



## DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE

### Introduction

This course is about diversity in our workplace. With a global economy and living in a multiethnic state, you will have diversity within your organization and among your clients. This course is designed to help you recognize diversities in your work environment. Some diversity issues or categories are protected by the Federal laws such as the Civil Rights Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and others. Some diversity issues are not necessarily specified by law, but do fall under ethical behavior within the workplace.

This course is not about you requiring you to change your values and morals, rather it is about helping you see where you can act to make your workplace an accepting place to for everyone and celebrate each person's diversity.

### Course Objectives

By the time you complete this course, you should be able to:

- List ways in which we're diverse
- Describe challenges and opportunities of having a diverse workforce
- Name ways to avoid discrimination in the workplace
- Recognize ways to embrace diversity
- Identify interpersonal diversity skills

### Level Setting

Level Setting

### What Is Level Setting

Level setting is important when beginning any course. Level setting is defined by Dictionary.com as "a situation in which everyone in a group has a basic understanding of a situation."

In this section of the course we will define a number of terms, examine where bias and prejudice come from, and the purpose of this course.

### Definitions from Merriam-Webster

Words matter and the same word may have different meanings to different people. We are beginning this course by defining some of the words used in the context of this course. Click each word to see the meaning of the word as we are using it. A hyperlink is included with each word if you would like to see alternative definitions from Merriam-Webster.

### Acceptance

Acceptance is "the act of accepting; the fact of being accepted: approval."

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/acceptance>

### Accepting

Accepting has a number of meanings that could be applicable within this course:

- “to give admittance or approval to”
- “to endure without protest or reaction”
- “to regard as proper, normal, or inevitable”
- “to recognize as true: believe”

These definitions cover a broad range of internalized acceptance. As you go through the course, you should determine which specific meaning applies to you.

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/accepting>

### Belief

Belief is “something believed; especially: a tenet or body of tenets held by a group.”

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/belief>

### Bias

Bias is “an inclination of temperament or outlook; especially: a personal and sometimes unreasoned judgment: prejudice.”

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bias>

### Diversity

Diversity is “the condition of having or being composed of differing elements: variety; especially: the inclusion of different types of people (as people of different races or cultures) in a group or organization.”

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/diversity>

### Embrace

Like accepting, embrace has two meanings which are applicable to this course and you should determine which specific meaning applies to you.

Embrace means

“to take up especially readily or gladly”

“to avail oneself welcome”

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/embrace>

### Ethics

Ethics are “a set of moral principles: a theory or system of moral values.”

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ethics>

### Morals

Morals means “sanctioned by or operative on one's conscience or ethical judgment.”

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/morals>

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### Prejudice

Several definitions of prejudice apply to our course:

“preconceived judgment or opinion”

“an adverse opinion or leaning formed without just grounds or before sufficient knowledge”

“an irrational attitude of hostility directed against an individual, a group, a race, or their supposed characteristics”

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/prejudice>

### What Workplace Diversity Is

Diversity in the workplace is more than just complying with government regulations such as the EEOC regulations we are familiar with. Diversity is understanding what each person can bring to the organization. It is also about respecting others inside and outside the organization. Diversity is each of us putting aside individual prejudices and biases to work together to create an organization that is innovative and productive. Click to see a sample EEOC notice.

[Company Name] provides equal employment opportunities (EEO) to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or genetics. In addition to federal law requirements, [Company Name] complies with applicable state and local laws governing nondiscrimination in employment in every location in which the company has facilities. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including recruiting, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation and training.

[Company Name] expressly prohibits any form of workplace harassment based on race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, genetic information, disability, or veteran status. Improper interference with the ability of [Company Name]’s employees to perform their job duties may result in discipline up to and including discharge.

### What Workplace Diversity Is NOT

Workplace diversity is not giving up your personal morals, ethics, or values. Workplace diversity is not giving up your religious or cultural practices.

Workplace diversity is understanding that each person is unique and if we accept each person in our workspace with respect and listen to each viewpoint, we will have a collaborative and productive work environment.

### Examining Your Bias and Prejudice

“Psychologists once believed that only bigoted people used stereotypes. Now the study of unconscious bias is revealing the unsettling truth: We all use stereotypes, all the time, without knowing it. We have met the enemy of equality, and the enemy is us.”

