

National Inclusion Week – Your Health is for Life

25 September -1 October 2023

Inclusive
Employers



**National
Inclusion Week**
2023 25 September
1 October

Founded by Inclusive Employers, National Inclusion Week (NIW) is a week dedicated to celebrating inclusion and taking action to create inclusive workplaces.

The theme for National Inclusion Week 2023 is Take Action Make Impact, a call to action for all in the Council.

Take Action Make Impact is a powerful message which aims to get organisations and individuals thinking about what actions they can take and what positive impact these actions could and should have for marginalised colleagues.

What is inclusion?

Many of us have thought, what is inclusivity? And what does it mean to be truly inclusive? Simply put, inclusion in the workplace is about ensuring that everyone feels valued and respected as an individual.

Inclusion is critical to society, and we must all work together to make equal and diverse spaces everywhere we go. This does not mean you have to know everything, but understanding what inclusivity means is a good place to start.

Is there a difference between diversity and inclusion?

Many people use the words inclusion, diversity, equality and even equity interchangeably. However, focusing on inclusion does not prevent us from thinking about, discussing, or acting on diversity and equality.

Equality is about the fair treatment of everyone and is often linked to the legislative framework in the UK, The Equality Act 2010.

Equity is about creating equal possible outcomes for everyone because, despite effort and merit, people can experience substantial barriers in the workplace.

Diversity is the mix of people.

Inclusion is the culture in which the mix of people can come to work, feel comfortable and confident to be themselves, and work in a way that suits them and delivers your business or service needs. Inclusion will ensure that everyone feels valued and importantly, adds value.

What is inclusion in the workplace?

According to Inclusive Employers, inclusion is an overarching culture encompassing diversity, equality, and many other aspects of our working lives. It would be naïve to think that by focusing on inclusion we automatically mitigate the inequalities that exist in the workplace.

With inclusion as an objective, it means that we are much more likely to see greater diversity in our workforces, fair treatment of everyone and greater equality of opportunities as outcomes.

Why is inclusion important in the workplace?

All evidence proves that organisations focused on building a more inclusive culture attract and retain a wider diversity of talent. The inclusive culture then empowers diverse talent to think differently and share their experiences and perspectives, which in turn is a key driver for innovation, development and engagement.

Inclusive cultures enable our colleagues to do things differently, working in ways that suit them, flex working patterns to ensure their life-work balance is healthy and that they are able to deliver their best for their organisation.

This focus on inclusion equips our colleagues to make a difference, in their well-being and in the success of our organisations.

The world is changing and inclusion is imperative to future-proof our workplaces, with many organisations priding themselves on an inclusive workplace model. However, true inclusion is always ongoing and about consistent learning.

Benefits of Inclusion and Diversity at Work

Feeling included is a key aspect of human life. Many of us can recall a sense of exclusion: moments when we felt left out; other; different; that we weren't welcome or weren't appreciated.

Inclusion is the reverse: making people feel welcome; ensuring that it is safe for them to express who they choose to be; demonstrating our appreciation for their input; working collaboratively and showing we care.

People spend the majority of their time at work, so it's critical that they feel safe and respected. The advantages of inclusion and diversity in the workplace are numerous, with main benefits including a large pool of talent, a positive culture, and mutual respect throughout.

The Challenges of Inclusion and Diversity in Work

Inclusivity in the workplace can be challenging. People have different requirements and different things that are important to them.

Some challenges you may face are:

- Communication
- Unconscious bias
- A lack of trust
- Trying to tick every box
- Discrimination
- Hostility in the organisation

- A lack of senior buy in

The most important thing is to actively take action to be an inclusive organisation and create a safe space for people to be their most authentic selves.

Supports

[Equality and Diversity](#) – the council has developed a number of resources to support managers in address and promoting equality for all

[Employment Information](#) – the council has developed an equality and diversity resource for those working or applying to work for the Council

[Policies and Procedures](#) – the council has developed a number of policies and procedures to support a more equal and diverse culture including procedures such as bullying and harassment and unacceptable actions, for when staff feel they have been subjected to unacceptable behaviour/conduct

[Mylearning](#) – the council has developed a number of e-learning modules to accompany policies for staff to access and to support the culture of inclusion

[Four Pillars of Wellbeing](#) – the council has developed a toolkit for all staff to access for support in dealing with mental, physical, financial and workplace wellbeing