

## Living & Breathing Diversity as a Leader

### 1. Up – Down

- Applause symbolizes a key skill for welcoming people at work.
- Applause lets people know we are glad each group is in the room.
- Cheering groups on that people belong to lets them know we are proud of them.
- People get a chance to practice noticing similarities and differences.
- People also notice the variety of similarities and differences.

### 2. Pairs

- Talking openly about groups you are a member of makes it easier for everyone in a group to claim their own identity and pride.
- Participants learn about the wide range of groups that are included when we speak of diversity.
- Participants have an opportunity to notice which group identity has primary effect on their leadership – and begin to identify strengths and struggles (often, as a result of a history of oppression).
- Participants expand their understanding of the strengths and struggles people may bring to a meeting, a work project, or a relationship based on different group identities.

### 3. First Thoughts

- Participants openly look at their own records to increase success in relationships with people of all diverse backgrounds.
- Participants learn that we have all been contaminated by records about each other. A culturally competent leader will want to examine and get rid of these records.
- A culturally competent leader will also want to create an environment where records can be acknowledged.

### 4. Caucuses

- Caucusing, and giving time for people to meet with members of their own group, can increase everyone's participation in a workplace or school community.
- Culturally competent leaders will want to know those things that people never again want others to say think or do towards their group, in order to be a more effective leader.

- Structuring effective, respectful conversation about race and differences in a workplace setting should include support for separate constituency/affinity group work.
- A culturally competent leader will want to incorporate constituency/affinity group work into their workplace in a way that increases greater unity of the whole.
- Setting aside time for caucusing/affinity group meetings regularly increases the overall cultural competency of an organization.

## 7. Speak-Outs

- A culturally competent leader will appreciate the value of listening regularly to people's stories.
- Effective conversations about race and differences should always include a significant component of listening to stories.
- One of the best tools for improving cross-cultural relationships is making time on a regular basis for people to ask each other questions and listen to each other's stories.
- At the core of the story telling is an opportunity to learn how people from different groups experience mistreatment.
- Understanding how people from different groups have experienced mistreatment enables leaders to develop non-oppressive policies.
- Developing listening skills through listening to stories of others increases empathy and strengthens leadership and organizational capacity.

## 8. Skill Training: Handling Oppressive Comments and Upsets; Giving and Receiving Feedback

- Culturally competent leaders will know how to respond to oppressive jokes, comments, and slurs in a non-oppressive way that increases the likelihood that a person can make changes.
- An effective leader knows how to develop several allies at work who can listen out to upsets without engaging or being confused by them.
- A culturally competent leader can listen out to the upsets underlying an oppressive comment without blame, targeting, or judgment.
- Listening out to another's upset as non-defensively as possible is a prerequisite before giving and receiving feedback.
- A culturally competent leader will practice giving and receiving feedback in a tone that can decrease defensiveness.