

# 10 TIPS FOR CREATING A CULTURALLY INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE



1. **Be intentional.** Embed cultural inclusivity as a core workplace value. Write it down. Talk about it. Find ways to measure it and hold employees and managers accountable for it— what’s measured counts!
2. **Don’t be “colour blind.”** As altruistic and politically correct as it may seem to be, refusing to recognize that everyone isn’t treated equally in the real world does nothing to address those inequalities. You must be aware of discrimination to deal with it.
3. **Recruit people where they gather.** Advertising in the same places will likely attract similar employees; if your goal is to build a workforce that is more representative of the cultural diversity in your community, advertise in ethnic media, using a variety of languages, and network in diverse community associations.
4. **Rethink screening criteria.** Ensure that job descriptions and ads are bias free (e.g., use plain language), focus only on essential job requirements, and be flexible about connecting with non-Canadian references. Don’t let “no Canadian Experience” be a deciding factor and question whether a foreign accent or less than perfect English is a valid reason to exclude otherwise qualified candidates.
5. **Redefine “culture.”** Accepting that every employee, even if locally born and educated, has a unique cultural background normalizes the notion of cultural inclusiveness. Consider cultural differences that go beyond ethnicity to include race, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, level of ability, education, and geographic location.
6. **Orient incumbents.** Build bridges between new hires and incumbents by providing orientation to both groups. Prepare your workplace to welcome diverse members of the team. Address the FUD factor (fears, uncertainty, and doubt) up front.
7. **Ensure “on-boarding” is effective.** See orientation as a process rather than a single scheduled event. Avoid information overload on Day 1; assign a mentor/buddy to provide ongoing support.
8. **Avoid “initiatives.”** Time-limited, one-off diversity initiatives are not effective because they don’t address the underlying problem. Appoint a diversity champion to keep an ongoing focus on inclusiveness. Contribute to a sustainable shift in corporate culture that fully embraces all people.
9. **Deal with difficulties.** In any diverse group, there will be differences of opinions, misunderstandings, and other challenges. Proactively anticipate these – and create a clear and transparent process for how to handle them.
10. **Share successes.** Measure and document the positive changes that result from a culturally inclusive workplace. Sharing testimonials, case examples, and success stories can support a business case for investing in diversity training and resources as well as inspire your entire workforce to get on board!



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