

5 Challenges of Inclusive Leadership for Leaders and Managers

1 Everyone has biases.

Most biases are unconscious and it's impossible to remove them completely. Biases lead people to work with people who think similarly, especially in pressured situations. Biases push people toward easier processes and working methods. This leads to the exclusion of others.

What are some examples of bias?!

The Halo Effect— tendency to place another person in higher regard after learning something impressive about them. Can be dangerous when reviewing candidates.

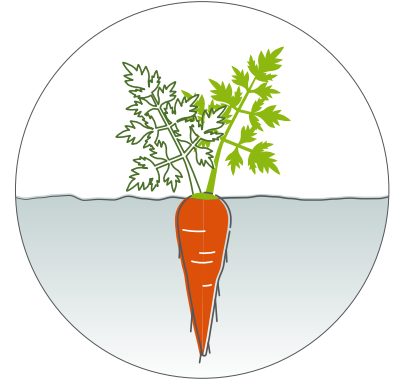
Ageism—the tendency to have negative feelings about another person based on their age. Often occurs with employees much older or younger than the average age in the group.

Beauty Bias—the tendency to place someone who's more physically attractive than average, according to cultural standards, as more competent or favorable than people of average or below average perceived physical attractiveness.



2 Diversity of thought — the invisible diversity characteristic

Think about diversity like a carrot. Above ground are the observable characteristics of diversity such as race, age, and gender identity. Below the ground, where you can't see, are the invisible diversity characteristics, like diversity of thought. Diversity of thought means recognizing that people are diverse from one another in their:



- Thinking styles and perspectives
- Experiences and backgrounds
- Work styles (decision-making, communicating, leading)
- Personality type

One way to increase self-awareness and introduce diversity of thought is through personality assessments like the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® assessment.



Personality assessments are beneficial in diversity training because they use a common, objective language to describe differences but don't rely on physical characteristics to differentiate between employees.

3 The self-perception trap

Many leaders perceive themselves to have more inclusive behaviors than they actually do. This means they do less than they could to make things better.

1/3 of leaders believe they're more inclusive than they are perceived by those around them.²

Part of the problem is leaders don't have tools or training on inclusive behaviors—they don't know what they don't know.

4 Organizations aren't designed to support inclusion.

The systems, processes, and culture of an organization might not support inclusive behaviors.

Example: Corporations have historically placed a high value on efficiency. But efficiency is usually achieved through a decision-making process that involves fewer people and fewer challenges. And that's the opposite of diversity.



5 Inclusive skills & behaviors haven't been acquired.

Inclusive leadership is a sought-after skill set, one that's becoming a critical capability. Not every leader has this skill set. It's far from being a given.



1 in 3 organizations have a strategy for training leaders to be inclusive³



33% of leaders lack confidence in the area of inclusion²

Inclusive leadership

doesn't come automatically. However, with the right training, all managers can harness the power of diversity and learn to be inclusive leaders. **Inclusive leadership training is good for the leader and even better for those they lead.**

2 ways to make leaders more inclusive

Give them the right training

The **2.48 billion results** on Google for 'leadership training' can be intimidating. Look for inclusive leadership training that's...

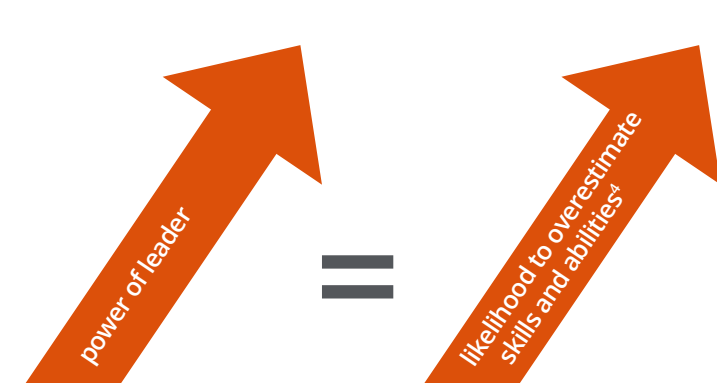
A **Designed specifically for managers and leaders.** People managers need to learn specific behaviors that model inclusion to get the best from employees and teams. These behaviors are different from those of individual contributors.

B **Engaging & interactive.** Don't let your training be "Zoom and doom." Look for development programs that have interactive elements throughout, whether it's in-person or virtual training. It helps leaders cement their learning.

C **Giving evaluation & action planning tools to leaders.** Too many trainings give slides and advice but don't include evaluation (self-evaluation or via assessment) to help leaders understand where they currently are, or action plans to apply new insights into everyday behaviors.

Increase their self-awareness

Only **10–15%** of 5000 people surveyed who claimed to be self-aware AND fit the criteria for high self-awareness.⁴



Most leaders who claim to be self-aware don't fit the criteria. In addition, research has shown that the more power a leader has, the higher the likelihood that they'll overestimate their skills and abilities.

Fortunately, personality assessments like the MBTI assessment increase self-awareness. They help people to understand differences. Leaders can then be trained to harness the benefits of diversity for positive results.

Learn how to address these challenges for your organization **here.**

Check out The Myers-Briggs Company's **Inclusive Leadership Workshop** here.

 The Myers-Briggs Company



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Reference: 1. <https://builtin.com/diversity-inclusion/unconscious-bias-examples> 2. Harvard Business Review, The Key to Inclusive Leadership 3. Werder, 2021 4. Eurich, T. (2018). What self-awareness really is (and how to cultivate it), Harvard Business Review