

Essential Tools for Workforce Development

Building Cultural Capability Guide

This resource is part of a series of resources in the online Diversity in Disability Toolkit.

For further information, see: diversityindisability.org

A culturally competent organization is one which recognises, respects and responds to diversity in order to achieve the best possible outcomes for all its clients.

Ref. CDCF p.43

Once you have built a business case for diversity, engaged your staff and started your CALD journey, you need to recognise, respect and respond to diversity.

Diversity exists not only in your local community and client base, but also in your team. Everyone has a culture and way of doing things. How can you leverage the diversity around you?

Recognise Diversity

Diversity in your community

- Get involved and engage with the diversity of your community
- Use the checklist resources to gather data
- Survey your clients and get to know their diverse needs better
- Deliver focus groups to find out more about community needs

Diversity among your staff

- Get to know your staff
- Provide structured ways staff can participate and share their knowledge
e.g. In a cultural diversity working group

Respect Diversity

Ensure communication is inclusive

- Listen to the voices of leaders in your culturally diverse community – what is needed, where, how and why?
- Where possible provide information in other languages, or information about interpreter services

Reflect the realities of your community

- In photos, reports and on your website, ensure the faces represented are representative of community demographics
- Hire staff who are from diverse cultural backgrounds and come from the communities you service

Ensure participation is possible

- Does your uniform have the option of religious attire in company colours?

e.g. A hijab for Muslim women, a turban for Seikh men

e.g. If you're focusing on servicing Muslim clients and engage Muslim staff, does your office have a prayer space? Do you ensure food is Halal or vegetarian options are available for staff events?

Respond to Diversity

It's no use having a culturally diverse workforce if you don't have the capacity or skills to leverage that diversity. Diversity without inclusion can result in reduced productivity.

It's important you are aware of how to manage diversity and create an inclusive team culture.

Highly effective diverse teams have:

- Clear overarching and unifying goals for the team
- Explicit expectations and a performance focus
- An acknowledgement and recognition of diversity
- A positive and participatory team culture
- Trust
- Good feedback loops and communication
- Solid processes and structures to ensure fairness and participation

Some ways you can create a more inclusive team culture include:

Celebrate Diversity:

Acknowledge Harmony day:

<http://www.harmony.gov.au/about/>

Eat together! Celebrate Harmony day with a lunch at your workplace:

<http://www.tasteofharmony.org.au/>

Celebrate national days or cultural events of key client and staff groups. Access this Multicultural Calendar for details:

<https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/settlement-and-multicultural-affairs/programs-policy/a-multicultural-australia/government-building-social-cohesion/calendar-of-cultural-and-religious-dates>

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