

Intercultural Competence

Equitable, inclusive, and just workplaces rely on people being guided by unbiased, culturally aware thoughts and actions.

WHY IT MATTERS

The ability to navigate differences constructively helps reduce bias against people with nondominant identities—those who are women, immigrants, people with disabilities, single, LGBTQIA+, young and old, less educated, or of certain races, ethnicities, religions, or socioeconomic classes—and therefore helps them enter, stay, and advance in the profession.

WORKPLACES INCREASE INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE WHEN...

- individuals actively listen to each other and acknowledge differences in perspective and communication styles
- firm leaders model responsibility for recognizing and improving their attitudes and biases
- firms support open, inclusive, and balanced dialogue
- diverse teams and their leaders receive support for holding courageous conversations
- firms offer intercultural learning opportunities

ACT

Value difference

- Become an attuned listener and consider multiple perspectives, especially if you are a member of a dominant group.
- Recognize the greater responsibility held by members of dominant groups to bridge gaps.
- Get to know people who are different from you, and deepen your understanding of other cultures.
- Communicate effectively—intent does not equal impact. Remember to use the Platinum Rule: treat others as they want to be treated.
- Actively remove barriers for those from groups that have been historically excluded or disadvantaged.

Notice and name culture and bias

- Be aware of cultural patterns that reinforce a hierarchy of human worth.
- Investigate your instincts, and practice being cognizant of and adjusting your assumptions.
- Take assessments, such as the Implicit Association Test and the Intercultural Development Inventory, to gain more insight into where you may hold biases and stereotypes.
- Practice navigating conflicts by embracing discomfort and focusing on shared meaning and goals.
- Learn how to interrupt bias when it is directed toward you and others.