Annie Murphy Paul, “Where Bias Begins: The Truth About Stereotypes”

### Purpose of This Course

The purpose of this course is to help you be cognizant of how people are different and be aware of how your own biases or prejudices may be leading you to treat others disrespectfully – either by pre-judging or overt actions. In the workplace each individual deserves respect and consideration, the same respect and consideration you want for yourself.

## Use of Language in This Course

This course is about people. When speaking and writing, we use pronouns to refer to people, including “he, she, or they.” We understand that new pronouns are being explored and some individuals may prefer a particular pronoun that is less traditional. Use of he or she in this course is for the sake of brevity, rather than implying one pronoun is superior to another. Later in this course we will review appropriate use of pronouns when communicating with persons who identify as other genders.

## Ways We Are Diverse

Ways we are diverse

## General Categories

In this section we will look at these “big” or general categories of diversity.

- Race
- Gender
- Age
- Disability
- Religion
- Economic
- Education
- Communication
- Height/Weight

Within many of these big categories are other categories. Our purpose in listing diversity categories is to help you become aware of how people around you may be different and how you may be reacting to them based on stereotypes or biases. There may be other groups that are not addressed here.

## Race

Race is defined by Merriam-Webster as:

- “a family, tribe, people, or nation belonging to the same stock” or
- “a category of humankind that shares certain distinctive physical traits”

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act does not define race. Race-based discrimination may include discrimination based on skin pigmentation including complexion, shade, or tone; hair texture or style; or facial features.

Other categories that fall into this general definition are country of origin, ethnicity, and culture. Click each for an explanation.

### Country of origin

Country of origin is “the country where something or someone comes from.” Discrimination based on country of origin most often occurs with recent immigrants.

### Ethnicity

Ethnicity is a particular ethnic affiliation or group.

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### Culture

Culture meanings include:

- “the integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behavior that depends upon the capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations”, or
- “the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group; also, the characteristic features of everyday existence shared by people in a place or time.”

Culture is based on the shared experience of everyday living. Within a nation as large as the United States we have some shared cultural experiences and some diverse cultural experiences which may be based on geographical location or family group.

### End

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination or harassment for any of these reasons.

[www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary)

### Gender

Gender most often is associated with the gender assigned at birth – either male or female.

Gender identity is “One’s internal, deeply held sense of one’s gender.”

Sexual orientation “Describes an individual’s enduring physical, romantic and/or emotional attraction to another person. Gender identity and sexual orientation are not the same.”

Discrimination or harassment for any of these reasons violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act.

GLAAD Media Reference Guide 9<sup>th</sup> Edition

### Age

Age discrimination may occur at both the beginning and the end of a person’s working life. Older workers may reject ideas from younger workers, viewing them as lacking experience. Younger workers may reject ideas from older workers as stale or already tried. In the current marketplace, organizations may have up to five generations of employees.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA) both protect workers from discrimination and harassment. The ADEA protects workers aged 40 and older.

The generation names and birth years are:

- The Silent Generation began in 1925 and ended in 1945
- Baby Boomer Generation began in 1946 and ended in 1964
- Generation X - Baby Bust began in 1965 and ended in 1979
- Generation Y - The Millennial - Gen Next began in 1980 and ended in 1995
- Generation Z began in 1996 and ended in 2010

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Please note that the first and last years for each generation are approximate and vary or overlap depending upon the source.

Just for fun, can you guess what the generation after Generation Z is being called?

Generation Alpha but since they're not in the workforce yet, we haven't included them on this slide!

Michael Robinson, "The Generations - Which Generation Are You?"

### Disability

Persons with a disability are protected by the Americans with Disabilities Acts (ADA) and/or the Rehabilitation Act.

Can you tell by looking who has a disability by looking at this picture? It's important to keep in mind that disabilities may or may not be visible. A person in a wheelchair would have a visible disability, while a person who is hearing impaired or has a mental illness may have invisible disabilities. Both physical and mental disabilities may require special accommodations, such as a ramp for a person using a wheelchair or a quiet working space for some persons with mental illnesses. These special accommodations may engender negative reactions from coworkers in the work environment. Disabilities of any type may make others feel uncomfortable or hesitant to include the person with a disability.

### Religion

Religious discrimination includes not only beliefs and practices of those in traditional, organized religions, but also persons with sincerely held moral or ethical beliefs. Title VII protects persons from both discrimination and harassment based on these beliefs.

