

A Culture of Belonging

A toolkit for sustainably fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion



Brought to you by: **2022 Cohort**

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You cannot change any society unless you take responsibility for it, unless you see yourself as belonging to it and responsible for changing it.

- Grace Lee Boggs

Creating a culture of belonging is key to sustainability for diversity, equity, and inclusion. The NEXT 2022 Cohort invites you to support our call to action to help everyone feel like they belong.

The toolkit is divided into five parts to be used as posters, handouts, discussion starters, etc.

- Amplify Voices with Allies
- Share Stories
- Reach Out with Stay Interviews
- Be Flexible with Work for Life
- Cultivate Gratitude

Determine who will review the toolkit and which ideas your station will put into practice. It is suggested that multiple groups onsite are involved.

- Leadership team
- Advocacy groups
- DE&I Committees
- Volunteers willing to champion a culture of belonging

Host small group discussions on Building a Culture of Belonging

Don't stop here!! These are ideas just to get started. Keep going!

Small Group Discussions

What's the goal of discussions around Building a Culture of Belonging?

- Increase awareness of the conditions/experiences in the nuclear industry that may adversely impact the culture of belonging.
- Share experiences that encourage and highlight the culture of belonging.

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Amplify Voices With Allies

Advocate, Encourage, and Educate

Benefits:

An ally, or upstander, helps others to feel less alone and provides feedback to those that may do harm (intentionally or unintentionally). Allies can transform a workplace so that everyone feels valued, heard, and respected – that they belong.

Advocate for equity, equality, and respect. Recognize that everyone has bias – even you.

Encourage people to share their perspectives and experiences – large or small. Encourage others to become allies by word and deed.

Educate yourself about the struggles of historically marginalized groups. Read books and papers, watch videos, talk to people.

“

I always wondered why somebody doesn't do something about that. Then I realized I was somebody.

- Lily Tomlin

Advantages of being an Ally or Upstander (Kim Scott, Just Work):

- There is strength in numbers
- The opinion of a neutral third party is hard to dismiss
- We all learn from the diverse experiences of others
- A personal connection makes it easier to communicate
- Many hands make light work

Recommendations for Allies and Upstanders:

- Listen! – listen to everyone and ask for everyone's input. Seek to understand the viewpoint of the speaker
- Call out inappropriate behavior – correct those that interrupt others, be intolerant of discriminating actions
- Use inclusive language – teammates instead of guys/gals/etc. Make an effort to spell and pronounce names correctly
- Give and receive honest feedback to everyone
- Get comfortable being uncomfortable – everyone is biased. Conversations about bias will be uncomfortable
- Be proactive – don't wait for bad acts to show support
- Select an ally who is focused on identifying bias during meetings

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Sharing Stories

Stories connect people, motivate, and can shift attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors

Benefits:

Storytelling celebrates the uniqueness and importance of each individual, and builds connection, empathy, and understanding. Stories engage the brain in ways that facts alone do not, enabling people to see things from new perspectives and to gain deeper insights and understanding. The experience of hearing a story more often creates lasting attitude and behavior changes.

Leaders need to create space for storytelling.

Listen with empathy, warmth, and an open mind. Don't ask storytellers to provide evidence.

Thank people for sharing, share your story, and check in on forum effectiveness and safety.

“

Words are how we think; stories are how we link.

- Christina Baldwin

Getting Started with Storytelling

Basic Guidelines:

- Encourage but don't require sharing and respect boundaries
- Provide a safe environment for people to be vulnerable and ensure participants do also
- Smaller groups are often more conducive to sharing
- Stories shared by peers, not just leaders, are most impactful; employees share first, then leaders
- Thank people for sharing

Ways to Facilitate and Encourage Storytelling:

- Use a round-robin question in a meeting
- Establish and promote employee resource groups
- Include stories in blogs, videos, newsletters, celebrations, onboarding, etc.
- Have social forums
- Develop social media campaigns that share stories
- Hold listening sessions and storytelling town halls
- Hold book clubs with plenty of discussion

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Stay Interviews

Because exit interviews are too late. You need to know what makes your people want to stay!

