

# 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.