[Click to view limitations and exceptions to religious discrimination.](#)

Protections based on religious beliefs and practices do have some limitations. If an employer would have an undue hardship accommodating particular religious dress or grooming practices that could compromise the safety of the worker or other workers the employer may not have to accommodate the religious dress or grooming practice. If a worker's religious practice decreases workplace efficiencies, infringes on the rights of other workers, or requires other workers to do more than their share of potentially hazardous or burdensome work, the worker may not be accommodated.

There is an exception for religious organizations permitting them to preferentially hire only persons sharing their beliefs. "The exception applies only to those institutions whose "purpose and character are primarily religious." The exception does not apply to other forms of discrimination such as race or disability.

### Economic

While not a protected category under Federal regulation, economic diversity exists in most organizations. The highest levels in management are compensated at a higher rate than new organization workers in non-management positions. This is not a surprise to any of us. What each person in the organization needs to keep in mind is acceptance and respect for all persons employed by the organization no matter what their economic status.

### Education

Education diversity may be greater at some organizations than at others. Education is obtained in two ways – formal education from a university or trade school and informal education obtained through

experience. While some positions, for example a psychiatrist, require a formal degreed education, others do not. The level of education a person has obtained should not be a factor in the respect and courtesy given to workers or clients of the organization. As with economic diversity, this is not a protected class under Federal law.

### Communication

Communication diversity in the workplace occurs at a number of levels. Communication may or may not be protected, depending on the reason for the communication issues.

First, communication in most organizations in the United States takes place in English. Individuals with English as a second language may have some challenges communicating with coworkers.

Second, communication problems may arise if a worker has a physical hearing impediment, either partial or full hearing loss. Some workers may communicate with sign language.

Finally, communication may be difficult based on a persons learned communication style. Some persons communicate very openly and freely, while others are more reticent. Generational and cultural differences may also impact the way people communicate.

### Other Physical Differences

Height and weight could be a diversity problem. The American with Disabilities Act holds that any person with an impairment that substantially limits a major life activity or major bodily function is protected under the Act. Courts have found, in some instances, that height outside the norms and severe obesity, if they limit major life activities or major bodily function, may be a protected disability. Severe obesity is defined as a weight more than twice the norm.

Visible scars, birthmarks, or other physical characteristics may impact how a worker is treated by others. If the physical difference limits major life activities or a major bodily function, then it too may be a protected disability under the ADA.

### Differences Summary

Of course, this is not a comprehensive list of differences we might encounter in the workplace. Politics, hobbies, likes and dislikes, and many other ideologies and characteristics make each of us a unique individual. In the next section, we will look at challenges and opportunities when working in a diverse workplace.

#### Overview

In this section we review ways you and your organization can embrace diversity. We'll begin with your organization's responsibility, then review embracing diversity at a personal level.

## Organizational Policy

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Each organization is required by Federal laws to ensure the workplace is non-discriminatory. We mentioned those Federal laws earlier in this course. Additionally, organizations may also be subject to state and/or local regulations. Beyond the regulatory compliance, organizational policies can foster diversity in the workplace. Organizational policies should include:

- Diversity in workforce hiring,
- Training all workers in the organization on diversity awareness,
- Organizational commitment to discussing diversity issues openly,
- A uniform set of expectation for all workers,
- An open-door policy for discrimination or harassment complaints, including a process to file complaints outside the worker's department or management structure,
- A commitment to complying with Federal, state, and local laws and regulations, and
- Enforcing a respectful environment for all employees.

## Personal Competencies 1

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Each person needs to support diversity in the workplace. Ask yourself these questions.

Do I practice active listening?

Do I practice nonjudgmental listening?

Am I willing to challenge my personal concepts about diversity?

Am I willing to be sensitive about terms labeling groups regarding diversity?

## Personal Competencies 2

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Can I identify diversity issues?

Do I understand how diversity issues can cause related tension?

Am I open to learning about others who are different from me?

Do I express respect and admiration for persons I interact with?

Do I work to improve my collaboration skills?

## Personal Competencies 3

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When conflicts arise, am I willing to work constructively to solve them?

Knowing that change is inevitable, do I have appropriate change management skills?

As a manager, do I work actively to build an intercultural team?

As a team member, do I work cooperatively within my intercultural team?

What are my abilities to educate others on how to build diverse people skills?

This personal competencies checklist is under the Resources tab of this course. You can download the checklist, rate yourself, and use it to set goals to improve your personal diversity competencies.