What is a Stay Interview? A one-on-one conversation that assesses an employee's engagement and satisfaction with their organization. Its purpose is to understand what motivates employees to stay with the company long-term. Stay interviews can uncover the causes for disengaged employees by proactively seeking feedback and improving in order to retain high-performing employees.

Let your employee know in advance that you'd like to have a conversation about what matters to them, what makes them happy, and what will keep them at your company. Be sure you are meeting in a quiet space, away from distractions.

PREPARE

Determine who you want to interview (top talent, difficult to replace, etc.)
Pick questions that will engage in open and honest dialogue.

ENGAGE

Make the conversation comfortable & open.
Show them that you value them & want to know what matters to them

TAKE ACTION

Create an action plan with strategies to eliminate concerns and mitigate roadblocks

Open-Ended Interview Questions

- What do you look forward to at work every day?
- What would you like to change about your job?
- How would you rate your work/life balance?
How is your stress level?
- What would make your job more engaging and satisfying?
- What keeps you motivated? What is the most enriching part of your work?
- Do you feel like you're meeting your career and development goals?
- What do you like most/ least about your job and working in our organization?
- Do you have any suggestions about how we can improve as an organization?
- As your manager, what can I do more of, less of, or differently?
- What would you like to be doing in the next 2-3 years?



Flexibility With Work For Life

Challenging, Dynamic, Rewarding

Benefits:

Employees are more likely to stay with their company if a flexible work schedule is available. Employees who have the ability to balance work and their life outside of work see a decrease in stress related illnesses and burnout, and an increase in job satisfaction.

Have patience. The way we do business has changed, and it's okay to change with it.

Create conditions where everyone, everywhere volunteers their best efforts and highest energy to achieve results.

Recognize the importance of open and clear communication. There are many ways to maintain a relationship with our employees – use the ones that fit the needs of your employees.

“

We need to do a better job of putting ourselves higher on our own 'to do' list.

- Michelle Obama

Tips for Managing a Flexible Work Schedule:

- Educate yourself and your team on the how-to's of flexible work – establish clear expectations for your team members that support the objectives of your work group.
- Create a culture of belonging – your employees should feel their work is valued and is contributing to the expected results.
- Focus on the results – shift to a results-based system instead of the number of hours worked
- Establish a consistent communication strategy with each of your employees and your teams that works for them and for you.
- Identify deliverables – agree to how you will ensure performance objectives are being met with quality and on time.

Helping our Employees Blend Life and Work:

- Each of us is different, and helping our employees recognize and have grace with those differences establishes a culture of belonging.
- Life happens. Supporting our team members in times of need establishes trust and a sense of relief.
- Challenge your assumptions – be aware of your own biases and recognize we all have experiences that shape our expectations.
- Listen to your co-workers. Their life experiences and ideas can help shape outcomes, resulting in improved job satisfaction and a desire to contribute.
- We are all human and want to be treated appropriately. Flexibility in the workplace honors the dignity of every person in every role.

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Cultivating Gratitude

Take a moment to say, “Thank You.”
We will all feel the benefits

Benefits:

Although it may take effort and specific intention to get started, practicing gratitude fosters positive feelings and can contribute to a sense of well-being when done regularly. It helps us connect with others by recognizing the goodness in our lives that lies outside of ourselves. Studies have found that showing appreciation and acknowledging others’ contribution to our own wellbeing opens the door for new relationships and opportunities. It can also improve aspects of physical health by lowering stress and increasing the body’s ability to fight off illnesses. If that is not enough, studies have even shown that practicing gratitude daily can lead to improved sleep and reduction in chronic pain.

Have courage. Expressing gratitude can make some people feel unsafe. A willingness by some encourages the practice of gratitude by all. Gratitude is contagious.

Be sincere and genuine. Celebrate wins big and small.

Create time and space to give thanks. Virtual and physical settings provide opportunities to share authentic appreciation and recognize the impact we have on each other.

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Resources:

- Discover Gratitude with Mayo Clinic Health System <https://mayocl.in/3aUIGwc>
- Practicing Gratitude Works • <https://bit.ly/3z0A0er>

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It’s not happiness that brings us gratitude.
It’s gratitude that brings us happiness.

- **Anonymous**



Brought to you by:

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For ambassadors to help facilitate these discussions
please contact the NEXT 2022 Cohort
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