



# DIVERSITY VS. INCLUSION: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

When it comes to business, the terms "diversity" and "inclusion" are often used interchangeably. However, there is a big difference between the two concepts – and it's important for leaders to understand the distinction.

## DEFINING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Diversity and inclusion are not just buzzwords, but rather an embodiment of how we strive to make everyone feel safe and accepted.

**Diversity** entails recognizing, understanding, and embracing our differences as individuals with varied relationships, backgrounds and perspectives.

**Inclusion** is about making sure that everyone feels heard, supported, and represented in their daily lives through deeper connections within their communities.

Together, diversity and inclusion encourages us to open conversations and break down barriers that keep people from feeling welcome—allowing those who have felt overlooked or undervalued the opportunity to be seen and celebrated. This ongoing work helps create a robust atmosphere where growth flourishes while upholding a sense of belonging.



## THE BENEFITS OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION EFFORTS IN THE WORKPLACE

The workplace can truly be a powerful setting for positive change when diversity and inclusion efforts come into play. Studies have shown that introducing more diverse employees, from different cultural backgrounds, ideologies, and age groups can lead to:

- fresher ideas
- improved creativity
- better problem-solving skills

An inclusive workplace where everyone is accepted brings about high morale for employees who feel their voice counts and is heard by their peers and leadership. Ultimately creating an inclusive workplace allows an organization to tap into the collective knowledge of all its members—forming the ideal base from which powerful solutions are born.





## THE CHALLENGES OF IMPLEMENTING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGIES IN THE WORKPLACE

To truly make sure diversity and inclusion are fully embraced, it takes educating people about its value, as well as allocating resources for training, recruiting and retaining employees from different backgrounds.

Additionally, initiatives must be put in place to ensure the success and progress of these efforts. This can include:

- setting up protocols
- providing mentorships or sponsorships
- creating diverse task forces that are dedicated to promoting diversity and inclusion

With strong commitment from leaders across the organization, all of these initiatives will help create a working environment that is respectful and inclusive.

## HOW TO CREATE A MORE DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT

Creating a diverse and inclusive environment takes commitment; it should not be seen as a "one-and-done" task. An important first step is to make sure that everyone in the organization,

from the top-level executives to new hires, is actively engaged in conversations about diversity and inclusion. All stakeholders should have a voice and feel comfortable raising questions or offering perspective on potential solutions. It's also essential to take an active approach to regularly evaluating and challenging existing policies, procedures, and behaviors to identify any systemic biases or obstacles preventing people of all backgrounds from feeling welcomed, safe, respected, and empowered. With awareness and empathy as key guides, organizations will be able to create meaningful progress toward an environment where everyone has an equal opportunity to thrive.

**Diversity and inclusion are essential components to fostering an innovative business that truly prospers.**

Ultimately, diversity and inclusion are essential components to fostering an innovative business that truly prospers. Both concepts are necessary in order to create a safe and comfortable environment for everyone, where their differences can be recognized and celebrated - allowing employees to reach their highest potential. Through understanding the difference between diversity and inclusion, as well as the benefits that each offer, businesses can continue to thrive for years to come.