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Belief, attitude, and actions are all tied to each other. Your beliefs may shift your attitude and your attitude influences your actions. The converse is also true, your actions may shift your attitude and your attitude then influences your beliefs.

Our beliefs and attitudes begin with our family and continue to change based on our experiences. How you feel about culture, race, gender, ethnicity, disability, and other characteristics of people you interact with evolve over time. Negative experiences and negative teaching result in negative attitudes and actions. Positive experiences and positive teaching result in positive actions. As your actions toward others are more positive, you may also find your attitude and beliefs soon follow.

### What Could You Do?

What could you do?

### Helpful Tips

In this section we will look at some specific tips for you working in a diverse environment. We'll review some action you can take when faced with uncomfortable interactions – once you have a plan of action, you may find your attitude and beliefs will become more positive.

### Communication Challenges

Communication is topic number one. Miscommunication results in negative experiences for all involved. Productive communication results in positive experiences. Before we review some specific situations, keep in mind the following adage from the first century philosopher, Epictetus, “You were born with two ears and one mouth for a reason.” The logic of this phrase is that we should listen twice as much as we speak.

Another quote along this line is from Stephen Covey's 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, “Seek first to understand, then to be understood.” Take the time to understand the other person, then they are better able to understand you.

### Communication: Non-Native Language Speakers

With a global economy and a large immigrant population in the United States, we all will interact with persons who speak English as a second language. English is a very complicated language with the same word having multiple meanings and a variety of forms. Don't dismiss or ignore what people say. Clarify by paraphrasing what you believe the other person meant. Use the send-receive-feedback model of communication.

### Communication: Cultural

Even if you have lived your entire life in the United States, where you grew up may reflect a different culture. If you grew up in New York City you would have different cultural words and expressions than someone who grew up in Atlanta or Chicago. An example of how words are used differently is the generic name for a carbonated non-alcoholic beverage or soft drink.

You are in a restaurant and want to know what soft drinks are available. In New York you would ask the server what kind of soda is available, in Chicago you would ask what kind of pop is available, and in Atlanta you would ask what kind of coke is available. You wouldn't think that asking for a soft drink would have so many options in one country, but it does. This is a simple example of how words can be so diverse geographically. If the words we use for something as simple as a soft drink are so different, what about words which we use to convey much more subtle meanings?

As we look at different cultural groups within the United States, then layer on multicultural communities, you can see how words may mean many different thing to different people. Once again, use the send-receive-feedback model to ensure you understand what the person is telling you.

### Communication: Gender

More recently gender has become a more relevant topic in communication. No longer are the pronouns he and she the only ones used when talking about a person. This is particularly true when addressing a person with a gender identity other than the one they were assigned at birth. A person may be transgender, cisgender, or gender non-conforming. If possible, ask the person which pronouns they would prefer you to use. If you are not able to ask the person, using the pronoun consistent with the person's appearance and gender expression would be appropriate.

When referring to a partner in a legal marriage, it is acceptable to use husband, wife, or spouse as applicable. Again, it is always appropriate to respectfully ask a person how you should refer to their spouse or domestic partner.

GLAAD Media Reference Guide, 9<sup>th</sup> Edition, 08/2014

### Ethnic, Cultural and Religious Challenges

Ethnic, cultural, and religious practices of some persons may be unfamiliar to us. No person should be harassed or denigrated based on their beliefs and practices. Employers are required make good-faith efforts to accommodate practices as long as they do not infringe on the safety of other workers and do not pose an undue hardship on the organization's ability to function.

While you may or may not subscribe to a particular ethnic, cultural or religious practice, as long as it does not put you in harm's way, you should be respectful. If you don't understand a particular practice, ask politely and listen without judgment. If you are working with recent immigrants to the United States, you can respectfully ask about their customary practices and perhaps explain the practices which are common in your workplace. The more we learn about each other the better our attitude will be.

Based on religious beliefs, some practices or events that are customary in your organization may overstep the bounds of a worker's beliefs. Make these events voluntary and as inclusive as possible.

### Disabilities Challenges

Persons with a disability have many, if not most, of the abilities every person has. If the disability is physical, it may be more evident than if the disability is mental. The websites *Disability Awareness 4 You* and Washington University's *DO-IT* have suggestions for how you can help. We'll begin with some general suggestions from "How You Can Help."

