

Developing an Inclusive Mindset

The following mindset strategies can help you cultivate inclusive leadership capabilities so that you can contribute to a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace.

Identity-awareness mindset

- Reflect on your own identity, including your cultural background, gender, socio-economic status, and sexual orientation.
- Acknowledge the advantages and disadvantages you may experience based on your identity. Challenge assumptions made about people. Physical appearances can be misleading, and different people may have unique perspectives even if they appear similar on the surface.

Relational mindset

- Assess your ability to communicate well across diverse social and professional identities.
- Evaluate how well you support the development of diverse employees and reward their strengths and accomplishments.

Open mindset

- Ensure that work activities, meeting times, and work-related social activities within your organisation are scheduled to maximise participation.
- Explore technologies that can facilitate inclusivity.
- Educate your leaders about the benefits of curiosity and openness, providing opportunities for them to develop active and reflective listening skills.

Flexible mindset

- Embrace flexibility by varying your thinking approach. Innovation and creative ideas often emerge after periods of both focused and unfocused thought, so allocate time to concentrate on projects deliberately and also while engaged in unrelated activities.
- Assess whether your organisation has integrated flexible working as standard practice and ensure that policies, processes, and technologies support it.

Growth-focused mindset

- Read and stay informed about diversity and inclusion issues.
- Investigate ways to involve team members from diverse backgrounds, experience levels, job functions, and business areas in decision-making processes.
- Practice respectfully challenging identity-based stereotypes and biased decision-making.

Ten simple ways to become a more inclusive leader

1. **Self-reflection:** Take a few minutes each day to reflect on your own biases, assumptions, and identities. Consider how these may influence your interactions with others.
2. **Active listening practice:** During meetings and conversations, make a conscious effort to fully understand and acknowledge the perspectives of others without interruption.
3. **Meet someone new:** Regularly connect with colleagues from different departments, backgrounds, or roles within your organisation. Get to know them better.
4. **Ask for feedback:** Create a safe space for your team to give you honest feedback on your leadership style and inclusivity efforts.
5. **Educate yourself:** Dedicate some time each week to learning about diversity and inclusion topics via articles, TED talks, or online courses.

6. Cross-cultural experiences: Try new foods, attend cultural events, or learn a few phrases in a different language.
7. Inclusive meetings: Allow everyone to prepare by sending meeting agendas in advance. At meetings, actively encourage input from everyone, including quieter team members.
8. Review policies: Take a look at your organisation's policies and practices to ensure they are inclusive. Share any potential areas for improvement with HR or relevant departments.
9. Mentorship: Offer to mentor or support a colleague from an underrepresented background so that you can learn from each other.
10. Celebrate diversity: Organise brief celebrations or acknowledgments of cultural and diversity events within your team or organisation.