomed touching of a sexual nature that includes fondling (any intentional sexual touching, however slight, with any object without consent); rape; sexual assault (including oral, anal, or vaginal penetration with a body part or an object); use of alcohol or other drugs to incapacitate; gang rape; and sexual harassment involving physical contact.
- **Xenophobic:** Unreasonably fearful or hostile toward people from other countries.



# Conclusion

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The University of Mississippi Medical Center recruits and employs students, staff, and faculty from around the world interested in receiving an excellent educational experience, participating in cutting-edge research and discovery, and serving patients from all walks of life. By having a diverse student body, staff, and faculty, UMMC is better positioned to produce outstanding health professionals to serve the community while addressing challenges and threats to better health outcomes and equitable care. We consider this guide as one of many ways to offer direction for academic leaders who recruit, retain, and support students, staff, and faculty. Increasing diversity and promoting an inclusive campus environment is a priority. This is why it is important to share applied knowledge, and foster responsible and accountable leadership committed inclusive practices in work and learning environments.

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