1. "Always treat people with disabilities as equals.
2. Always ask before you help.
3. Never assume someone does or does not have a disability.
4. Do not stare.
5. Respect and understand confidentiality."<sup>1</sup>

### Disabilities Challenges (con'd)

List of suggestions by disability. This is not a comprehensive list, only some ideas to get you thinking.

#### Crutches

- Ask the person if they need help.<sup>1</sup>
- Never touch a person's equipment, unless you ask first.<sup>1</sup>
- If a person falls, ask before you help them up.<sup>1</sup>

## Deaf or hearing loss

- Speak clearly.<sup>1</sup>
- Make eye contact with the person, not the sign language interpreter.<sup>1</sup>
- If necessary, write it down or text it. Ask before beginning a long conversation this way.<sup>1</sup>
- In a group discussion, slow down the conversation to make sure the person with a hearing impairment is able to keep up with the conversation, such as changing their focus from reading one person's lips to another's. Repeat questions or comments as needed.<sup>2</sup>
- Avoid jargon and acronyms, unless the person is familiar with them.<sup>2</sup>

## Developmental

- Respect and understand the person's routine.<sup>1</sup>
- Do not talk down to the person.<sup>1</sup>
- If you do not understand what the person said, ask the person to repeat.<sup>1</sup>

## Health impairments of any kind

- Medications may affect memory or energy levels.<sup>2</sup>
- Modify assignments and tasks as needed.<sup>2</sup>

## Learning

- Some people with disabilities, such as dyslexia, prefer verbal information rather than written.<sup>1</sup>
- Some people with auditory disabilities prefer written information rather than verbal.<sup>1</sup>
- To help with focus a person may need a quiet area to work.<sup>1</sup>
- Learning disabilities do not mean a lower intelligence level.<sup>2</sup>
- Give additional time if needed to accomplish tasks.<sup>2</sup>

## Psychiatric

- Be positive and expect the person to do well.<sup>2</sup>
- Be consistent.<sup>2</sup>
- Make instructions clear.<sup>2</sup>
- Reward and compliment good job performance.<sup>2</sup>
- Make corrections privately.<sup>2</sup>

## Seizure disorder

- If a seizure occurs, move away objects which could harm a person. Particularly be aware of the person's head.<sup>1</sup>
- Be aware of strobe lights and beepers which can trigger seizures.<sup>1</sup>

## Short stature

- Never refer to someone as a "midget." Use the term "little person."<sup>1</sup>
- Be aware of items that are out of reach, offer to lower the items if the person may need them.<sup>1</sup>
- Place yourself at eye level, just as you would when talking to a person in a wheelchair.<sup>1</sup>

## Social

- Respect a person's personal space, the person may be sensitive to touch.<sup>1</sup>
- If the person seems upset, give words of encouragement in a calm voice.<sup>1</sup>

## Speech

- Never finish sentences for the person.<sup>1</sup>

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- Be patient, let the person finish talking.<sup>2</sup>
- If you cannot understand the person, ask the person to repeat what was said or repeat what you heard for verification.<sup>1</sup>
- Hold conversations in areas without excessive noise or distractions.<sup>2</sup>
- Encourage the person to participate in group conversations.<sup>2</sup>

### Visually impaired or blind

- Never pet, play, feed, or talk to a guide dog when he or she is working.<sup>1</sup>
- If the person looks disoriented, approach and ask if they would like assistance.<sup>1</sup>
- Offer your arm, do not take his.<sup>1</sup>
- When beginning a conversation, identify yourself.<sup>1</sup>
- Be verbal. Let the person know of hazardous objects or situations they are approaching. Give verbal clues about the environment, such as the “the door is on the right, then down the stairs after a few steps.”<sup>1</sup>
- Make sure printed material is large enough for a person with low vision to see.<sup>2</sup>
- Make sure written material is available in an audio format for a person who is blind.<sup>2</sup>

### Wheelchair

- Never lean, push, or sit on a person’s wheelchair, unless asked.<sup>1</sup>
- Kneel or sit down to be at eye level with the person if it is appropriate.<sup>1</sup>
- Keep ramps and walkways clear.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Disability Awareness 4 You, “How You Can Help”

<sup>2</sup>Washington University’s DO-IT, “Strategies for Working with People who have Disabilities”

## Experience and Learning Opportunities

When working in a diverse environment each person brings their own abilities, strengths, and weaknesses. Look for strengths in people you work with and ask if they can help you build yours in a similar way. Immigrants and first generation Americans will have insights into communities you may be serving. Older workers may have “been there, done that” and have insight on useful shortcuts. Younger workers have grown up with technology and generally have an easier time adapting to new technologies which they can in turn share with older workers.

As you work in teams across ages, cultures, races, ethnicities, disabilities and other diversities, ask yourself these questions:

Is there an opportunity to be a teacher?

Is this an opportunity for me to learn something new?

“Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young. The greatest thing in life is to keep your mind young.” Henry Ford

<https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/h/henryford103927.html>

## Scenarios

What would you do? In this section we’ll look at some scenarios and determine if the actions taken were discriminatory, then reflect on what you could have done.

### Cindy

Cindy is 57-years-old and has worked for the organization for 15 years at the front desk answering incoming calls. The new facility administrator has commented that Cindy sounds “old” on the phone and has asked you if you think Cindy should be terminated in the reorganization the facility is undergoing. Would it be discriminatory for the administrator to terminate Cindy? Yes or No.

What could you say to the administrator when asked your opinion? Type your answer in the text box provided.

#### **Answer:**

While not the only answers, these are some possible answers:

Terminating Cindy because she sounds “old” would be age discrimination.

Possible replies to the new administrator might include:

Cindy’s voice is very reassuring to clients who are upset.

Cindy is such a pleasure to work with and always treats our clients with the respect they deserve.

### Sarah

Your organization has recently hired Sarah as a psychologist. Sarah was in the top of her graduating class and had amazing references. Everyone in the office was looking forward to the new clinician. When she began her first day of work you and your coworkers were uncomfortable when you saw she wears a hijab (headscarf) as a required religious practice. Does Sarah have a right to wear the hijab? Yes No

What could you say to coworkers to help them accept Sarah’s religious attire?

#### **Answer:**

While not the only answers, these are some possible answers:

Yes, since Sarah’s attire is not an issue of safety to herself or others when counseling clients, the hijab is protected as a religious expression.

Possible conversation you could have with Sarah might include asking, in a respectful and inquisitive tone, about the significance of the hijab in her religion.

With your coworkers you could encourage them to get to know Sarah on a personal basis rather than making assumptions about her based on just her religious attire.

### Kelly

You have worked with Kelly for three years in the administrative office of your organization. While you have been “work friends” you don’t know a lot about Kelly’s life outside the office. Kelly came into the office last week and told a few selected people in the office that he is going to transition from a male to a female. What could you say to Kelly to help the transition? What could you say to your coworkers?

#### Answer:

Possible conversations with Kelly could include asking how you can help make the transition easier in the office, when and if Kelly is ready for you share information if asked by a coworker. You can ask Kelly which pronoun is preferred and when you should begin using it.

When speaking with coworkers, make sure you are only talking about Kelly’s transition when you have permission to do so. Share information about pronouns and Kelly’s attire as appropriate. Help others understand that Kelly has made a difficult decision and will need their support along with yours.

### Jeremy

Jeremy is a new employee who has cerebral palsy. He needs crutches to walk and it takes him longer than most to walk a long distance. He also has difficulty carrying things, like his computer, when walking. There is a heavy entry door to the employee entrance. How could you help Jeremy feel welcome?

#### Answer:

Possible ways you could help Jeremy would be to offer to open the heavy door or carry his computer, he may or may not want your help, but will most likely appreciate the offer. Since it takes him longer to walk from room to room, you could slow your pace and walk with him when you go to lunch or take your breaks. Encourage your coworkers to take the time to walk with Jeremy too.

### Diversity and Me

Of course, these four scenarios are just some examples to get you thinking. In what ways are people diverse in your work environment? Have you let prejudices or biases lead your actions with your coworkers? Have you purposefully ignored prejudices expressed by coworkers towards others in your organization? How could you help make a change within those workers?

### Objective Summary

You should now be able to:

- List ways in which we're diverse
- Describe challenges and opportunities of having a diverse workforce
- Name ways to avoid discrimination in the workplace
- Recognize ways to embrace diversity
- Identify interpersonal diversity skills

### Final Thoughts

Throughout this course we have reviewed some of the ways we are different and some of the ways we can become more accepting both at a personal and organizational level. Take time to reflect on your own personal biases and how they may be influencing how you interact with those around you.

### Resources Links

Project Implicit <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/index.jsp>

This is an online self to allow you to test your biases. While the site makes no claim for the validity of their suggested interpretations, it is an interesting process you may want to try.